Pandemic Aware Procedures

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Introduction

Dear Guest,

As The Buffalo History Museum welcomes guests for on-site visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to stay vigilant and flexible with regard to new procedures for ensuring safety. The procedures detailed here will be revisited as the pandemic evolves and reflect the most up-to-date approach to safe access and gathering as conditions change in our community.

Our plan complies with New York Forward Business Re-Opening Safety Plan, as well as all local, state, and federal health and governmental guidance. Staff has been trained to follow these procedures prior to opening our doors and updated as circumstances evolve.

The safety and well being of everyone at the Museum – guests, staff, volunteers – is our number one priority. Our Strategic Framework places the guest at the center, and as such, we focused on creating a safe, welcoming visitor experience while developing plans to reopen.

In light of new health and safety precautions, we intend to ensure our mission to experience history with you in a safe, welcoming atmosphere.

All my best,

Melissa N. Brown
Executive Director

If you have questions about our Reopening Plan and Pandemic-Aware Procedures, please contact:

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The Buffalo History Museum

Pandemic-Aware Procedures

1. Pandemic-Aware Guest Experience

Hours of Operation:
- Wednesday 10 am-8 pm
- Thursday 10 am-5 pm
- Friday 10 am-5 pm
- Saturday 10 am-5 pm
- Sunday 12 pm-5 pm
- Closed Monday, Tuesday

Guest Admissions:

Encourage guests to reserve timed tickets in advance of their visit
- Timed reservations are available in advance of visits through our website. To ensure social distancing, we accept a maximum of 40 guests for 1-hour windows throughout the day (totaling 240 guests). Space is also available for walk-ups if we can safely accommodate.
- Registration for a visit to the Museum includes a timed start: if a ticket indicates 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., guests should arrive within that time to begin the visit. Guests may visit the Museum as long as they would like until 5 p.m.
- Our website, social media, and press outreach will encourage guests to reserve tickets in advance.
- Advance registration will help us approximate daily visitation.
- At check-in, with advanced registration, guests will be asked their name to verify reservation and the proper number for the party.
- Advance timed reservations and affords guests a minimal contact, quick admittance experience.

Admission is Pay What You Wish

Promote contactless payments

- Guests are encouraged to “pay what you wish” for admissions. We are keeping the museum financially accessible for everyone.
- Guests may make their admission donation when registering online via credit card, or at the reception desk when they arrive by credit card or cash.
- Credit card usage readers are available on the upper counter of the reception desk for a self-service transaction. Readers are sanitized after every use. Receipts do not require signature, however, if a guest requests to sign, we will provide a disinfected pen for their use. After a guest uses a pen, it will be kept separate from other disinfected pens until it is disinfected.
- Reception desk surfaces, pens, credit card readers and other items handled during transaction will be wiped down after each transaction.
- Guest Services Associates can wear gloves (provided by TBHM) or sanitize between each cash transaction. Guest Services Associates can request that cash payments be placed on the counter and not directly exchanging hands.
- Donations can be made in a contactless manner at designated donation boxes or on our website.
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Offer digital maps and information for guests
- Maps of the Museum are available at the front desk. Guests can also take a photo to reference on their phone or follow QR code to a map PDF available on our website.
- Membership information is available via QR code to purchase/find information on our website.
- Display free Wi-Fi access information prominently to facilitate use of the online tools and website links.

Shield for both guests and guest services associates with plexiglass protective panels at each reception desk and reference desk in Library.

Health Screenings:

Signage and pre-registration materials encourage healthy guests
- Website guidelines and post-reservation information encourage guests to conduct a self health screening. Before the visit and on signage at our entrance, we ask the following questions:
  - Have you have tested positive for COVID-19 in past 14 days?
  - Have you had close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days?
- If guests answer “Yes” to any one or more of these questions, we ask guests to reschedule their visit to the museum and seek medical guidance. We are not asking these questions directly or mandating answers as guests arrive.

Social Distancing:

Encourage guests to maintain 6-foot standard of social distancing in all areas of the museum.
- Signage throughout the museum reminds guests to maintain social distancing.
- Maintenance and all staff are monitoring guests on their regular rounds and encourage guests to maintain social distancing as needed.

Require face coverings inside the building
- Masks are required for all guests while inside the Museum and for the entire length of a visit, regardless of their vaccination status. Masks should cover one’s nose, sit below the chin, fully cover one’s mouth and nose, and rest securely on one’s face. Face shields must be accompanied with a proper face covering that covers one’s mouth and nose. Masks can be cloth, surgical, or n95.
- Guests are strongly encouraged to bring their own masks, but a number of disposable masks will be available. If a guest refuses to comply, they will be asked to leave the premises.
- Exceptions will be made to guests under the age of 2. Digital Museum experiences are available for individuals unable to wear coverings.
- For individuals who need a break from wearing their mask, outdoor space is available on the Museum’s Portico, Japanese Gardens, and outside on our campus.
- Prepare guests for the public safety requirement using our website, social media, and press outreach in advance of their visit.
- Staff are required to wear masks in all public-facing spaces and when interfacing with the public, regardless of vaccine status.
- Staff and volunteers must wear masks while facilitating education programs for children whether inside or outside, regardless of vaccine status.
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- Staff are not required to wear masks if they are vaccinated and in a private office or in a public outdoor space.

Exhibit Experiences:
Offer interactive elements when enhanced cleaning can ensure a safe guest experience
- Removed interactive components that cannot be sanitized regularly (including cloth items).
- Interactive exhibit areas will have signage encouraging safe use and hand sanitizer or restrooms nearby for washing hands after use. The enhanced cleaning schedule provides for increased cleaning of interactive play areas.
- Interactive touch screens will be cleaned every 3 hours, or more often based on higher attendance.

Hand washing:
Restrooms and hand sanitizer available throughout the Museum
- Restrooms are located on the first floor and lower level and are equipped with sinks and soap for handwashing.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located on all floors of the Museum.
- The Resource Center has a hand sanitizer at the reception desk and exhibit area for guest use.

Signage accompanies all handwashing sinks and sanitizers
Following CDC recommendations.

Guest Amenities:
Ventilation:
Windows and doors will be open as much as possible to introduce outside air and with consideration of significant energy waste (mostly at the Pan-Am building where air conditioning is not widely available).

Gatherings:
- Any Museum or rental events will comply with all relevant NYS governmental safety regulations and can only be scheduled if we can offer a safe experience for all staff and guests.
- In accordance with New York State COVID-19 mandates for social gatherings, the Museum requires proof of COVID-19 vaccination or a recent negative COVID-19 test for events in excess of 250 guests. Both staff and guests will be required to provide proof of vaccination or negative test before entering a large event.
- Staff team meetings will be held virtually or in spaces where social distancing is feasible.

Group visits and tours
The maximum group size that can pre-register for normal admission is 10 (and those individuals should be from the same family group).

If guests would like to attend the Museum with a group of more than 10 individuals, they must contact the Museum in advance to discuss alternative options to ensure the safety of guests and staff.

Indoor group tours are allowed if we can ensure a safe experience for guests.
Non-guest visitors and contact tracing:

Deliveries directed to Reinstein Building

- When staff order supplies to be delivered, they should direct to Reinstein administration building. All deliveries and mail will be sorted and kept in the closet by the door for staff to retrieve.
- If a delivery comes to the front entrance, it can be accepted if social distancing can be maintained, or guest services associates can direct the delivery personnel to the Reinstein Building.

Maintain records of who is on site each day

- Staff members meeting with any outside personnel at the Museum (maintenance repairmen, rental clients, donors), are responsible for placing meetings on the Master Calendar in case contact tracing is needed.
- Guest names and zip codes are captured for walk-up guests. We collect name, address, and email address for those who pre-register for admission. These records can be used for contact tracing if needed.
- All information provided for contact tracing will only be used for that purpose and not for any future marketing unless guest specifically requests it.

High-volume procedures:

- Admission is restricted by ability to provide social distancing between guests. If we are nearing that limit, we will implement the following additional procedures to ensure safety:
  - If staff/volunteers are available, invite guests to enter through different entrances (doors on or under the Portico facing the Japanese Gardens). Staff will be protected with a table and plexiglass similar to the main reception area.
  - Announce over loud speakers throughout the day reminders about social distancing and proper mask wearing during higher volume times.
  - As with all days, maintenance staff will do regular rounds to clean surfaces, and they will also keep an eye on social distancing and mask compliance and remind guests as needed.

Museum Shop:

Museum Shop offerings stream-lined to reduce crowding of items and thereby, guests.

- Place racks/displays to allow for social distancing when guests are browsing the Museum Shop.
- The Museum Shop offers items for sale on the website for pickup or shipping.
- Sanitize entire Museum Shop on a weekly basis and spot clean as necessary.

Research Library:

Full procedures will be available in a separate document and highlights will be included here.

- Guests will schedule advance appointments for the library, which will be open only during the Museum’s public hours. In-person appointments will be scheduled on Wednesdays and Saturdays; Virtual Appointments will be scheduled on Thursdays and Fridays.
- Only three guests will be scheduled to use the Library at any time, and they will be required to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing during their entire visit, regardless of vaccination status.
- Guest work stations are wiped down with disinfectant after every use.
- Library guests are encouraged to bring all of their own supplies (ie: pencils, notepaper, laptops)
2. Team Member Procedures

Cleaning and Hygiene Protocols

- Staff provided with masks and training on how to properly use and clean them.
- Staff should wear masks whenever they are in public spaces and whenever they are within 6 feet of someone.
- Office doors should be closed when staff are inside and working without their masks on.
- All staff are trained on disinfecting procedures and shown where to find cleaning supplies for cleaning at any time they feel comfortable.
- Maintenance and guest services staff are provided with gloves for cleaning before and after guest interactions.
- Hand sanitizer available in all staff common areas, entrances, and in public exhibit areas.
- Full cleaning procedures are shared with staff, and staff can share feedback with Facilities Manager or Director of Operations at any time.
- Signage to remind staff about cleaning and hygiene available in all restrooms.

Staff scheduling and contact tracing

- Staff are no longer required to fill out a daily health survey, but should continually ask themselves the following questions before reporting to work:
  - Have you have tested positive for COVID-19 in past 14 days?
  - Have you had close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days?
- If a staff member has any symptoms of COVID-19, they should talk with their supervisor, and refrain from coming into work until they receive a negative COVID-19 test result.
- If anyone known to be in a Museum building becomes sick with COVID-19, all buildings affected will be closed immediately for a deep cleaning.
- Any staff member who receives a positive COVID-19 test result, should inform the Director of Operations, and discuss if any other staff have been exposed (per “close contact” definition). Any exposed staff members will be informed immediately and must follow the appropriate isolation/quarantine guidance. The Director of Operations and Executive Director will assess staff risk and quarantine needs to determine if the Museum can continue to operate or if closure is needed.
3. Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures

High-Touch surfaces are disinfected frequently

- High-touch surfaces and restrooms are disinfected on the following schedule on all days the Museum is open to the public:
  - Before opening at 10 am
  - 1 pm
  - 4 pm

- Staff will use disinfectant sprays approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as effective against COVID-19 and wipe down all surfaces with clean disposable wipes, or with pre-soaked disinfectant wipes.

- At our most highly used doors, we have also installed self-cleaning wraps on the handles.

General Cleaning Procedures:

- Cleaning logs will be kept in each restroom. Custodial staff will fill them out when the restrooms are cleaned and the logs will be reviewed daily by Facilities Manager.

- Cleaning logs for the frequent disinfecting procedures are kept in the maintenance area and checked daily by Facilities Manager.

- If there is any known COVID-19 exposure in any of the buildings, all affected buildings will be shut down immediately and undergo a deep cleaning before reopening to any staff and/or guests.

- Restrooms in each of the buildings are cleaned on a daily basis for staff use.