

# REOPEN

# Connecticut<sup>®</sup>

SAFER. STRONGER. TOGETHER.



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**Governor Ned Lamont**

**Best Practices for Reopening**

March 19, 2021

## BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

### GOAL

Proactively protect public health and speed up the pace of economic, educational, and community recovery while restoring Connecticut's quality of life.

# 1

#### SAFETY FIRST

We will reopen society safely and securely with a proactive program that safeguards the health of our vulnerable residents, continues physical distancing, and provides clear safeguard rules for businesses and institutions deemed safe to reopen.

# 2

#### SCIENCE-DRIVEN

Our strategy will rely on a scientifically validated set of public health interventions. Patient assessment, testing, proactive tracing, field studies, and public health guidance will be deployed simultaneously to contain infection.

# 3

#### PREPARED

We will work closely with hospitals and health systems to procure and distribute critical personal protective equipment, and assess capacity of beds and ventilators to ensure optimal standard of care.

# 4

#### CHOICE

Individual businesses within sectors allowed to open are empowered to make their own choice on when they reopen. When they open, they must comply with rules we lay out to safeguard their employees and customers.

# 5

#### DYNAMIC

We include a suite of tools to inform an adaptive plan that can be nimbly scaled or rolled back rapidly based on real-time critical health metrics.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

### HOW WE WILL OPEN OUR ECONOMY SAFELY

Our plan to open the economy will address two factors:

**WHAT** businesses can open and when.

**HOW** businesses must operate **if they choose to open**.

#### WHAT:

- We know that some businesses put employees and customers at greater risk of transmission.
- We will prioritize opening businesses that pose a lower transmission risk and drive outsized impact on the economy.
- Transmission risk is defined as contact intensity and modification potential of businesses.
  - Contact intensity considers contact proximity, contact length, and number of contacts.
  - Modification potential considers the businesses' ability to socially distance and sanitize in accordance with regulations.
- We will assess the impact on state economic health with a focus on number of employed individuals, total GDP impacted, and impact on small businesses that make up the backbone of our economy.

#### HOW:

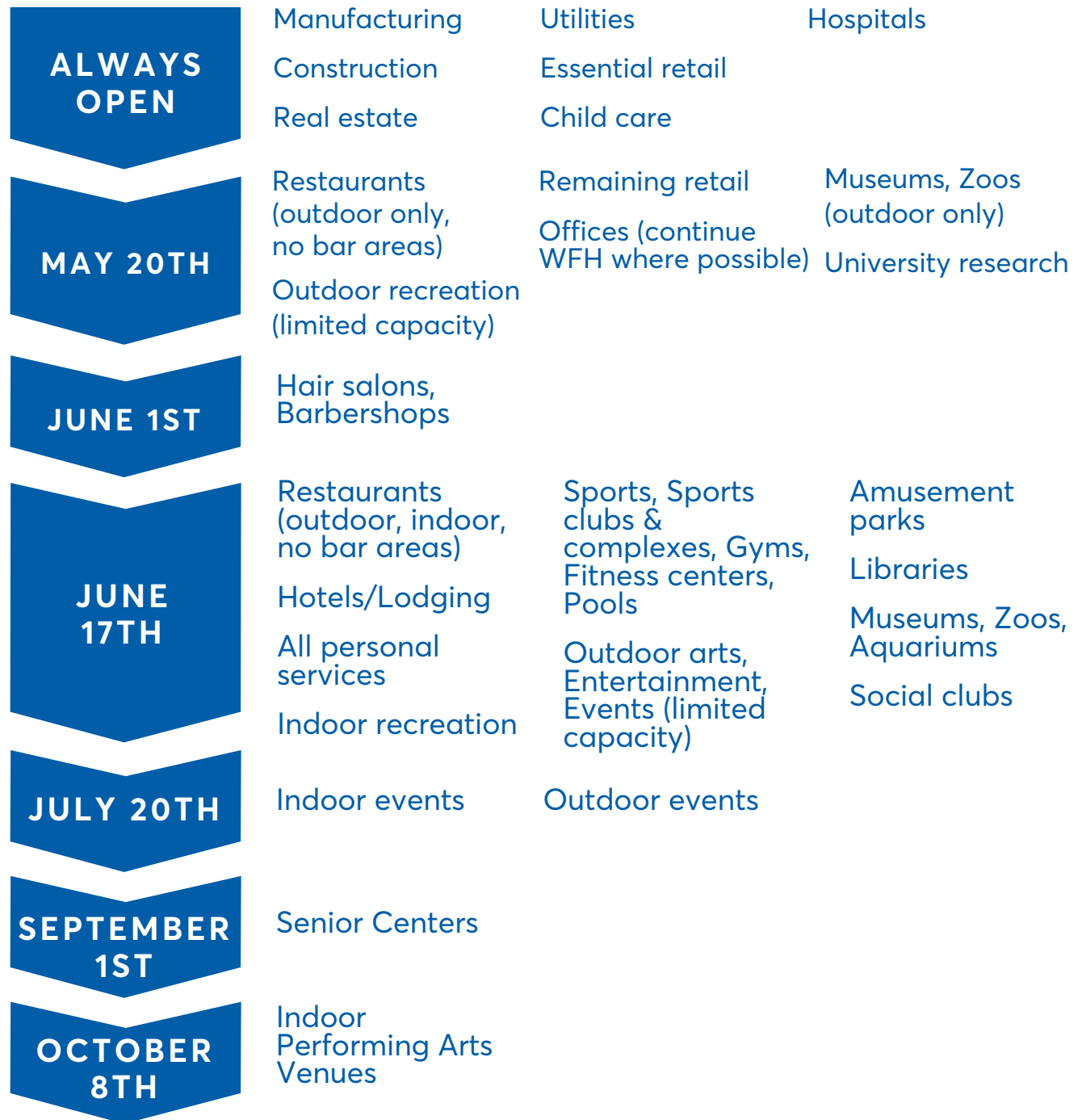
- We will provide clear operational guidance to businesses on how to reopen while ensuring the safety of both employees and customers.
- Guidance will include social distancing and hygiene, as well as the use of personal protection – for business operators, workers, and customers.
- The goal is to not only open safely, but create confidence in our society across employers, employees, and customers.
- The level of guidance will gradually become less restrictive over time, as our confidence in the ability to monitor and contain the disease increases.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

### WHAT: SECTOR REOPENING OVER TIME

**The state will open its economy with a gradual approach.**

The first set of businesses started reopening when we saw a sustained 14-day decline in hospitalizations, had adequate testing capacity, had a contact tracing system in place, and had procured sufficient PPE. The timing for that reopen was **May 20th, 2020**.



## BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

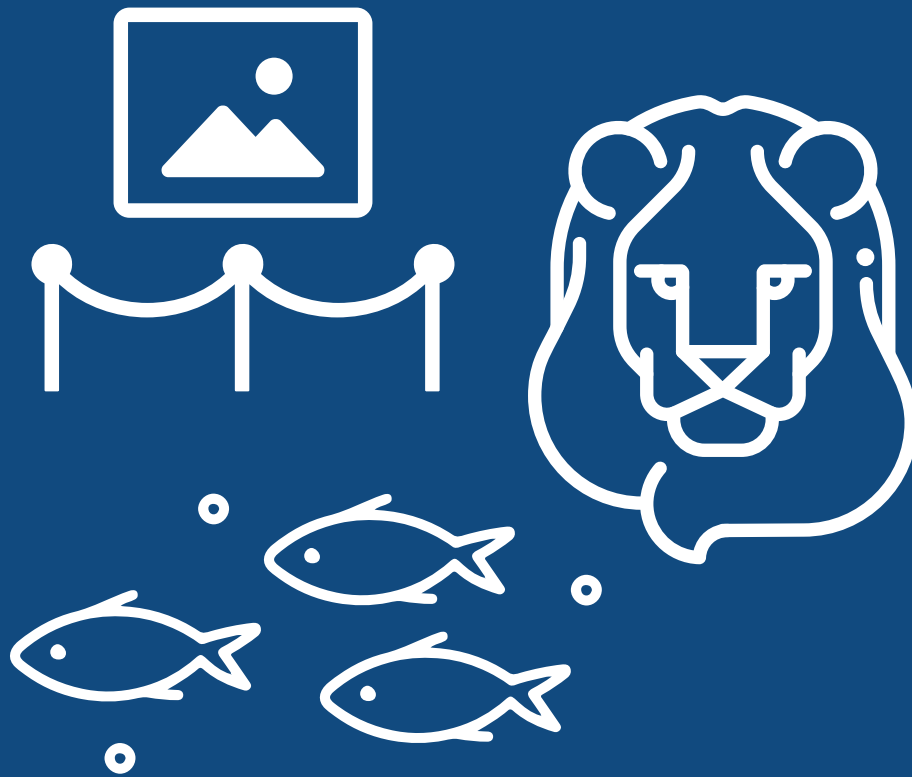
### HOW: SAFEGUARDS

As we continue to reopen businesses, we will open at our strictest controls on business operations and societal interaction. This will include, among other measures:

- Strict cleaning and disinfection protocols in all settings.
- Those who can work from home should continue to do so.
- Those in high-risk groups (comorbidities) and over the age of 65 should continue to stay safe and stay home.
- Facemasks should continue to be worn in public at all times.
- Social gatherings will be restricted in accordance to the Governor's executive order.

As we see progress on a defined set of public health metrics (detail to follow), we will gradually loosen safeguards. This will allow for the next set of businesses to open and potentially for businesses already open to operate with additional leeway. We expect this will occur over the coming months.

As always, we will make decisions based on data and science. Our plan intentionally allows for sufficient time for learning, adoption of behaviors, and ultimately the achievement of improved health metrics that create the necessary environment for new business operations. If public health metrics deteriorate, the State may choose to revert back to stricter safeguards.



**MUSEUMS, ZOOS,  
AND AQUARIUMS  
INDOOR & OUTDOOR**

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS

## OVERVIEW

As Connecticut reopens its museums, zoos, and aquariums, the state wants to enable its citizens to continue to enjoy its rich cultural and historical heritage. Such activities must be undertaken only after prioritizing the health and safety of employees and consumers. This set of **best practices** developed by the State of Connecticut aims to minimize the risks presented by these establishments while allowing its citizens to enjoy the state's cultural treasures. These guidelines are designed for the exterior grounds as well as the interior spaces of museum/zoo/aquarium campuses. If your institution has one or more offices, retail venues, or restaurants, you must also follow the guidelines specific to that industry.

Museums, zoos, and aquariums must exercise caution throughout the reopening, ensuring strict adherence to the protocols listed **on the Sector Rules for Reopening webpage**. It is the cumulative effects gained from social distancing, hand washing, and mask-wearing that will prevent the spread of COVID-19. Please keep that in mind as you plan and execute your reopening.

While these **best practices** provide a way for museums, zoos, and aquariums to reopen as safely as possible, risks to visitors and employees cannot be fully mitigated. Visitors who choose to come to museums, zoos, and aquariums during this time should be aware of potential risks. It may be advisable for individuals over the age of 65 or with other health conditions to evaluate whether visits to museums, zoos, and aquariums are appropriate. Museums/zoos/aquariums may choose to reserve times for higher risk visitors.

Museums, zoos, and aquariums should take these **best practices** as the minimum baseline of precautions needed to protect public health in Connecticut. Individual establishments should take additional measures as recommended by industry guidelines or by common sense applied to their particular situation. Museums, zoos, and aquariums shall refer to the guidance issued for other industries, such as restaurants, transportation, outdoor events, retail, indoor recreation, and for any and all activities that are not covered in this guidance but pertain to the needs of your organization.

## STATE GUIDANCE FOR MUSEUMS, ZOOS, & AQUARIUMS

Rules are predicated on the understanding that COVID-19 is transmitted through a combination of intensity and duration of exposure. With this in mind, a key factor to minimizing risk and increasing safety is through reducing staff and visitor density, and requiring personal protective equipment as guided by the state. Museums, zoos, and aquariums shall calculate maximum safe occupancy for each exhibit area/room to allow for social distancing between groups and to comply with state social gathering size guidance.

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS

Establishments should leverage signage, floor markings, and enhanced presence of attendants and other personnel to enforce such occupancy rate.

These **best practices** are intended to help museums, zoos, and aquariums safely get back to work. The information here can be supplemented with information developed by professional organizations and by other industry groups, some of which are listed below. These **best practices** may be updated.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

- **CDC**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
- **OSHA**  
<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
- **AMERICAN ALLIANCE FOR MUSEUMS**  
<https://www.aam-us.org/2020/03/05/information-for-the-museum-field-on-the-covid-19-coronavirus/>
- **CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF THE ARTS/CONNECTICUT ARTS ALLIANCE/CONNECTICUT HUMANITIES**  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Arts\\_Culture/COVID-19-Guidelines/CT-Arts--Culture-Industry-Guidelines-for-Operating-During-COVID19-FIRST-EDITION-UPDATE-52720-Final-1.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Arts_Culture/COVID-19-Guidelines/CT-Arts--Culture-Industry-Guidelines-for-Operating-During-COVID19-FIRST-EDITION-UPDATE-52720-Final-1.pdf?la=en)
- **CLEANING/DISINFECTING HISTORIC SURFACES**  
<https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/blog/covid-19-basics-disinfecting-cultural-resources/>  
<http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1297912&f=6635&s=30789&m=359683&t=bd06d0677f4412d3c2219db317376d80f4832fead23f92897d520aeb005ff931>
- **AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CONSERVATION**  
<https://www.culturalheritage.org/resources/emergencies/collections-care-amid-covid-19>
- **AMERICAN CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS**  
<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-museums/preparing-to-reopen/>
- **ASSOCIATION OF ART MUSEUM DIRECTORS (AAMD) AND COVID-19 RELATED RESOURCES**  
<https://aamd.org/our-members/from-the-field/museums-and-covid-19>
- **RE-OCCUPANCY ASSESSMENT TOOL AS PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS (AIA)**  
<https://www.aia.org/resources/6292441-re-occupancy-assessment-tool>



# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## PLAN FOR REOPENING

Share these **best practices** with your employees and inform them of any additional specific measures being taken in response to COVID-19.

- Museums, zoos, and aquariums **should** share their public safety policies for visitors online and in multiple locations on-site.



## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Appoint a program administrator who is accountable for implementing the rules.



## EMPLOYEE TRAINING

The employer **should** institute a training program and ensure employee participation in the program. Training **should** be provided at no cost to the employee and during working hours. The training materials **should** be presented in the language and at the literacy level of the employees. Employers **should** continuously update staff on changes to these **best practices**. The training **should** include:

- **Best practices** outlined in this document
- Protocols on how to clean and use cleaning products (incl. disinfectants) safely
- Additional guidance can be found here:  
[https://osha.washington.edu/sites/default/files/documents/FactSheet\\_Cleaning\\_Final\\_UWDEOHS\\_0.pdf](https://osha.washington.edu/sites/default/files/documents/FactSheet_Cleaning_Final_UWDEOHS_0.pdf)

Additional protocols for cleaning historic surfaces that cannot stand up to harsh cleaners are available in the Resource section above.

**NOTE:** If any on-site duties are subcontracted, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure subcontractors are also appropriately trained.



## CLEANING PLAN

Develop cleaning checklists for cleaning all surfaces, modern and historic, that incorporate these rules. Ensure it is clear which employees are responsible for implementing the plans.



# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## THOROUGH CLEANING

Complete a thorough cleaning of the facility prior to reopening, including but not limited to:

- Backroom common areas, high traffic areas such as ticket counters, portions of exhibits that are below eye-level, handrails, elevators, restrooms



## CLEANING & DISINFECTING

Businesses shall follow federal guidelines (CDC, EPA) on what specific products shall be used and how.

- Disinfectants are irritants and sensitizers, and should be used cautiously.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door handles, cash registers) at least daily and shared objects (e.g. payment terminals) after each use.
- Use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 and that are appropriate for the surface. Prior to wiping the surface, allow the disinfectant to sit for the necessary contact time recommended by the manufacturer. Train staff on proper cleaning procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.



## BATHROOMS

Clean and disinfect frequently, and implement use of cleaning log for tracking. Clean multiple times a day and hourly during busy times.

- Recommend posting signage encouraging reduced capacity in bathrooms, and reminding individuals to wash their hands and wear a mask
- Consider placing a wastebasket outside of the bathroom

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## SHARED EQUIPMENT

Ensure employees do not share equipment to the extent possible; if shared, clean after each use.



## LOG EMPLOYEES

Maintain a log of employees on-premise over time, to support contact tracing.



## PERSONAL PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES

- All employees are required to wear a facemask or other cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth. Employees that cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition must provide documentation to their employer.
- Employees may utilize their own cloth face covering over that provided by their employer if they choose.
- Gloves and eye protection are required when using cleaning chemicals.



## EMPLOYERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING PERSONAL PROTECTION TO THEIR EMPLOYEES

- If businesses do not have adequate personal protection, they cannot open.



## SHIFTS

Stagger shift start/stop times and break times to minimize contact across employees.

- Consider cohorting staff within each shift (e.g. keeping the same shift schedules and avoiding mixing staff across shifts).



## HANDWASHING

Ensure employees wash their hands routinely using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## DAILY HEALTH CHECK

Ask employees resuming on-premise work to confirm they have not experienced COVID-19 CDC-defined symptoms and to monitor their own symptoms, including cough, shortness of breath, or any two of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue

Employees should stay home if sick.



## LEAVE

Employers shall adhere to federal guidance pertaining to paid leave for employees and provide this guidance to employees.

Employers shall post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Department of Labor poster. The poster can be accessed at:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/posters>

- Additional guidance can be accessed at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>



## IN THE EVENT OF A POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE

Employees shall inform their employers, and follow state testing and contact tracing protocols. In addition:

- Employee should contact local public health to initiate contact tracing.
- Recommend 24-hour passive decontamination in the event of a positive case, and follow CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Additional information can be accessed at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>



## WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Employers may not retaliate against workers for raising concerns about COVID-19 related safety and health conditions.

- Additional information can be accessed at [www.whistleblowers.gov](http://www.whistleblowers.gov).
- Additional information for the public sector can be accessed at [www.connosha.com](http://www.connosha.com).

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## SIGNAGE

Post clear signage that reinforces new policies, e.g.:

- Maximum occupancy of each exhibit area/room
- Social distancing protocols
- Cleaning and disinfection protocols
- Personal protection protocols (face masks, gloves) for visitors and employees
- Employees shall stay home if sick/experiencing symptoms
- Customers shall not enter if they are experiencing symptoms
- Additional signage can be found here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/COVID-19-Signage-for-Download>



## ELEVATORS

Encourage social distancing while using elevators, by:

- Encouraging social distancing while individuals queue using visual markers
- Using signage displaying healthy elevator use protocols, including passenger limits and safe distances in the carriage
- Using elevator attendants to manage flow and discourage over-crowding
- Using floor markers that establish distancing zones and describe where to stand
- Encouraging alternatives, such as stairs, where possible



## VENTILATION

For facilities with central ventilation systems, increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system where possible. For facilities where a central ventilation system is not used, window air conditioning units or unit ventilators should be adjusted to maximize fresh air intake into the system; blower fans should be set on low speed and pointed away from room occupants to the extent possible. Ceiling fans should be adjusted so that fins are rotating in a direction that draws air up toward the ceiling rather than down onto occupants. Window fans should be turned to exhaust air out of the window in the direction of the outdoors. Window fans that blow air into a room or free-standing fans that only serve to circulate existing air around a room should not be used.



## HAND SANITIZER

Hand sanitizer shall be made available at entrance points and common areas, where possible.



## TOUCHLESS APPLIANCES

Install touchless appliances wherever possible, including:

- Paper towel dispensers, soap dispensers, trash cans



## CLEANING, DISINFECTANT PRODUCTS, &/OR DISPOSABLE DISINFECTANT WIPES

Make available near commonly used surfaces, where possible (e.g. ticket counters).

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Calculate maximum number of people allowed under the rules for each exhibition room/area.



## ONE-WAY FLOW

Post floor markings to direct visitors in a one-way flow where possible.



## PERSONAL PROTECTION FOR CUSTOMERS

Customers are required to bring and wear facemasks or cloth face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth.

- Businesses have the right to refuse service to an individual who is not wearing a mask.



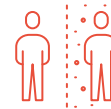
## SOCIAL DISTANCING MARKERS

Install visual social distancing markers to encourage customers to remain 6 ft apart (e.g. lines outside of the museums/zoos/aquariums if applicable, lines to purchase tickets, directional markers for self-guided exhibit, lines to use the restroom).



## TICKET PURCHASES/WELCOME AREAS/LOBBIES

- Limit cash and paper receipt transaction. "Touchless" payment options are recommended. Use online ticket sales only if this is an option for your museum/zoo/aquarium.
- Use timed tickets and/or reservations for entry into the facility, and ensure visitors understand the timed limits of their visit.
- Discourage loitering in welcome areas and lobbies.



## ISOLATION PLAN

Develop a detailed plan in case any attendee self-identifies and/or becomes ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the visit. The plan should include a designated isolation area and align to local municipality COVID-19 health protocols.

# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS

Carefully consider your organization's interactive exhibits. Interactive exhibits may include all indoor play areas, touch screens, exhibits designed for visitors to manipulate, etc. Only those interactive exhibits/experiences/activities that may be subject to a thorough, routinely scheduled cleaning **should** be open. To the extent possible, groups that come together should not mingle with other visitor groups.



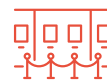
## GENERAL

- Remove all but needed seating from public areas, and establish a cleaning schedule for exhibit galleries/area that includes any public seating.
- Close public water fountains.
- Attendants to remain at the same workstation throughout the day to minimize movement.
- Install physical barriers for ticket counters where possible.
- Attendants to enforce maximum occupancy per exhibition room/area where possible.



## AUDIO-GUIDES

- Allowed; ensure equipment is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.



## INDOOR EXHIBITS

May remain open with the following measures in place.

## SELF-GUIDED VISITS

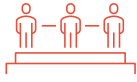
- Staff members trained in COVID-19 safety protocols should be stationed in discrete exhibit areas.
- Discourage loitering in the exhibit areas.
- Enforce timed entry and exit.

## GUIDED VISITS & TOURS

- Tours are limited to the number of people that may safely social distance for the majority of the tour. No more than 10 people including tour guide(s) **recommended**.
- All participants on the tour must wear face masks.
- Visitors must be reminded not to touch any surfaces on the tour except for handrails and banisters. Handrails and banisters, exhibition case plexiglass surfaces, and station barriers should be considered high touch areas and subject to regular cleaning.
- During tours that walk through historic spaces that may be narrow, it is highly suggested for each tour to have one additional tour guide at the end of the group to assist as needed.



# MUSEUMS, ZOOS, AND AQUARIUMS



## PERFORMERS/TALENT – OUTDOORS

- Follow performer rules on DECD Sector Rules webpage
- Please refer to the Outdoor Events **best practices** document for additional guidance on staging, set up and rehearsals of live performances

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## CHILDRENS MUSEUMS, SCIENCE MUSEUMS, TRANSPORTATION MUSEUMS, NATURE CENTERS, ETC.

The nature of these museum experiences may involve higher touch levels and increased personal interaction between non-family groups. For additional information, please see the state **best practices** for reopening Gyms and Fitness, Outdoor Amusement Parks, Indoor Recreation, Outside Events Up To 50 People, Youth Sports, etc.

If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Shapiro, Director of Arts, Preservation and Museums, DECD  
Elizabeth.Shapiro@ct.gov.



## GIFT SHOPS & FOOD PLACES

Gift shops and on-site commerce may resume provided that all rules in effect for retail businesses are followed.

- Indoor restaurants may be open provided that all rules in effect for indoor restaurants are followed.
- Outdoor food counters/snack bars are permitted in accordance with restaurant rules.



## EVENTS

- **Indoors:** Allowed; follow **Best Practices** for Indoor Events
- **Outdoors:** Follow **Best Practices** for Outdoor Events



## CERTIFICATION

Complete the self-certification on the DECD website to receive a Reopen CT badge. Once complete, businesses can choose to post the badge on-site and on social media to advertise adherence to CT rules and build customer confidence. Certification must be completed for every phase of reopening and for each specific sector.



## HOTLINE FOR VIOLATIONS

Post clear signage that includes the state hotline (211) for employees and customers to report potential violations of these rules.