

MONTREAL COMMUNITY THEATRE

COVID Safe Plan



The Montreal Community Theatre Inc. has prepared this document to inform theatre patrons, volunteers and visitors of the requirements of the theatre to meet all COVID Safe guidelines

**Prepared by the Montreal Community Theatre Inc.
COVID Safe Response Team 22 December November 2020**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Montreal Community Theatre is registered as COVID Safe and will be operating under COVID Safe guidelines to ensure the health and safety of all patrons, volunteers and visitors.

WHS

The theatre committee has a duty of care to respond to COVID-19. It must take action to protect volunteers and others at the workplace from the risk of exposure to COVID-19 so far as is reasonably practicable.

The key principles are:

- Hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- Physical distancing of 1.5m
- Reduced capacities
- Increased cleaning
- Stay home if you are unwell
- Record keeping
- Use the COVIDSafe app
- Monitor the spread of the virus in our region
- Comply with NSW Public Health directions

COVID Safe

The Montreal Community Theatre is a registered COVID Safe business through Service NSW. It has a COVID Safe plan and a QR Code through Service NSW to help keep the community safe.



2.0 THEATRE CAPACITY

Total Capacity

The Montreal Community Theatre is managed by an incorporated committee supported by a group of dedicated volunteers. To ensure the safety of volunteers, two categories of events have been identified

Category A Event – Less than 250 patrons and less than 5 back of house visitors with no interval

Category B Event – More than 250 patrons, or more than 5 back of house visitors, or an interval

Category B events have more controls in place to ensure COVID Safe guidelines are maintained.

Front of House

Patron capacity is currently reduced based on the requirements of 4 or 2 square meters per person across the facility, or 75% of regular seated capacity (whichever is greater) in accordance with NSW Government advice. The theatre's regular seated capacity is 540.

| Front of House Space | # of people (4 sqm) | # of people (2sqm) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Foyer | 5 | 10 |
| Thoroughfare behind box office | 5 | 10 |
| Downstairs | 170 (50% capacity) | 250 (75% capacity) |
| Upstairs | 97 (50% capacity) | 145 (75% capacity) |
| Female Toilet | 3 | 6 |
| Male Toilet | 2 | 4 |
| Accessible Toilet | 1 | 2 |

Back of House (BOH)

Workers do not fall under the 4sqm rule for capacity. All theatre hirers will need to negotiate the total BOH capacity for their event based on the event's requirements.

| Back of House Space | # of people (4 sqm) | # of people (2 sqm) |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Stage (including wings) | 21 | 42 |
| Stage (behind curtain) | 10 | 20 |
| Green Room | 1 | 2 |
| Kitchen | 2 | 4 |

3.0 TICKETING

Ticket Availability

The Montreal Theatre has a very small foyer for the size of the theatre. To ensure patrons are transitioned through this space smoothly, there are a number of ticketing options available. Patrons are encouraged to pre purchase tickets to reduce queueing at the Ticket Box before each event.

- 1) Online - we encourage tickets to be purchased online when available. Tickets can either be printed or evidence of ticket purchase on your mobile phone.
- 2) Ticket Box - located inside the doors of the Montreal Theatre, will be open a minimum of 30mins prior to the scheduled start time of each event.
- 3) Sounds of the Mountains Office - Capper St between 9am-3pm Monday to Friday

Allocated Seating

Patrons will be advised when purchasing tickets that seating allocations have been made with safety in mind and to remain in allocated seating.

There must be a minimum of a 1-2 seat gap between groups of patrons. Ushers will guide you to your seats and ask you to move if required.

Exchange and Refund Policy

The Montreal Community Theatre's Exchange and Refund Policy has been designed to encourage anyone showing symptoms, or who has had possible contact with a COVID-19 case, to cancel their attendance for the safety of all other patrons and volunteers.

- A full refund or exchange will be available to ticket holders who develop any recognised COVID-19 symptoms following their ticket purchase
- A full refund or exchange will be available to ticket holders who, have come into contact with anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed case of Coronavirus following their ticket purchase.
- Refund or exchange in the above circumstances will be available up until 'last minute'. Absolutely no refunds or exchanges will be available after the event has taken place.
- A full refund or exchange will be offered for any tickets to cancelled or rescheduled events

4.0 PATRONS

The Montreal Theatre's Covid Safe Plan includes everything reasonably practicable to maintain a safe physical distance of at least 1.5m between people to minimise the spread of COVID-19. and where possible, provide each person (patrons, volunteers and visitors) with 4 or 2 square meters of space in enclosed areas in accordance with general health advice.

To ensure stipulated levels are achieved, the following guidelines have been put in place

- Measure and confirm capacity of theatre spaces to ensure limits are not exceeded.
- Limit the number of tickets sold as per the current safe capacity
- Manage distancing between performers and audience where required for choral and high energy performances.
- Implement separate entrances and exits for patrons where possible
- Through information on the Montreal Community Theatre's website (montrealtheatre.com.au) and prerecorded messaging, we will provide advice to patrons to remain seated at all times throughout the scheduled event and ask them to depart the theatre immediately to avoid crowds forming.

Patron Compliance

It is the responsibility of individual to ensure they observe physical distancing protocols as directed by the Australian, State and Territory Governments. Individuals are liable for fines if they do not comply with restrictions imposed by the appropriate Chief Health Officer (CHO).

Montreal Theatre staff have the right to refuse entry or ask patrons to leave if they are not complying with CHO advice or with the published terms and conditions of theatre entry including safety regulations. If patrons are refused entry and do not leave, staff will call police to remove them from the building.

Access/Entrance/Exit

- Internal pathways will be designed and implemented to create efficient flows of patron movement, when required.
- The Ticket Box has been set up with a perspex service/sneeze screen
- Public signage regarding COVID-19 protocols and distancing will be placed at access points and throughout public and back of house spaces.
- Accessibility will be managed on a case by case basis by the ushers
- Accessible seating will still be bookable for scheduled events
- Patron flows will be designed to ensure people of all abilities can navigate their way around the Theatre.
- For Category B events, additional signage will be in place to restrict patrons movement

Patron Tracking/Contact Tracing

Contact details need to be kept for all people coming into the theatre for more than 15 minutes, including those under 18 years of age, where applicable.

- Tickets will require full name and contact phone numbers to be recorded
- State guidelines indicate that where organisers have the ticket buyer's information for bookings of 2 or more, they can be asked to remember who was in their group and have the means to contact all group members. Contact details must be provided to staff if requested.
- All non-ticket holding theatre attendees (visitors) including patrons, volunteers, performers, production and touring staff and contractors, will immediately sign in to the Visitors Book located in the foyer. They must provide their full name and phone/email contact details. Any person not doing so will be refused entry.
- Contact logs for each day/event will be kept for 28 days and then destroyed
- Anyone who buys a ticket from the Ticket Box or Sounds of the Mountains office, will have contact name and phone number recorded so a contact list can be generated if necessary.
- Patrons will be encouraged to download and use the COVIDSafe app via signage onsite.

5.0 VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers will be trained in COVID Safe protocols before commencing ushering duties. Volunteers will be trained in correct responses to public request for further information on our COVID Safe planning. Volunteer feedback will be monitored and an approach of continuous improvement implemented.

All volunteers will need to sign into the Visitors Book at the commencement of every shift. Do not attend the workplace if you are experiencing any flu like symptoms (fever, cough, runny nose) or you have been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.

Should you contract COVID-19, the public health unit and/or your general practitioner will advise you when you are fit to return as a volunteers.

Control measures such as good hygiene and physical distancing are considered effective. Gloves and masks are available and may be worn when required. All PPE required will be supplied.

Volunteer Infection

If a volunteer is confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, you must immediately notify the Chairperson of the Montreal Community Theatre Inc. or the Admin Officer at Sounds of the Mountains. The volunteer will be required to remain at home until they receive their results and a negative result confirmed. All volunteers are required to be symptom free prior to returning to duties.

If a volunteer presents at work with flu like symptoms, they will be asked to go home and call the 1800 831 099 to get tested. They are to remain isolated until they have the results. If results come back negative they can return to duties, if positive, the volunteer will be required to follow the advice of NSW Health.

Volunteers will not return until "Return to volunteering induction' has been completed. Any questions of volunteers addressed before returning to duties.

6.0 VISITORS

Visitors (including contractors, visiting artists, performers)

- All visitors must sanitise on entering and leaving the building, using the sanitiser stations
- Visitors must also sign the Visitors Book located in the foyer on arrival and sign out when they leave.
- All work areas must be cleaned by the visitor before they depart
- More information provided under section 8.0 Back of House

7.0 FRONT OF HOUSE

Everything possible will be done to ensure a smooth customer experience at the theatre whilst ensuring COVID Safe guidelines are being adhered to. Ushers will be positioned to reduce patrons mingling in the foyer, aisles and toilets, or on the pavement at the front of the theatre.

Pre-Event

- Patrons will have access to the theatre no less than 30 mins prior to the start of the event
- There are a number of ticketing options to help patrons transition from the foyer through to their seats, whilst avoiding queueing at the Ticket Box.
- Patrons to be advised they need to be seated at all times. The foyer is to be considered a thoroughfare.
- Cartoons or similar will be playing on screen to encourage patrons to remain seated prior to the scheduled event commencing.
- Pre-recorded messaging outlining the new protocols in place will be played/screened

Interval

- Pre-recorded messaging outlining the new protocols in place will be played/screened
- We will extend the interval time where appropriate to ensure all patrons have been able to use the facilities.
- As capacities increase, the most effective management of patrons will continue to be monitored.

Post-Event

- Patrons will be encouraged to depart quickly following the event and to continue to adhere to physical distancing measures once outside the theatre.
- For Category B events, all exits to be utilised for egress

Foyer

- Foyer Furniture will be reduced and arranged to be consistent with physical distancing and to allow for patron flow.
- COVID Safe and occupancy signage will be prominently displayed
- 'No-touch' bins will be easily located
- Hand sanitiser stations will be positioned at theatre entry points
- Pre-paid ticket entry positioned to reduce queueing at Ticket Box

Ticket Box

- The Ticket Box will be open a minimum of 30 mins prior to the starting time of each and every event.
- Perspex service/sneeze shield is in place to protect both staff and patrons
- Cashless – contactless payment preferred
- Contact details for all customers will be captured and recorded on a contact log
- Clear messaging in place for patrons encouraging tickets to be pre-purchased
- If there is capacity to sell tickets for an event on the day, patron contact details will be collected.

Toilets

- Room capacities for toilet facilities will be displayed for patrons to adhere to
- Signage in place for effective hand washing
- Paper towel will be available in all toilets for hand drying and 'no-touch' bins

8.0 BACK OF HOUSE

Theatre Hirers

It is understood that each event planned entails different specifications. The Montreal Theatre committee and Admin Officer will work with hirers to apply specific safety measures to meet the exact requirements of each event including;

- Ensure hirers have provided written agreement to abide by this COVID Safe Plan
- Ensure hirers have considered their own COVID Safe Plan for rehearsals and events and provide templates and current guidelines.
- Inform hirers that increased control measures will require more pre-production time
- On arrival, brief and induct hirer regarding The Theatre's COVID Safe Plan / health & safety protocols.
- Ensure hirer signs Visitors' Book (hirer has responsibility to keep contract tracing requirements).
- Ensure no hirer personnel use theatre seating pre-event to avoid cross-contamination

Off Stage – Behind Curtain and the Green Room

- No public access is granted to off stage areas
- Where required for different groups, there should be a changeover/cleaning period in the schedule.
- The hirer is responsible for cleaning and sanitising back stage areas between users
- The green room should be considered a holding area, performers should arrive as prepared as possible for the event. If changing is required, the rooms should not be utilised by anyone else until cleaned accordingly.
- Room capacity limits according to distancing guidelines displayed at entrance to each room
- Hand sanitiser stations distributed throughout the back of house area
- All 'high-touch' areas will be cleaned and sanitised after each event

On Stage – Personnel/Performers

- Implement separate entrances and exits for personnel where possible
- The number of people onstage must be as per theatre capacity limits as indicated above
- Manage distancing between the performers and audience where required for choral and high energy performances.
- Manage distancing onstage where possible during the event

9.0 CLEANING AND SANITISING

Theatre cleaning will be scheduled based on the following:

- Volunteers will be required to clean in accordance with the Usher Duties Procedures
- In addition - a contracted cleaner will be utilised for Category B events
- Cleaning supplies will be made available as per requirements
- Volunteers must use gloves for cleaning as appropriate
- Cleaning and disinfecting common contact surfaces will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.
- All 'high-touch' areas of the theatre, where there is regular human contact with surfaces, will be cleaned after each event
- Disposable cleaning products and items will be safely disposed of
- Air-conditioning filters will be checked and replaced on a regular schedule
- Working bees are undertaken by the committee and volunteers on an 'as needs' basis

10.0 FOOD AND BEVERAGE

At present there will be no food or drink available for sale or consumption from the theatre.

11.0 COMMUNICATION

Getting the community confidently returning to the theatre is a key priority. Communicating the health and safety measures in a clear and transparent way is of vital importance to build audience trust. Clear communications will ensure the committee can continue to provide quality entertainment and a warm, friendly experience whilst keeping everyone safe and supported in the process.

Internal Communications

Internal communications will remain regular and keep all volunteers updated as to current planning.

External Communications

External communication will be developed and scheduled for patrons, visitors, hirers, media and the local community. External communication will include public facing documents, available for patrons in advance of their arrival at the Theatre. Updated and detailed messaging at the time of ticket purchase and education on new protocols in advance to ensure the customer journey onsite is as smooth as possible. The theatre website *montrealtheatre.com.au* will be updated continuously with the latest information available.

Signage and Posters

Signage is an integral part of the COVID Safe Plan for visual communication onsite. Adequate signage will be placed around the building indicating good hygiene practices and to assist with safe crowd flow. COVID Safe green will be used as a consistent messaging colour to allow customers to instantly recognise the key safety signage. Signage will include:

- Physical distancing reminders
- Reduced capacity signage for different areas
- Health warnings, conditions of entry and COVID Safe app
- Hand hygiene reminders

12.0 COVID SAFE RESPONSE TEAM (CSRT)

To ensure COVID Guidelines remain up to date and there are effective procedures, a COVID Safe Response Team has been established. The team will meet as required and report back to the Montreal Community Theatre committee with recommendations. The COVID response team consists of the Chairperson and a minimum of three (3) committee members. The Sounds of the Mountains Admin Office will be consulted as required.

The CSRT Responsibilities include:

- **Incident Response Plan**

In the event of a positive case of COVID-19 at the theatre, NSW Government will be cooperated with.

- **Regular Review**

This COVID Safe Plan will be reviewed periodically and necessary adjustments made. The CSRT will meet to assess and readjust plans as required. Any updates will be communicated to the committee, volunteers and hirers for future delivery.

- **Reassessment Triggers**

As Government announcements are made and capacities increase, this plan will be reassessed to ensure the theatre is operating with the most effective controls in place to comply with current Government and Health Regulations. Other triggers for reassessment would include; a confirmed case at the Theatre, or if NSW government introduces, amends or revokes its COVID-19 orders / directions under biosecurity, public health or emergency management legislation.

13.0 RESOURCES

Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre COVID Safe Plan

<https://civictheatre.com.au/civic-theatre-covid-19-updates>

Performing Arts Connections 0 National Guidelines for COVID Safe Theatres

<https://paca.org.au/projects/coronavirusresources2/>

NSW Government

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe/cinemas-theatres-concert-halls-drive-cinemas>