



CinemaSafe

Voluntary Health & Safety Guidelines for United States Movie Theater Owners

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Developed by the National Association of Theater Owners in consultation with medical and industry experts

INTRODUCTION

- The following is intended to provide guidance related to reopening of movie theaters during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Given the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19, the following recommendations are likely to be subject to change. Moreover, certain changes are expected based on the phased reopening guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE. Local and state public health guidance should be followed as relates to timing of reopening, specific protocols, and modifications to this guidance. This will depend on the state and region's phased reopening plan. Consult with local counsel to ensure that your reopening plans are consistent with all federal, state and/or local guidance.
- Exhibitors committing to meet or exceed the CinemaSafe protocols may display the CinemaSafe badge on their website and physical locations.

THIS GUIDANCE IS BASED ON PROTOCOLS DEVELOPED BY THE CDC, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA), DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, AND WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO). IN PARTICULAR, THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO FOLLOW THE CDC PHASE BASED GUIDELINES FOR OPENING UP AMERICA AGAIN.

PROTECTING EMPLOYEE HEALTH

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

1. *All employees will be trained on the proper way to wear face coverings and required to wear a face covering or mask. Face coverings or masks should be provided to the employee at no cost to them. The face covering must be worn at all times when interacting with the public or other employees.*
2. *If washable, employees will be instructed to wash their face covering daily.*
3. *Gloves should be provided and available to employees. They should be used when contact with potentially contaminated surfaces is unavoidable. Gloves do not substitute for hand hygiene*

and may provide a false sense of security. Hand hygiene should be performed after removing (doffing) gloves.

- 4. PPE should never be shared between employees.*

HAND HYGIENE

- 1. Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.*
- 2. Handwashing facilities with running water, soap, and paper towels (dispensed using a non-touch system when available) should be easily accessible.*
- 3. Handwashing facilities should be kept clean and well-stocked.*
- 4. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (EPA approved ethanol or isopropyl) should be strategically placed around work areas and easily accessible, especially in ticket booths or other enclosed spaces.*
- 5. Supplies of soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer should be stocked and maintained to ensure they do not run out.*
- 6. Employees who work in areas without ready access to handwashing facilities or hand sanitizer stations should be provided with pocket-sized hand sanitizer.*
- 7. All employees should be trained on hand hygiene practices (20 seconds of duration, scrubbing all surfaces).*
- 8. Hands should be washed or sanitized:*
 - Upon arriving at work.*
 - After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing.*
 - After using the restroom.*
 - Before eating or drinking.*
 - After handling equipment or objects that may carry COVID-19.*
 - After cleaning or disinfecting equipment, tools, or workspaces; and*
 - At other appropriate times throughout the workday.*
- 9. Signage should be posted prominently with instructions on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, including hand hygiene and PPE instructions.*

WORKPLACE POLICIES

1. *All employees should be trained on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 as well as local theatre policies and procedures. Training should be mandatory for all employees as a condition of employment.*
2. *Employees should be instructed to self-monitor for fever or other symptoms of COVID and not to come to work if sick or if they have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. This should be part of training and reinforced with posted signage and frequent reminders.*
3. *The workplace should have a plan in place for what to do in case of an employee who develops symptoms while working as well as an employee who tests positive for COVID-19. This must include the employee isolating themselves at home. Any other employees who had a close contact workplace exposure will need to self-quarantine. All employees should be familiar with this plan, and it should be part of training.*
4. *Symptom checks should be performed prior to employees entering the workplace. This should, at a minimum, include questions about cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, loss of smell, loss of taste, and fever. This check can be done in person or remotely (such as electronic survey). If feasible, temperature checks should also be done upon arrival to work.*
5. *Employees should be given breaks to wash their hands. Stagger break times to ensure appropriate physical distancing can be maintained in employee restrooms and breakrooms. Employees should not congregate in break rooms.*
6. *Vulnerable employees, for example those over age 65 or with certain chronic health conditions, should discuss any concerns with their physician.*

PROTECTING PATRON HEALTH

PPE

1. *Patrons must wear a face covering at all times, except as noted by the CDC and herein. Those who are unwilling to wear a face covering will be denied entry.*
2. *Signage should be prominently posted at entrances notifying patrons of this requirement, as well as signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Patrons should be notified of this requirement prior to arrival, such as on the theatre website during ticket purchasing.*
3. *Theatres should develop protocols to handle non-compliant patrons, and all employees who interact with patrons should receive training on this protocol.*

4. *Patrons should be asked to bring a face covering with them to the theatre. Individual theatres should decide whether they will provide disposable face coverings if a patron arrives without one.*
5. *With limited exceptions, patrons must wear a face covering at all times while in the auditorium and common areas of the theatre. Exceptions to this policy include those unable to wear face coverings such as children under 2 years of age and individuals with certain medical/physical conditions that inhibit their ability to safely wear face coverings. In addition, face coverings may be removed for the limited purpose and limited time period necessary to consume food and beverages, if approved by state or local health authorities. If so approved, no food or beverages will be consumed in any area that does not provide sufficient space to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.*

HAND HYGIENE

1. *Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (EPA approved ethanol or isopropyl) will be liberally placed in easily accessible public areas and patrons will be encouraged by staff and appropriately placed signage to practice hand hygiene.*
2. *Ensure public restrooms are clean, well-stocked, and have adequate supplies for hand washing. Touchless faucets, soap, and paper towel dispensers should be used when available.*

POLICIES

1. *Explore novel options to minimize the number of patrons in an auditorium, for example allowing families or those that attend together to rent out an entire auditorium.*
2. *Appropriate physical distancing must be maintained at all times between patrons, except members of the same household or those that attend together.*
3. *With limited exceptions, patrons must wear a face covering at all times while in the auditoriums and common areas of the theatre. Exceptions to this policy include children under 2 years of age and individuals with certain medical/physical conditions that inhibit their ability to safely wear face coverings. In addition, face coverings may be removed for the limited purpose and limited time period necessary to consume food and beverages, if approved by state or local health authorities. If so approved, no food*

or beverages will be consumed in any area that does not provide sufficient space to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.

4. *Provide ample announcements of the theatre's policies to patrons. Options could include instructions on the theatre's website and social media, prominent signage, floor markings, and on-screen announcements prior to screening.*

GENERAL INFECTION PREVENTION ISSUES

DISINFECTION AND MAINTENANCE

1. *High-touch surfaces should be wiped down periodically with EPA-registered disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, contact time). Examples of high-touch surfaces are countertops, doorknobs, faucets, etc. These surfaces should be wiped down at frequent intervals during operating hours.*
2. *Manufacturer's instructions for cleaning should be followed for sensitive electronic equipment (e.g. ticket machines, projectors).*
3. *Appropriately trained employees will be assigned to perform high touch wipe down, with an emphasis on shared spaces and equipment. Surfaces should be disinfected on a predetermined schedule and monitored by management to ensure compliance.*
4. *Auditoriums should be carefully disinfected between movie screenings. Seat maps of patrons can be used after a screening to help target this activity. This enhanced cleaning will necessitate increased intervals between screenings.*
5. *If employees are required to wear equipment such as radios, headsets, or earpieces, these should be designated for a particular employee and not shared between multiple employees. If sharing this equipment is unavoidable, protocols will be developed to ensure they are cleaned between each employee use as per manufacturer's suggested cleaning instructions.*
6. *Alternatives to paper tickets should be used whenever feasible. If paper tickets are used, the staff person collecting them should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (face covering) and disposable gloves. Hand hygiene should be performed after doffing gloves.*
7. *If items are handed out to patrons, such as 3D glasses, these should either be single use or protocols established to ensure disinfection between uses. Assisted audio devices should be thoroughly disinfected between uses according to manufacturer's suggested cleaning instructions.*
8. *Minimize personal items left in commons areas such as employee breakrooms.*
9. *Theatres that have been closed should be thoroughly disinfected prior to reopening to the public. If a theatre has had a prolonged shutdown, hot and cold-water fixtures should be flushed per CDC guidelines to ensure water systems are safe to use.*

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

- 1. With limited exceptions, patrons must wear a face covering at all times while in the auditoriums and common areas of the theatre. Exceptions to this policy include children under 2 years of age and individuals with certain medical/physical conditions that inhibit their ability to safely wear face coverings. In addition, face coverings may be removed for the limited purpose and limited time period necessary to consume food and beverages, if approved by state or local health authorities. If so approved, no food or beverages will be consumed in any area that does not provide sufficient space to ensure physical distancing can be maintained. Consider identifying additional designated areas for eating/drinking outside of auditoriums that have adequate space to permit appropriate physical distance.*
- 2. Those responsible for preparing and distributing food must clean their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer prior to beginning food preparation or distribution and regularly thereafter.*
- 3. All local public health regulations regarding preparing and distributing food must be followed, including use of appropriate food service PPE (hairnets, gloves), safe food temperatures, etc.*
- 4. Minimize the number of people involved in preparing and distributing food.*
- 5. Communal food, condiments, condiment caddies, straws, napkins etc., that require shared serving utensils or equipment should be eliminated, offered via touchless technology or provided by appropriately trained employees. Examples include popcorn butter dispensers, salt-shakers, popcorn flavoring, straws, etc.*
- 6. Consider options for patrons to place orders ahead of time, such as mobile ordering, to minimize the amount of time they must wait in line.*
- 7. If patrons must wait in line to place orders or receive their food, they must maintain appropriate physical distancing. Visual reminders should be prominently placed to assist.*
- 8. Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitizer dispensers should be readily accessible at the entrance of any designated eating area and should be used when entering and leaving the area.*
- 9. Consider addition of plexiglass (or similar) barriers between cashiers and patrons.*
- 10. Minimize cash transactions and encourage credit cards or contactless payments whenever possible.*

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

1. *Ticket lines should be configured to ensure appropriate physical distancing is maintained at all times. Options include visible markers, barriers, tape, etc.*
2. *Tickets sales should be available online or via phone whenever feasible to reduce the need to stand in line for tickets.*
3. *Lines to enter a theatre should be minimized whenever possible. If lines are unavoidable, appropriate physical distancing must be maintained.*
4. *Adequate numbers of employees should be available to direct patron traffic and enforce physical distancing in lines.*
5. *Ensure that, at a minimum, the amount of physical distance defined in all applicable federal, state, and local guidance is maintained in all directions inside auditoriums, except for members of a household or those that attend together. Configure ticket sales systems to facilitate appropriate physical distancing. Occupancy will need to be individualized based on state and local public health guidance and the phased reopening plan.*
6. *Limit and stagger screening times to reduce overcrowding between screenings, particularly in common areas, restrooms, and concession areas.*
7. *To the extent possible, reconfigure restrooms, for example by blocking stalls or urinals, to ensure appropriate physical distancing can be maintained at all times. As patrons may need to line up to enter restrooms, use visual indicators such as tape to identify appropriate physical distancing.*
8. *Use of employee breakrooms should be limited. As face coverings cannot be worn during eating/drinking, limit the number of employees in a breakroom at any one time to ensure distancing can be maintained. Clean countertops and tables between uses.*
9. *If there is an elevator, capacity should be limited to four (4) individuals at a time, families or others that attend together only.*
10. *Unless permitted and protocols in place consistent with local and state public health guidance consistent with each state and region's phased reopening plan, close any on-site lounges, play areas, or other areas where people may congregate.*

HVAC

1. *All HVAC systems should be in working order with increased ventilation whenever possible.*
2. *Upgrade the building's air filters consistent with CDC, state and local health guidance to the extent possible.*
3. *Whenever possible, increase the quantity of outside air.*
4. *Consider use of portable high-efficiency air cleaners.*
5. *Considering hiring an HVAC expert, such as an industrial hygienist, to assess and optimize airflow and air exchange.*

Visit [CinemaSafe.org](https://www.cinemasafe.org) for the latest protocol updates and news.

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