



Williams Lake Studio Theatre Society COVID-19 Reopening Plan

Updated July 28, 2021

Subject to Change

The Williams Lake Studio Theatre Society (WLSTS) is actively taking measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to keep the theatre space safe. With that objective, the WLSTS has created the following COVID-19 Reopening Plan.

All theatre members are responsible for the adherence to this plan; a combined effort will help to contain virus spread. We will continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our Health and Safety Committee.

This plan serves as the roadmap for the safe reopening and ongoing operations of the WLSTS and live events under the current government guidelines and criteria.

Disclaimer: This re-opening plan is subject to changes without notice in order to adhere to the protocols required by various government authorities.

The safety information in this plan does not take precedence over applicable government legislation.

Enforcement: Failure to comply with this plan and associated safety procedures in this plan may result in eviction from the theatre premises.

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1. General Preventative Measures

- All shows will be small cast and crew to safeguard rehearsals and performances.
- Any person with COVID-19 symptoms in the previous 10 days will not be allowed in the theatre.
- The theatre will purchase an adequate supply of cleansers, disinfectants, hand sanitizers, hand sanitizing wipes, and disposable masks to meet its COVID-19 requirement.
- All cast, crew and other theatre members will sanitize or wash hands upon arrival into the theatre during rehearsals and the show run.
- There will be hand washing/sanitizing stations according to the following configuration:
 - One at the theatre entrance;
 - One in each washroom;
 - One in the greenroom/kitchen;
 - One in the office/concession
 - One in the tech booth.
- Masks will be encouraged for all patrons, cast, and crew.
- Theatre will have a supply of sanitary, one-use masks for patrons and cast/crew members if needed.
- Equipment will be cleaned after each use.
- In the backstage, there will be designated spots for each cast/crew member's personal effects, props, costumes, etc.
- Tickets will be refundable if patron has COVID-19 symptoms.

2. Protocols to Reduce Risks

Personal Self-Care

- All theatre members are expected to follow general rules for personal self care as lined out by the Provincial Health Officer to minimize their risk of exposure and their risk of exposing others.
- Individuals with increased vulnerability (e.g. over 60 years of age, underlying chronic medical conditions and/or compromised immune systems) should consider taking extra precautions.

- Ensure that any congregation of people are kept to a minimum, and to respect the comfort and discomforts of others.
- The maximum occupancy as per the PHO Order as of July 1, 2021 is 50 people not including staff (cast and crew). Occupancy limits for specific areas are as follows:

Theatre	50 people + staff
Audience seating	50 people
Kitchen	2 people at a time
Concession/Office	2 people at a time
Director's seating	1 person at a time
Lobby	5 people at a time

Handwashing Protocol

- Handwashing posters will be placed at all sinks to encourage good handwashing practices.
- All theatre members should wash or sanitize their hands when they arrive at the theatre and throughout the day before/after:
 - Using the washroom
 - Handling cash or other public items
 - Before AND after using shared tools and equipment
 - Before AND after handling masks or other PPE
- Hand soap will be available at all running water stations and sanitizer will be available at sanitizing stations.

Payment

- It will be made clear in WLSTS advertising that tickets are not available at the door at this time.
- If a situation arises involving handling cash - wash/sanitize hands, complete transaction, wash/sanitize hands
- The concession and box office will not be open at the theatre to help reduce congestion and the spread of germs. All tickets will be purchased in advance through our vendors: The Open Book, Kit and Kaboodle, and online.

Audience Event

- Tickets - tickets will be available through two vendors (The Open Book and Kit and Kaboodle) and online sales.
- It will be stated on all tickets and advertising that COVID-19 protocols are in place.
- Program - Digital options for the program or use of a QR code will be considered. This will be up to the discretion of the director.
- Entry - there will be one entrance into the theatre. Signs encouraging social distancing and our protocols will be posted on the doors.
- Lobby – The lobby doors and house doors will open at the same time (~45 minutes before show start time).
- Seating – audience members will be encouraged to distance themselves from people outside of their bubble. Audience members must stay in their seat unless using the washroom or visiting the concession (if open).
- Intermission - Time allotted for intermissions will be increased to allow patrons to navigate the new social distancing routes.
- One-Acts - The theatre will consider focusing on one-acts to remove the need for an intermission.
- Productions will possibly offer free bottled water, particularly if there is no intermission. Patrons will be allowed to bring in their own non-alcoholic beverages.
- Everyone backstage must respect the personal space of others.
- Cast are encouraged to do their own hair and make-up. Productions will have the option to have no makeup. If makeup is used, brush handles must be sanitized after each use.
- If a person helps a cast member with hair/makeup, that person must wear a mask
- Opening speech – the opening speech will be delivered by a crew member already in attendance or a member of WLSTS in attendance to view the show. The opening speech will explain the new requirements, including but not necessarily limited to:
 - The proper exits;
 - Hand sanitizing stations locations;
 - Disposing of own garbage and recyclables;
 - The evacuation muster point.

- Concession - Concession will be closed at this time. If concession is ever utilized during a production, concession will require a plexiglass barrier. Concession will have pre-packaged foods only. There will be one-way ingress and egress for the concession using floor decals. There will be one worker in the concession. No self-serve items (i.e. sugar, cream for coffee) - single serve or concession staff will add before giving to customer. There will be nothing on counter that customers can touch. FOH workers will avoid handing things directly to customer. FOH workers will clean the counter area between customers. Concession will be closed at this time.
- Front of House – FOH workers will be trained in the theatre’s COVID-19 protocols. The FOH manager will ensure all FOH workers and security know the theatre’s COVID-19 protocols. There will be a designated spot for one FOH worker to watch the show if desired. Front of House workers must wear masks inside.
- Exits –the opening speech at start of performance will point out exits. All audience members on the right side will exit through the exit door on the right, and all audience members on the left will exit through the main entrance. Audience members must exit the building immediately after the performance. Any post-show congregations must be done outside while following social distancing protocols.
- After performance - The theatre will be cleaned and sanitized after each performance.

No Audience Event

- Auditions can be done in person or over Zoom; this will be up to the discretion of the director.
- If auditions are through Zoom, a link will be posted publicly so people can attend last minute.
- All set building will involve a small core group for each production.
- During rehearsals, if a cast member doesn’t need to attend, they will be encouraged not to.
- During rehearsals, intimate scenes in a performance will be examined by the director for chances to encourage distancing.
- Mouthwash will be available backstage which can be used before and after kissing scenes in the performance.
- Tech setup work will be done when no other groups are in the theatre.
- Only cast and crew members will be allowed in the theatre during rehearsal times.
- The set strike will involve only the cast and crew of the production.

Cleaning protocols

- High touch areas - On non-event days, cleaning will be done on an 'as-used' basis: members will be responsible for cleaning their own areas (ex. tech booth) and any high touch areas in rooms that they enter. Cleaning will be documented on a tracking sheet provided.
- General cleaning - General cleaning duties will be performed on a regular basis and cleaning will be documented on the tracking sheet provided.
- During event - For audience events, a full clean will be completed, including disinfecting all high touch areas. Prior to the event, high touch clean and washroom cleaning will be conducted after intermission, and another full clean will be completed after the event has finished. For no audience events, a full clean will be completed prior to the event and after the event has finished.
- Equipment After use - During movement of equipment, follow shared use items protocol - wash hands before beginning, disinfect any surfaces that are easy to disinfect and don't require special consideration (i.e. handles, etc., not cables/electronics), wash hands when finished.
- Cast, crew and other theatre members will clean anything after using it, incl. dishes, coffee pot, tools, equipment, props, makeup, etc.
- Cast, crew and other theatre members will be encouraged to bring their own water bottle.
- During a run, cleaning and disinfecting will occur before, after any intermission, and after each show on high contact surfaces, including but not limited to:
 - Handrails;
 - Door handles/bars inside and outside;
 - Washroom areas;
 - Counters;
 - Seats, incl. armrests;
 - Tables;
 - Chairs;
 - Office desk;
 - Light switches;
 - Cabinets;
 - Tech equipment;
 - Flashlights;
 - Register;
 - Touch point on waste receptables;
 - Food prep areas (coffee pot, kettle, counter, microwave);
 - Makeup chairs (after each use);
- After use of any tools, equipment, props, etc. the person using it shall clean it.

- Props that can be will be cleaned and disinfected before and after a show.
- During a production run, specific people will be placed in charge of cleaning certain areas.
- Front of House will clean the lobby, concession and office before and after a show.
- Tech crew will clean the tech booth before and after a show.
- There will be a cleanup checklist for each area of the theatre that needs to be cleaned and disinfected before and after a show that will need to be signed after being completed.

Emergency Procedures

- FOH workers will be present during any audience events to support emergency evacuation procedures if necessary.

3. Policies to support a Safe Environment

Entrance to theatre

- Anyone who has experienced symptoms of COVID-19 at any time during the previous 10 days will NOT be allowed to enter the theatre; this includes staff and patrons.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- In addition, anyone who has been directed by Public Health to self-isolate for any reason will NOT be allowed to enter the theatre during the duration of their isolation period (14 days)
- Signage is posted outside the entry to communicate the above.

Symptom Onsite

- Any cast, crew or theatre member who begins to experience symptoms while at the theatre must inform the appropriate person (the director, stage manager or liaison), leave and self-isolate immediately.
- If a cast or crew member gets ill during the run, the production will be cancelled/postponed, and tickets refunded.

- If a cast, crew, theatre member, or patron gets quite ill while at the theatre, 911 will be called.
- Anything a symptomatic person may have touched will be cleaned and disinfected and those performing the cleaning will wear a mask and gloves.

Violence Prevention

- Due to the extra measures and precautions in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a risk of violence that may arise as people adapt to these unfamiliar rules or when they feel others are not following these rules.
- Theatre volunteers will be made aware of the potential risk of situations that may arise and will be provided with training to help mitigate these risks (please see Appendix A).
- Rules and Policies will be made clear in all advertising and with ticket sales so patrons are aware beforehand.

Concerns

- Cast, crew or theatre members that have any concerns regarding or related to the theatre's COVID-19 procedures and potential transmission in the theatre will direct her/his concerns to the theatre's COVID-19 Protocol Designee and the designee will take the concerns to the Health and Safety Committee. The Designee will be someone on the Health and Safety Committee.
- COVID-19 responsibilities will be added to the position manuals (ex. the stage manager manual).

Plan Assessment

- Assessment of the plan will be completed after each production or other major event.
- When problems or issues arise, a team approach will be taken to trouble-shoot and revise existing protocols or policies and to resolve issues.

4. Communication plan

- Wherever the WLSTS advertises, the WLSTS COVID-19 Reopening Plan will be advertised.
- Informational signs and the reopening plan will be posted and available wherever possible in the theatre.

- Signage will inform that **anyone** with symptoms will not enter the theatre.

- Signs will be posted to provide information, including but not necessarily limited to:
 - COVID-19 symptoms list;
 - Handwashing procedures;
 - Coughing/sneezing procedures;
 - Emergency evacuation procedures.

Appendix A

WLSTS Violence Prevention

It is important to understand that people may be experiencing additional stress and anxiety due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Expectations to follow unfamiliar rules, or situations where one feels others are not following these rules could lead to agitation and violence.

Preventing and de-escalating situations that may result in violence takes coordinated teamwork; support one another by listening, sharing, watching, and providing support when needed.

The following suggestions for dealing with negative situations are taken from the Responsible Service BC Serving it Right, and from WorkSafe BC:

- With respect to COVID-19, having clear signs, marked areas, and being up front with patrons about policies in place will help to avoid confusion and possible anger among patrons or members who don't understand or don't want to follow the rules.
- Always be polite but firm with patrons and members who question the rules. Cite the government's and your establishment's policies, use closed statements rather than questions, and avoid arguments and bargaining.
- Use "I" statements (e.g. "I'm not allowed to let you in if you have symptoms"). Be friendly, courteous, professional and respectful. Listen and acknowledge patron's frustrations and share your regret that you can't accommodate their wishes at this time.
- Let your teammates know if a patron or group becomes problematic; keep an eye out for your fellow teammates who may be experiencing issues and support one another in managing negative situations.
- Dealing with an irate individual:
 - o Focus on emotions first - remain calm, and try and calm the other person
 - o Avoid escalation - find ways to help the person save face
 - o Listen carefully and try and put yourself in the other person's shoes to try and find a solution
 - o If you cannot calm the person down, ask for help.
- If a situation escalates to the point where a patron or any person in the theatre is thought to pose a danger to anyone, they must be asked to leave
 - o Let the patron know you have the authority to ask them to leave
 - o Ask them in a clear, concise manner to leave
 - o Don't rush; let the patron take a few minutes
 - o Consider calling the police if the patron isn't leaving.
- Record any incidents that occur.