

Musicians Returning to Live Performance

Returning to live performance in the environment of COVID-19 will look and feel different. Music Network has compiled the below practical advice to help musicians as they return to live performance. This advice should be read in conjunction with the latest public health recommendations and government guidelines around social distancing, respiratory etiquette, mask wearing and hand washing. It will be updated from time to time in line with current research.

Current restrictions allow for organised indoor events with capacity limits of 60% of venue capacity where all patrons are immune (fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months), or accompanied minors (under 18.) See more detail at the link below.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/7894b-post-cabinet-statement-resilience-and-recovery-the-path-ahead/#organised-indoor-events-and-mass-gatherings>

See sectoral guidance from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media at the link below. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/35bb8-covid-19-sectoral-guidance/>

Planning

- Ask for a detailed description of your venue's health and safety measures and become familiar with the protocols to which you will be expected to adhere
- Offer your own ideas for health and safety specific to your act
- Perform your own risk assessment for rehearsal, travel and performance, including measures to minimise risks
- Keep up to date with the latest scientific knowledge and recommendations, and adapt your risk assessments accordingly
- Plan for what will happen if a group member falls sick or has to restrict their movements: will you replace the musician or cancel the performance/recording?
- If performing to a live audience, think about adapting your performance to suit the audience size
- Prepare an accurate stage plan and send it to your venue in advance, bearing in mind distancing requirements and latest safety guidelines regarding your specific instrument
- Check with your venue about how their current protocols (such as cleaning) may affect your schedule
- Consider whether greater amplification may be needed given the increased physical distance between artists
- Agree a schedule with your venue
- Agree a programme length with your venue and ask whether or not they recommend an interval. Knowing the length of the programme in advance will help put audiences at ease
- Bear in mind that fewer performers can help to lower the risk of infection

- Come to an understanding with your venue/promoter about financial obligations, refund policy and participation requirements in the event of cancellation or adaptation of the performance/recording due to COVID-19
- Liaise with your venue about their current policies on the selling of merchandise
- Request electronic payment

Group Rehearsal

- Make a rehearsal plan which minimises your in-person contact with fellow performers, e.g. talking on the phone in advance about musical/stylistic details, rehearsing in sub-groups
- Consider rehearsing outside if possible
- If rehearsing indoors, use the largest space available
- Be clear about the entrance route and protocol before arriving at the rehearsal venue
- Review ventilation and airflow in the rehearsal space: make sure that windows and doors are open where possible, and that airflow from mechanical ventilation systems is not being recirculated. For further information on ventilation, see the Arts Council's [Guidelines for the Safe Presentation of Festivals & Live Events](#).
- Don't share music, music stands or pencils/pens
- Share written information digitally rather than distributing paper
- If using a piano, agree a sanitisation procedure with the owner and have protocol in place about who can touch the instrument
- Keep the recommended distance apart from others
- Take frequent breaks to ventilate the room, and minimise contact during breaks. Ideally move outside during breaks. If moving to another indoor space for breaks, that space should not be smaller or less well ventilated than the rehearsal space
- Performers should bring their own refreshments to avoid sharing cutlery, mugs, kettles etc. Determine restroom protocol for rehearsals, e.g. if sharing facilities, use hand sanitiser before and after, and consider bringing your own hand towel

Performance/Recording Session

- Stage positioning: don't deviate from the plan agreed in advance with your venue; keep the recommended distance apart and be mindful of recommendations concerning voices and wind and brass instruments (no official advice for performing musicians currently available)
- Stage equipment:
 - if you require theatre staff to help load in equipment, smaller items should be sealed in a suitcase which can be wiped down
 - don't share chairs, mics, mic stands, music stands etc. between performers
 - check that mics have been cleaned since last use
 - after the sound-check, wipe down any equipment that you will touch during the performance
- Plan your stage entrances and exits to ensure they meet distancing protocol
- If using a hired instrument (e.g. piano), agree protocol for cleaning with the owner

- Ask for the venue's procedures regarding artist use of restrooms, green room, dressing rooms etc.

Remember, don't attend a rehearsal or performance/recording session if you have tested positive for Covid-19, are feeling unwell, are required to restrict your movements due to international travel, are a close contact of Covid-19 or are awaiting Covid-19 test results.

Gig Bag Checklist

Mask(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bottled water	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hand sanitiser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/>	Antibacterial wipes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pen/pencil	<input type="checkbox"/>		