



Museum, Aquarium, Zoo Health and Safety Plan

Business name: California Academy of Sciences

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Permanent URL for Health and Safety Plan:

This plan will be publicly posted online here: <https://www.calacademy.org/reopening>. A direct link to the PDF is available here: <https://www.calacademy.org/hsp>.

Evaluating and documenting maximum capacity

Square footage of the museum and aquarium spaces: 183,000 square feet, including the Academy's East and West Gardens

Planned capacity, including Academy personnel (based upon 25% of maximum capacity of the museum and aquarium spaces): 2,444

In determining the building's planned capacity, the Academy developed a model that plotted individual guests throughout the museum with a minimum distance of six feet between each guest or household group. This also allowed the Academy to examine the capacities of individual exhibit spaces. Leaders applied the Academy's extensive experience managing the flow of museum guests to this model, where far fewer guests will be present as compared to pre-COVID visitation.

The Academy will reopen at 25% capacity per local and state guidelines to promote physical distancing and reduce crowding. All guests, including members, will be required to reserve timed-entry tickets in advance, with entry times offered in 30-minute increments and a limited number of tickets available for each increment. This approach will encourage guests to space out visits throughout the day and allow Academy staff to accurately estimate occupancy at any given time.

Real-time monitoring will be used to count the guests exiting the building—reentry is not allowed. Our museum staff supervisors will also walk through open exhibits on a regular basis to prevent crowding in high-traffic areas.



As the Academy welcomes guests back into the museum, staff will be monitoring for problem areas—spaces where guests tend to get too close. Adjustments have been made to daily programming and museum flow to address these high-traffic areas.

To further discourage gatherings and promote physical distancing inside the museum, the Academy will no longer be scheduling public programs and demonstrations at specific times. Instead, we are shifting to a “pop-up” model where Academy staff will host physically distanced, exciting, educational mini-programs throughout the day on every floor, in the East and West Gardens, and on our Living Roof.

Signage requirements

Types of prominent Academy signage include: the required health screening protocol, capacity limits by area of museum, research-based COVID-19 factoids, physical distancing, and hand washing.

Locations of signage include: the Academy’s public entrance, lobby, restrooms, elevators, hygiene stations, main thoroughfares, and floor decals throughout the museum.

A copy of the Academy’s Social Distancing Protocol is posted at the front entrance of the facility.

Ensuring personnel and patrons wear face coverings at all times, unless specifically exempted

Academy patrons: Face coverings are required for all guests ages 3 and up, as well as all Academy staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners, and must be worn at all times except when actively eating or drinking. Guests will be asked to ensure everyone in their party brings their own face covering. If guests do not have one, they may purchase a mask at the door, and Academy staff will have a limited supply of free single-use masks to hand out to guests at the front entrance if needed. Guests will be informed about the mask requirement on the Academy’s website, in the confirmation emails they receive after they purchase tickets or make a reservation to visit, and via prominent onsite signage when they arrive.

Academy personnel and vendors: Academy staff are required to wear masks consistent with public health orders. Staff have been informed about the requirement to wear masks during a mandatory reorientation process that includes detailed health and safety protocols for COVID-19. Staff are encouraged to bring their own compliant masks, and spares are available from the security department. For employees who are unable to comply with the face covering orders, the Academy will engage in the interactive process with individuals to consider an accommodation. Accommodations take into consideration the needs of the staff member as well as the health and safety of others in the facility. Staff who unreasonably refuse to wear a mask will not be permitted in the facility and will be subject to discipline.

The Academy’s vendors, including the onsite restaurant and retail vendors, are also required to comply with applicable face covering orders. Academy leaders who manage relationships with vendors have communicated Academy-specific COVID-19 protocols that are applicable to those vendors. Vendors are required to comply with health orders that are specific to their industry.



Ticketing booths and payment systems

The Academy is asking all guests, including members, to make a reservation online in advance of their visit. This will help us manage guest flow and capacity inside the museum, minimize crowding at our main entrance, and reduce face-to-face interactions between guests and staff.

When guests make their reservations online, they will be asked to acknowledge the health screening questions they will be required to answer before entering the building. If anyone in the party can answer “yes” to any of the questions on the day of the visit, the Academy staff will help guests reschedule their visit for a later date. Guests who answer “no” to all three questions will be able to scan their own tickets at the door before entering the building for a contactless entry.

The ticket window will be open only for limited transactions that require exceptions or in-person validation, such as the Museums for All program, by which the Academy will continue to offer \$3 Daytime Admission tickets to EBT, WIC, Lifeline Pass, and Medi-Cal cardholders. These tickets are not available online at this time; guests must present their card at the ticket window to purchase their \$3 tickets. There will be only one staff member in the box office at any given time, to allow for appropriate distancing in the work space. The box office is an enclosed space and guests are separated from the staff by a permanent window.

Personnel safety precautions

Academy staff who can work remotely after reopening will continue to do so, while those whose work requires them to be in the building—such as animal care biologists, engineering staff, and custodial staff—will be subject to the same daily health self-screening questions as guests. These staff members will also practice physical distancing in all back-of-house areas and follow rigorous safety protocols to protect guests, animals, and one another.

All staff and volunteers have been provided detailed health and plans, and are required to review and acknowledge those protocols as part of a return-to-work process. In addition to written FAQs for staff that address the applicable work-related COVID-19 protocols, staff are required to review a video on Academy museum operations during COVID-19 as well as an Academy specific health and safety video produced for staff, volunteers and vendors.

HVAC systems

The Academy has rebalanced the facility's air exchange to increase the safety of its indoor spaces.

The Academy follows ASHRAE's (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers) CDC-aligned recommendations for HVAC operations, including:

- Reducing the use of recirculated air and using 100% outside air whenever possible
- Purging of spaces with outside air before and after occupancy
- Securing windows that negatively impact central HVAC airflow
- Use of MERV-13 air filters with an increase in changing frequency
- Use of portable high-efficiency air filters in some back-of-house areas
- Use of ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) in some areas



Food and beverage concessions

The Terrace Restaurant, located outdoors in the West Garden, will be open, serving family-friendly grab-and-go food and beverage options. To maximize health and safety, diners will follow a one-way route through the food service area, tables, condiment stations, and food prep areas will be disinfected regularly, plexiglass partitions will be installed at all points of sale, and all seating will be moved outdoors and placed six feet apart in our West Garden. The indoor Academy Café will remain closed until local health and safety regulations permit indoor dining.

All food and drink must be consumed outside in the East Garden or West Garden. We've added more tables and chairs outside, which will be cleaned and disinfected regularly. Guests will be asked to keep their masks on except when actively eating or drinking, and limit each table or bench to one party.

Retail

The Academy Store on L1 will be open, although hours may vary. The shopping experience will also be modified for patron and personnel safety: Guests will be assisted by store associates to minimize contact with merchandise. The Academy's retail vendor will be complying with Health Officer Directive No. 17 in the operation of the onsite stores. Cashier stations have also been modified to allow for social distancing between shoppers and employees.

Social distancing in elevators

Elevators will be available, but we ask that guests use the stairs whenever possible to reserve elevators for those who need them. We're asking guests to stick to one household group per elevator. Signage reflecting this messaging will be posted by the elevators.

Monitoring and limiting patrons to ensure physical distancing between members of different households

The Academy's reopening plan takes into account areas of the museum where guests have previously gathered to enjoy exhibits and employs strategies to ensure physical distancing. Stanchions, floor markers, and verbal instructions will all be utilized to distance guests from one another and from staff members.

Due to the unique layout and limited capacity of Osher Rainforest and the Shake House earthquake simulator, entry into these two exhibits is by timed reservation only. This will help us manage capacity, ensure physical distancing, and allow enough time for cleaning and disinfection between groups of guests.

Upon arriving at the Academy, guests will be able to scan a QR code (displayed on signs in the lobby) with their smartphone and select an entry time for those two exhibits. Party size will be limited to eight. Guests will receive a text message confirming their reservation and entry time.

Household groups will be admitted to these spaces one group at a time, allowing for sufficient distancing between the groups while visiting those spaces.



Paths of travel through the establishment and wayfinding signage

In addition to limiting attendance, requiring masks, and promoting physical distancing, we've established some new "rules of the road" to help guests navigate the museum with plenty of (masked) breathing room. This includes:

- Regulating the quantity and pace of guests through certain spaces to promote physical distancing
- Creating clearly marked one-way paths through areas like the Amazon Flooded Forest Tunnel and Academy Store
- Installing prominent signage, floor decals, and other visual aids to remind guests to stay 6 feet apart at all times

We also have language on our Academy website (www.calacademy.org/reopening) that encourages guests to be mindful of their surroundings during their visit. Read an excerpt of this information, below.

"We'll also need your help to keep traffic moving smoothly and safely. During your visit, please remember to:

- Be patient. Academy staff may ask you to wait for other groups to exit before entering certain spaces.
- Be polite and stay to the right. Please yield to faster groups and let people pass on your left whenever possible.
- Resist the urge to run. We know it'll be hard for kids to contain their excitement, but please do your best to encourage little ones to slow down."

Plans for preventing patrons from gathering in a space

From physical-distancing decals on the floor to frequent announcements over our PA system to eye-catching signage throughout the museum, guests will never be too far from friendly reminders to watch their distance. Should the need arise, Academy staff will be on hand to politely remind guests to maintain physical distancing.

To discourage gatherings and promote physical distancing inside the museum, we will no longer be scheduling public programs and demonstrations at specific times. Instead, we are shifting to a "pop-up" model where Academy staff will host physically distanced, exciting, educational mini-programs throughout the day on every floor, in the East and West Gardens, and on our Living Roof.

Sanitation for restrooms

Restrooms will be checked hourly, and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected twice daily.

Tours and audio self-tour equipment

The Academy will not be hosting indoor or back-of-house tours. The Academy is offering an outdoor guided tour experience for a reduced number of participants, without the use of headsets or other shared equipment. The tour guide will maintain at least 6 feet of distance from guests for the entire duration of the tour, and ensure that guests adhere to physical distancing requirements and other safety measures.



Physical distancing will be enforced during outdoor guided tour experiences. The tour guide will also maintain at least six feet of distance from the group for the entire duration of the tour.

Sanitation for high-touch surfaces and areas

High-touch surfaces like exhibits, restrooms, railings, and seating areas will be cleaned and disinfected frequently throughout the day per CDC guidelines, and the entire building will be cleaned and disinfected every evening after closing. To further reduce risk, some hands-on exhibit elements will be unavailable.

Interactive exhibits

The Academy's Chief of Science, Dr. Shannon Bennett—a virologist in emerging infectious diseases—assessed the Academy's exhibit interactives including those involving touch as well as other experiences to minimize any risk, or a perception of risk, for COVID-19 transmission. The main modes of transmission considered included 1) transmission by surface contamination, and 2) exchanging infected droplets through direct contact (larger drops) or aerosol (microscopic droplets).

As a result of this assessment, interactives in Academy exhibits were either eliminated or retained if they played a role in accessibility of the exhibit and represented (or could be modified to represent) a low-intensity interaction, similar to the action of pushing an elevator button. Retained interactives could not involve guests' faces, require any exertion, promote clustering, or require guests to remain in an enclosed space with people outside their household group. The remaining interactives include simple touch experiences that are optional except for accessibility, are robust to frequent surface decontamination, are accompanied by adjacent hand sanitizers plus reminders to wash hands frequently, and/or can be engaged with by using an instrument instead of fingers.

Visitor touch interaction with exhibits is effectively limited to multilingual accessibility and accessibility for those with visual impairment. The amount of physical interaction that visitors will have with such an exhibit is similar to opening a door or riding an elevator. And like our doors and elevators, our exhibits will have hand sanitizer stations nearby in addition to a high frequency of cleaning by staff.

The Garden Eel pop up, Rainforest butterfly viewers, and the Fog Room are all closed. The following methods are used to make exhibits view-only: new signage for formerly touchable specimens, touch-activated videos are set to auto-loop, and our Bee Vision monitor has been made stationary. The following exhibits are "use-your-own": Drawing Station (use your own pencil), Fog Stories (listen on your own device), and Color Visualizer (use your own object to pluck strings). The Dance Interactive and Redwood Ascent are now limited to one household group at a time. Many of the remaining flipbooks provide multilingual access by delivering translated content.

Office space

Upon the reopening of the museum, the Academy will not resume office operations. Access to office areas has been limited to employees who need to be onsite for the conduct of minimum basic operations as defined in the health orders. In advance of reopening, only those staff members needed to reopen the museum and conduct guest operations are permitted access to the office spaces, and only to the extent those employees need to use the office spaces to perform their jobs.



Detailed site plans that include a health screening process, distancing of workstations, mask-wearing guidance, hygiene protocols, and room-specific occupancy limits have been provided to staff who are authorized to work onsite. The Academy's senior leaders, in consultation with the Workplace Safety Monitor, approve all site visits and onsite work.

Academy staff who can work remotely after reopening will continue to do so, while those whose work requires them to be in the building—such as animal care biologists, engineering staff, and custodial staff—will be subject to the same daily health self-screening as guests. These staff members will also practice physical distancing in all back-of-house areas and follow rigorous safety protocols to protect guests, animals, and one another.