

Risk Assessment for freelance performers returning to work during COVID-19.

JUNE 23, 2021

As a freelance performer, it is helpful to complete your own risk assessment before returning to performing. You should also ask for the risk assessment from your place(s) of work or rehearsal/performance venues, to ensure that they have covered any risks which might affect you and let them know about any ways in which you might need additional support when you return, so that you can discuss any arrangements.

COVID-19 has presented a significant challenge to the performing arts sector, and you may have faced difficulties in maintaining practice and readiness to perform whilst social distancing at home. In advance of returning to perform, you are advised to build up practice routines slowly to avoid injury. Further advice on building fitness to perform is available [here](#).

If you have had COVID-19, you may have additional complications which affect your ability to practise and perform. Voice-users, for example, are advised to recuperate for 6-8 weeks after the virus to allow recovery. Advice from sports medicine published in the Lancet and JAMA suggests resting for two weeks after the start of symptoms and getting back to playing slowly, seeking medical help if things don't improve. 1% of COVID-19 sufferers have a heart problem and further diagnostics and treatment may be needed. Common after effects of COVID-19 include fatigue, prolonged cough and for some there may be long-term lung damage, kidney damage and blood clotting. Those patients who have been in ICU will need rehabilitation. Further advice on recovering from covid is available [here](#).

The aim of this assessment is to understand the specific risks you face, including your individual level of vulnerability and your risk of exposure to COVID-19, and enable these risks to be mitigated as far as possible. It should be completed in conjunction with the latest guidance from local public health guidance, such as Public Health England [Public Health England](#) (PHE) With emerging evidence, risk categories have been revised, and consider age, sex and ethnicity as well as medical conditions and vaccination status. **The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19.** More information [here](#). Completing the sections below will help you understand your level of risk, and you can use your self-assessment to discuss arrangements for your return with your contractor, or the person managing the environment in which you will be working.

Guidance for [people who work in performing arts, including arts organisations, venue operators and participants](#) has been published by PHE and is probably the most applicable to freelance work environment. General guidance on **social distancing, hygiene and hand washing** can be found [here](#).

Guidance on travel abroad or returning from travel changes frequently, so we advise you to consult your local government guidance, such as <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> for accurate information on the need for testing and self-isolation or quarantine.

If you develop [Coronavirus symptoms](#), however mild, or you have received a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test result, then you should immediately [self-isolate](#) and stay at home for recommended duration. Your household contacts may also be required to self-isolate under this guidance. [Regular rapid lateral flow coronavirus tests](#) are also available for people who do not have symptoms. These tests are only part of the risk assessment matrix and should *not* replace other covid-safety measures.

General Information			
Name:		Role:	
Location / Area:		Working hours:	
Date of Assessment:		Review date:	

Please review the table below to assess your level of vulnerability to COVID-19. We suggest you use the “COVID-age calculator” <https://alama.org.uk/covid-19-medical-risk-assessment/> which allows you to review your risk factors and give a COVID-age to your workplace if they need it. This means you don’t have to disclose any specific health issues, but can still give them an assessment of your individual vulnerability level.

To use the calculator, enter your risk factors into the online calculator <https://alama.org.uk/covid-19-medical-risk-assessment/> This updated version, considers vulnerability, immunity and viral prevalence to inform individuals’ workplace risk into very high, high, moderate or low.

1. Self-Assessment - your level of vulnerability			
This tool considers risk factors including age, medical condition, ethnicity and gender			
<i>Please tick appropriate box:</i>			
COVID age	Vulnerability level	✓	Workplace considerations
85 and over	Very high		Ideally work from home. If attending work, the risk should not be significantly greater than the risk within your own home. Social distancing must be enforced. Ensure hand hygiene and do not touch shared instruments, equipment and surfaces.
70 - 84	High		OK to attend work if the risk of doing so is no greater than the risk of shopping in the local supermarket, or social distancing in the streets, parks and countryside. Keep the risk in the workplace as low by observing stringent hand hygiene and avoiding shared instruments or equipment. Working closely with others (such as teaching, creative arts practice, sharing a vehicle, using public transport) may be possible provided controls (e.g. partition screens) are effective in managing the risk.
50 - 69	Moderate		A moderately increased risk of infection may be accepted where there are no reasonably practicable means of reducing it further. Hand hygiene and social distancing must be observed.
Under 50	Low		Increased risk of infection may be accepted where there are no reasonably practicable means of reducing it further. Hand hygiene and social distancing must be observed.
	Pregnancy		Current advice is to minimise the risk to pregnant women, while allowing them to choose whether to attend work and what role to undertake at work. Risk should be reduced as far as reasonably practicable. Advised to avoid roles where a degree of risk cannot be avoided, such as working closely with others
Individual Self-Assessment Notes (e.g. details of underlying health condition. There is no need to declare details if no modifications are need to undertake the required work)			

2. Assessment of Activity		
Consider whether activity is by individual or more than one person, potential for aerosol generation (wind/singing), shared instrument or equipment and whether the activity can ensure social distancing		
<i>Please tick all appropriate boxes:</i>	✓	Risk Level
Group work (e.g. orchestra, group singing, big band, dance, circus, acting)		High risk
Wind instrument with another in the room (e.g. lesson, accompanist)		
Singer with another in the room (e.g. lesson, accompanist)		
Instrument or equipment that cannot be readily cleaned (e.g. reeds)		
Any activity that does not allow social distancing (e.g. dance)		
Other shared instruments or equipment that can be readily cleaned (e.g. keyboard, percussion, strings)		Moderate risk
Playing instruments (apart from wind) with another in the room		
Individual practice (voice/instrumental)		Low risk
Virtual lessons		
Individual instrumental performance		
Activity Assessment Notes (e.g. details instruments or lesson).		

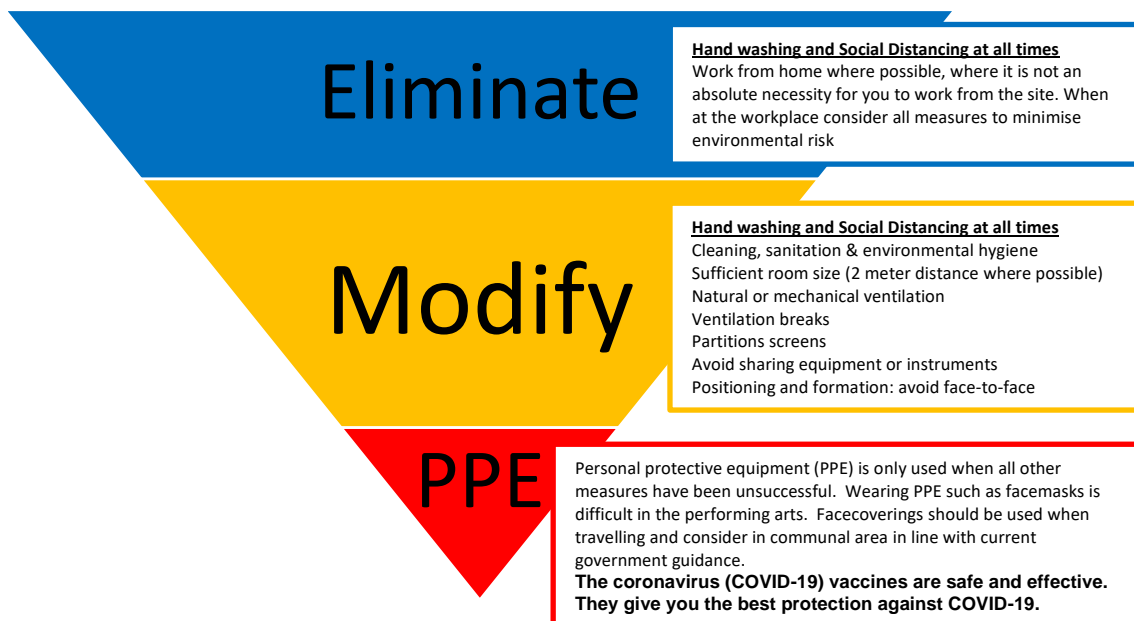
3. Assessment of Environment		
Consider whether the space has		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient space to accommodate social distancing in line with current government guidance (currently 2 meters), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural or mechanical ventilation in good working order* • and the duration of time spent in a shared space, allowing ventilation breaks 		
<i>Please tick appropriate box:</i>	✓	Risk level
Indoors: confined space with or without ventilation system, irrespective of time/duration		High Risk
Indoors: sufficient space for social distancing but no natural or mechanical ventilation or monitoring of duration		Moderate Risk
Indoors: sufficient space for social distancing with natural or mechanical ventilation and monitoring of duration		Low Risk
Outdoors		

*The HSE recommend that If you use a [centralised ventilation system](#) that removes and circulates air to different rooms, it is recommended that you turn off recirculation and use a fresh air supply.

4. Combined Risk			
Activity Assessment	Low risk activity	Moderate risk activity	High risk activity
Environment Assessment			
High risk environment	Moderate Risk	High risk	High risk
Moderate risk environment	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High risk
Low risk environment	Very Low Risk	Low Risk	Moderate Risk

5. Mitigation of Risk

Consider your level of risk using this top down approach, reviewing each option before moving to the next.
 Focus on eliminating risk at source with **hand washing** and **social distancing**
 What working conditions do you need for you to be able to take up a role?



- Risk management requires a value judgement to decide whether the existing control measures are sufficient or whether more should be done.
- The option, or combination of options, which achieves the lowest level of residual risk should be implemented, provided it does not pose an alternative risk to the project. (e.g. If you are part of a group of musicians planning to record together, you may be able to record your part from home, or work with different combinations of group members at different times to allow adequate social distancing and mitigate risk.)
- If the risk is too high, and you can't take any mitigating action, it may be necessary to postpone return to work for this project.

5. Mitigation of risk (cont.)		
Factors for consideration	What is in place at the moment?	Can anything more be done?
Individual		
Are any adjustments already in place for to carry out my role? (e.g. social distancing, flexible working hours, working from home where possible and not absolutely necessary to come on-site, restriction from high-risk activities or environments)		
Procedure if symptomatic (cough, fever, smell/taste disturbance); retuning traveller or track & trace		
Consider vaccination status. The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19. More information here		
Consider the use of face coverings during meetings and breaks. Face coverings are not a replacement for social distancing but should be used in line with government guidance.		
Activity		
Can the activity be done outdoors all the time or some of the time?		
What is the maximum amount of time a group of people should share a space while socially distancing ? Schedule ventilation breaks during and between lessons/rehearsals		
Consider the position and formation of the activity, avoiding face to face. Chose forward facing or back to back.		
Are there facilities to clean shared equipment (e.g. keyboard, percussion) and hand hygiene before and after use?		
Avoid draining of condensation onto floor. Do not blow through instruments to clean them.		

5. Mitigation of risk (cont.)

Factors for consideration	What is in place at the moment?	Can anything more be done?
<i>Environment (you may wish to seek reassurance from the venue about the following)</i>		
Is there natural ventilation in the room or can it be adapted to allow natural ventilation?		
Is there well-maintained mechanical ventilation (ventilation and air conditioning systems, HVAC) or can it be installed, in line with HSE guidance ?		
Has the room been assessed & measured to determine the maximum occupants maintaining social distancing (ideally radial distance 2 metres)? This might include reconfiguration of the space.		
Consider other shared spaces (corridors, entrances, cafeterias, waiting areas, backstage space, green rooms) and how social distancing is maintained and sanitation is carried out.		
Consider the use of rapid antigen testing (lateral flow) for people without symptoms. These tests are only part of the risk assessment matrix and should <i>not</i> replace other covid-safety measures.		

6. Assessment Actions		
<i>Please tick appropriate box:</i>	✓	Date agreed to review action
No further action needed		
Review risk assessment after agreed period of time e.g. 1 week, 1 month, 3 months		
If you have any health issues that are impacting your playing/performance, contact BAPAM for an assessment. info@bapam.org.uk		

Additional notes
Please include action plan agreed based on mitigation factors identified in the table above

Please add any additional notes as appropriate

You should have a discussion with the person responsible for contracting you or managing the work environment you will be in. You should discuss any existing underlying health conditions or risk factors that increase your risk in undertaking the role identified. This conversation should be ongoing (complete review date above) and should consider any concerns about your feelings re: safety, and mental health and wellbeing. If you or your contractor/workplace manager are unclear about any aspects of this form they should seek support from Occupational Health. BAPAM can provide this service. Call 020 8167 4775 or email info@bapam.org.uk for further information

You should keep this risk assessment as a record.

Individual's signature		Contractor/workplace manager's signature	
Print Name		Print Name	
		Managers job title	
Date Signed		Date signed	