

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center



REOPENING PLAN

We are closely monitoring state and local government policy changes, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines, and public health advancements and will continue to make changes as necessary or appropriate to our protocols and procedures.

CONVENTION CENTER– REOPENING PLAN

Greetings,

The City of San Antonio (COSA) and the Convention Sports Facilities Department are pleased to reopen our facility to our guests. Our number one priority is the health and safety of our guests, employees, and the surrounding community.

This plan presents our best efforts to keep our guests, employees, and our community safe. It follows the Governor’s Task Force on COVID-19, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), City of San Antonio guidelines as well as industry recommendations. We will continue to refine and update the plan as Federal, State, Local and industry experts release additional information.

There is no guarantee of an illness-free event even if we follow everything in this *Reopening Plan*. It is indisputable, however, that planning, training, and implementing reasonable health and safety measures are the best ways to offer protection and inspire guests to return to our facility.

We understand that each event is unique and we are eager to create consistency for our staff and our guests to ensure guidelines are appropriate to meet all demands. We look forward to responsibly reopening our venue and begin hosting events again. We are diligently working to prepare our facilities in welcoming our guests back. Our plan is comprehensive and addresses sanitation, screening and physical distancing processes as well as food and beverage improvements. Updates will be provided on our website as they become available.

We look forward to working with you to make your event successful.

Sincerely,

Patricia Muzquiz Cantor
Director
Convention, Sports and Facilities Department

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CONVENTION CENTER – REOPENING PLAN

KEY PRIORITIES

- **Protect the People:** create and implement daily processes and practices to minimize the transmission of the virus between employees, guests, and contractors
- **Redesign the Work Environment:** minimize the entry and potential transmission of the virus in the places that guests gather and that employees work
- **Drive Operational Productivity:** continually improve performance, collaboration, and customer service while physical distancing

Guests are required to wear a face covering during screening and while in the facility.

Guests are responsible for complying with CDC and building guidelines while attending events.

MARKETING PROGRAM

- The Convention Center and Visit San Antonio continue to collaborate on comprehensive marketing programs. Our goal is to ensure new guidelines regarding sanitation processes, physical distancing, screening, hygiene, and face covering information are well displayed throughout our facility and communicated prior to events to ensure guests are confident in returning to our facility.
- We communicate our message to guests and staff through:
 - **Web-sites** for the Convention Center, the event and Visit San Antonio (VSA).
 - **Social Media Channels** for the Convention Center, the event and VSA.
 - **Physical and digital signage** regarding processes discussed above will serve as reminders
 - **In-house audio messaging system** in front of house and common areas

BUILDING SANITATION

Accreditation and Training

The Convention Center is proud to have received the **Global BioRisk Advisory Council (GBAC) Accreditation**. GBAC is a division of International Supply and Sanitary Association (ISSA), the worldwide cleaning association. This accreditation program assesses cleaning and disinfection practices and infectious-disease prevention. GBAC is currently the industry's only accreditation for outbreak prevention, response and recovery establishing requirements to control risks associated with infectious agents, such as the virus that causes COVID-19.

Sanitizing

- Training on COVID-19 sanitation procedures have been provided to all staff and contractors. Contractors will be communicated with as often as necessary to ensure each receives updated information regarding new processes and procedures for consistent operations.
- UV Lighting has been installed on escalator hand rails for additional sanitation purposes.
- The frequency of sanitizing has been increased in all front and back of house spaces with an emphasis on high touch point areas such as guest services areas, podiums, trash and recycle receptacles, light switches, countertops, desks, telephones, keyboards, seating areas, chairs, tables, restrooms, elevator buttons, door handles, telephones, ATM machines, etc.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located throughout the facility.
- Sanitizing wipes have been placed in various areas.

- Staff maintains documentation of areas cleaned and places a card in some areas indicating completion of sanitation.
- Cleaning products are on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list for use against COVID-19 and staff will follow product instructions.
- Our new UV Light Robot is used to effectively disinfect areas.
- Doors may be propped open in some areas to minimize contact.

BUILDING RETROFITTING

Retrofit of Building

- New touchless items were installed including auto flush valves enhancing the touchless faucets, forearm door pulls, and light/power sensors.
- New automatic entry doors will be installed in September.
- Plexi-glass/physical barriers have been installed where necessary.

Building Ventilation

- Increased fresh air exchange and air flow within the building and incorporated higher performing air filters.

Signage

- Physical and digital signage as well as floor markings have been placed in appropriate areas to promote directional information, hygiene practices, and physical distancing in common areas, elevators, vehicles, lobbies, hallways, breakrooms, bathrooms, and workspace areas.

Services Suspended Until Further Notice

- The usage of table linens and skirting
- Water fountain availability (Guests may purchase beverages from concession areas within the Center)
- Water service using pitchers and glassware
- Individual brochures previously provided at the Guest Services desk

BUILDING INFORMATION

Currently the building capacity is 50% with social distancing. Capacities have been revised to incorporate 6-foot social distancing guidelines.

Setups

- Physical distanced event setup plans are in place.
- Current capacities are available on our website and through our Event Services staff.
- Diagrams will be produced for physical distancing in each space and for each type of setup in line with current occupancy.
- Center and cross aisles will be 6 to 10 feet.
- Theater seating will have 6 feet between chairs.
- Classroom tables are 8 feet and will have 1 chair per table.
- Banquet tables are 66 inches and will have 4 chairs per table.
- Leased spaces will normally be sanitized in the morning prior to the start of the event and when the event has ended.
- Additional sanitizing will be based on the amount of leased space and time between sessions.
- Changeovers may be scheduled for at least 45 minutes to accommodate possible sanitizing.
- Disinfecting techniques include:

- EnviroSan II disinfectant spray,
- Electrostatic Backpack Sprayers, and
- Electrostatic handheld foggers.

Meeting Planners are encouraged to consider the following items

- On-line or satellite pre-registration at hotels due to possible registration area limits and to ensure social distancing. (The Main Lobby may be restricted as a registration area during this time.)
- Hire First Aid personnel for events.
- Stagger session start times in anticipation of long screening lines as well as breaks and ending times to allow for better flow of guests.
- Establish protocols for exiting of areas for general sessions, receptions, meetings, etc.

Exhibit Hall Information

- Current recommendations for halls are one attendee per 36 square feet of unoccupied space per person.
- 10-foot aisles should be one-way with exhibits on both sides; directional arrows should be provided by the decorator.
- 20-foot aisles or wider should be two-way with exhibits on both sides with directional arrows down the middle of the aisle to ensure attendees understand to remain on either side; directional arrows should be provided by the decorator.

Exhibitor Responsibilities

- Provide a copy of all diagrams at least 45 days prior to the event to Event Coordinator for review and adjustments if necessary.
 - Include entrance and exit points which should be one way only.
- Provide estimated exhibit hall occupancy numbers based on exhibit hall set up.
 - Discuss occupancy information with the Event Coordinator prior to the event to eliminate possible confusion.
- Provide updated diagrams based on information from discussions.
- Provide ingress and egress plans and directional signage for setup and teardown of areas and will be provided by general contractor.
- Monitor the number of personnel within booths as well as the number of guests visiting their booth. Consider social distancing for all aspects of the event.
- Clean and sanitize exhibit space before, during and after show hours.

Convention Center Exhibit Hall Responsibilities

- The Event Coordinator and the Fire Marshal will review estimated occupancy figures based on information submitted from the client/general contractor.
 - Estimates include the number of decorator labor, service providers, and HBGCC staff working in the area.
 - Estimates will decrease as items are added such as screens, stages, etc.
- Expand event space if additional space is available and practical
 - Discuss additional charges for space if necessary
- Set eating areas socially distanced (66-inch rounds, 2 – 4 per table, spaced 6 feet apart)

- Mark floor areas outside of restrooms to ensure social distancing
 - Remove some urinals and sinks from service to allow for social distancing
- Work with the RK Group to clean and sanitize tables in food and beverage areas throughout the show hours
- Event Coordinator will work with the general contractor to coordinate load-in and load-out times
- Attendance will be monitored within exhibit halls. The Event Coordinator will meet with an event representative if it is determined that there is an excessive number of people within the exhibit hall. Entry may be suspended to allow occupancy to stabilize.

The following items are highly recommended

- Consider having guests sign up for times to visit the exhibit halls to avoid too many guests at once
- Use of plexiglass between exhibitor booths and guests
- Place barrier between booths located less than 6 feet apart, i.e., plexiglass, 8-foot pipe and drape, etc., to socially distance
- Ensure the size of the booth and social distancing are considered when exhibitors determine the number of associates in each booth
- Consider staggering load-in and load-out times as well as access to exhibit space by guests to allow for social distancing

SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SAFETY MEASURES

Following are protocols for guests in the Convention Center. These standards will be in place until they are no longer needed, as determined by public health directives and guidance. We will continually work with the COSA Health Department to monitor and update the protocols.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

- Guests are required to wear a face covering during screening and while in the facility.
- Meeting planners will be responsible for providing face coverings to guests if necessary and will promote hand washing often or use of hand sanitizer throughout the event.
- Convention Center management, Security staff and Event Coordinators will remind guests to wear their face coverings and socially distance when appropriate.

On-Site Visitor Health Screening

- All visitors who want to enter the Convention Center will be subject to screening at designated entrances for COVID-19 symptoms before entry. Please check with your event coordinator or meeting planner for entry/screening locations during your event.
 - The following question will be asked regarding COVID-19 symptoms
 - Are you experiencing any COVID symptoms? Simultaneously, the guest will be shown the written symptoms.
 - Temperatures will be checked using our new thermal imaging cameras. A label indicating an approved temperature reading will be dispensed and worn by the guest to confirm screening was completed.
- Any visitor who is not successfully screened or is experiencing COVID symptoms will not be permitted entry into the facility.
- Secondary screenings will be provided in a separate area from the entrance if the initial

temperature is greater than or equal to 99.7 F.

- If a second reading is greater than or equal to 99.7 F, entry will not be permitted.
- Meeting planners will be asked to provide the name and telephone number of a representative that will be contacted if a second screening attempt is not successful. The representative and a Convention Center staff member will speak with the guest.
- The Health Department will be notified to initiate contact tracing if necessary.
- The visitor should wait 3 days and have no temperature and no COVID symptoms before returning to the facility.

On-Site Exhibitor Health Screening:

- All exhibitors must enter the Convention Center through the appropriate loading dock.
- Exhibitors will be required to undergo a temperature check and be asked the question by Center Security Staff “Are you exhibiting any COVID 19 symptoms”? Simultaneously, they will be shown the written symptoms.
- If the exhibitor answers “yes” to the question, he/she will be instructed to move to the appropriate area while the Center Security staff communicates this information to the assigned Event Coordinator. The exhibitor will be informed that they cannot enter the facility upon response from management.
- If the exhibitor answers “no” to the question and records a 99.6 temperature or lower, he/she will be granted access to the facility.
- The Center Security Staff will issue the exhibitor the appropriate color I.D sticker of the day to be visibly worn to indicate that they have successfully completed a health screening for the day.
- The exhibitor will be issued a temporary parking pass (approximately 20 minutes), that must be displayed in the windshield of their vehicle. Security Staff will record their name, phone number and booth number in case they need to contact them for any reason.
- If the exhibitor registers a temperature of 99.7 or greater, he/she will be asked to move their vehicle to the “cool down” area to be screened again. If the person registers a second screening of 99.7 or greater, staff will contact the meeting planner and the person will be asked to leave.

Guest Illness

- If a guest becomes ill during the event, the guest is expected to immediately go to the First Aid location. If there is not a First Aid location, the guest is expected to immediately contact the meeting planner or representative to report the illness.
- Prior to the event, guests should be reminded that if they are ill, to avoid coming to the event.

Physical Distancing

- Guests will be reminded to physically distance from other guests unless they are members of the same family or guests who have travelled together.
- Some seating located in the Lila Cockrell Theatre will be unavailable and marked to physically distance guests during events.
- Ticket sales will ensure physical distancing.
- In case of an emergency, staff within all areas will assist guests with the appropriate exit route that will consider social distancing.

HBGCC PROTOCOLS

Following are protocols followed by all HBGCC employees and all other employees working in our facility. We will continually work with the Health Department to monitor and update the protocols.

- Employees who do not successfully pass the screening process or have had a positive COVID-19 test within the last 10 days will not be allowed to enter the facility unless one of the following applies:
 - There are no new or worsening symptoms, without a fever for 3 days, and have been at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared as directed by the CDC,
 - If there are no symptoms, the employee may return to work 10 days from the test date that yielded a positive result, or
 - Employees with close contact to a known positive, have no symptoms and have not been tested, may work remotely if possible but must quarantine for 10 - 14 days from last date of known exposure. This includes those contacted by Human Resources, Metro Health or have household members who test positive

Employee or Event Personnel Illness

- If a COSA employee becomes ill, the person is expected to contact their immediate supervisor and seek medical attention. If event personnel or an exhibitor becomes ill, the person is expected to immediately seek medical attention.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

- All Convention Center employees will be required to wear a face covering supplied by the department.
 - Personal face coverings must be professional and not display any inappropriate wording, images, or logos, and should be safely worn and cleaned regularly.
 - Face shields and gloves will be provided to staff whose tasks require these items.
- Contractor staff will be required to wear face coverings that follow our guidelines.

Training

- All staff have been trained on stringent cleaning and hygiene protocols.
- Staff have been trained on the manufacturer's directions and OSHA requirements for safe usage of all EPA certified cleaning products.
- Staff have been trained to clean high touch point surfaces in the building and within their work areas to include desks, keyboards, light switches, equipment, door handles, etc.
- Staff have been trained on our new technology such as Thermal Imaging Camera for temperature checks and our UV Light Robot to disinfect areas.
- Guest Services staff have the latest information on the nearest medical facilities and COVID testing sites and will provide to guests as necessary.

Sanitizing

- Managers ensure training manuals are updated so that appropriate protocols are in place.
- Hand sanitizing and wipe stations are available for staff usage in back-of-house areas.

- Staff sanitize equipment and City vehicles before and after each use.
- Staff clean various areas around their work space. Non-essential items should be stored in cabinets and drawers to ensure proper cleaning and sanitation of areas.
 - Staff follows stringent cleaning protocols for surfaces such as copier machines, items with handles, etc.
 - Employees must wear disposable gloves and face coverings when performing all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.

Office Space, Equipment and Physical Distancing

- Office space has been evaluated for physical distancing.
- Staff are encouraged to use stairs and escalators. Elevator usage is limited to 2-4 people.
- All staff are reminded to practice physical distancing as much as possible.

Signage

- Signage and floor markings are installed in appropriate areas to promote directional guidelines, hygiene practices, clean work area policies, physical distancing in elevators, vehicles, lobbies, hallways, breakrooms, bathrooms, and workspace areas.

Administrative Staff

- Remote work policies are in place and revised as necessary for staff whose job functions permit.
- Remote work schedules will continue for some staff.
 - Staff will return to support on-site functions and services as necessary.
- Flexible work hours to lesson building occupancy have been considered.
- Staff is asked to remain at home when sick or when known exposure to COVID-19 has occurred.
- Virtual meetings will continue in place of in-person meetings as much as possible. Online conferencing, email or telephone will be the primary tools for employee communication, even when employees are in the same building.
 - If an in-person meeting is necessary, it should be short, in a large meeting room where people can sit at least six feet from each other, and with no physical contact.
- Congregating in hallways, break rooms, huddle rooms, pantries, copier areas, or other areas is not permitted. Staff should remain six feet apart when possible and eliminate any physical contact such as handshaking, hugging, etc.
- Staff are encouraged to eat at their desks to avoid potentially crowded break areas.

Operational Staff

- Meetings are held in space where social distancing is accommodated.
- Work start times have been staggered to minimize large groups.
- Staff are asked to remain at home when ill or when known exposure to COVID-19 has occurred.
- Congregating in hallways, break rooms, or other areas is not permitted. Staff have been instructed to eliminate handshaking, hugging, etc.
- A freshly laundered uniform must be worn each day.
- Break and lunch times are staggered to minimize large groups.

Processes

- Contactless pick-up of various items (COSA mail, post office mail, payments, correspondence, etc.) has been implemented.
- The number of customers in office areas is limited.

Travel

- Business travel is currently suspended.
- Employees are reminded to use their best judgement when deciding whether to travel.
- Employees are strongly urged to continue practicing safeguards when travelling and actively monitor their health upon their return. This extends to members within their household.

CONTACT TRACING

The COSA Health Department and Human Resources Department will perform contact tracing if symptoms of COVID-19 are substantiated during an event and do everything possible to notify guests who may have been in contact with the individual. It is important that meeting planners understand the importance of recording and sharing registration names and information in the event contact tracing becomes necessary.

CONTRACT REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE

Convention Center staff will work with COSA City Attorney's Office to review and revise, if necessary, contractor agreements and responsibilities, contracts, addendums, and compliance language in relation to COVID-19.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE OPERATIONS

As the RK Culinary Group sets its sights on welcoming guests back to the Convention Center, their top priority and considerations are focused on the precautions, sanitation, preparation, safety and appropriately servicing of guests while following all the recommendations from the State and the CDC.

Adjustments are planned for the servicing of events to include one-sided buffets allowing wait staff to serve each guest, wait staff distributing beverages, individually wrapped cold items to include salads, sandwiches, breakfast breads, etc., individually wrapped silverware, condiments provided to guests upon request, continuous disinfecting of service areas and waitstaff servicing each event with masks and gloves.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

All service providers and contracted service providers have established new protocols and will provide them upon request. All must provide a written plan of operational plans, post signage in their work areas reminding all staff of recommended hygienic practices, social distancing, and the requirement to wear face coverings.