New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center

COVID-19 Control Plan

These guidelines were created in response to federal, state, and local authorities’ recommendations for the safe reopening of businesses and museums and with input from the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers, and constituents.

This is a working document and it will be updated as needed to reflect changes in local, state, and federal guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
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According to the Centers for Disease Control, best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are:

- Frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Not touching your face.
- Wearing a face covering over mouth and nose.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.
- Cleaning frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Staying home when sick.

Social Distancing

Office

*NBFHC has a single office that is shared by its staff, contract workers, and volunteers.*

- Staff will continue to work from home when possible.
- Staff will adopt a staggered schedule so that not more than two individuals are using the office at the same time.
- Furniture will be reorganized to maximize distance between workstations.
- Staff may work at the front desk if volunteer coverage is not adequate.
- Staff meetings will continue to be held by video conference or if in person, with appropriate distancing.
- Meetings with external parties will be scheduled as telephone or video calls or, if in person meetings are necessary, then maintaining appropriate social distancing protocols.

Bathrooms

*NBFHC has two accessible single stall bathrooms.*

- Disinfecting wipes will be provided in each bathroom.
- Each person is responsible to wipe down door handle upon exiting.
• On days the Center is open to the public, bathrooms will be cleaned twice each day (at 12:45 and 4:00 or when the last staff/volunteer leaves each day).

Galleries/Gift Shop/Welcome Desk

• All people who enter the NBFHC will be required to sign in providing name, email, phone contact and time in and out.
• No more than ten visitors will be permitted in the Center at any one time.
• A plexiglass divider with a slot for cash transactions will be erected at the Welcome Desk to provide added protection for staff/volunteers and guests.

Personal Protective Equipment

Face Coverings
Following recommendations from the CDC, the Governor and the Mayor have mandated the use of face coverings in public wherever a six-foot distance is not possible. This does not apply to anyone for whom doing so would be unsafe or impossible due to a medical condition.

• All staff and volunteers are required to wear a mask or other cloth material that covers their mouth and nose while at the Center, except to eat or drink during a break.
• If a staff member is working alone in the office, they may remove their masks, but must wear their mask anytime they enter the hallway, bathroom or gallery spaces and people are present.
• NBFHC will provide a cloth mask for each of its staff and key volunteers (those who interact with the public on a regular basis) and will have disposable masks on hand to supplement. It will be the responsibility of the staff/volunteers to clean and care for their cloth mask and to bring it with them each time they come to the Center.
• Proper use and cleaning of face masks is outlined in the appendix of this document.

Hygiene Protocols

• Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the Center for use by staff, volunteers, and visitors.
• Signage for staff/volunteers about proper handwashing will be posted in the bathrooms.
• All high touch surfaces will be cleaned on a regular basis.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Office

• Office workstations and office equipment will be restricted to FHC Staff initially. Volunteers may be able to resume use of laptops, scanners, and copier at a later date.
• Staff/volunteers will clean cash register and front desk area before and after each shift.
• All doorknobs will be cleaned daily by staff/volunteers.
• The Center will maintain cleaning supplies, paper towels, disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, disposable masks, disposable gloves, and bleach.
• Should an employee, volunteer, or visitor be diagnosed with COVID-19, remaining staff will clean and disinfect all areas where the infected and possible infected persons may have interacted. If it is a staff person who was working in the shared office space, the office will be off limits to all persons for 72 hours after which time it will be cleaned and disinfected.

Exhibits

• Staff/volunteers will wipe down high touch exhibit areas daily.
• The armchairs will be moved 6 feet apart.
• Benches and folding chairs will be wiped down after use.
• iPad will be wiped down between visitors.

Gift Shop/Welcome Desk

• Staff/Volunteers will assist patrons in browsing unique gift shop items including prints, jewelry, and artwork to minimize handling.
• At the beginning and end of their shift, volunteers will be expected to sanitize the phone, pen, chair, counter, cash register.
Staffing and Operations

Operations

New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center plans to re-open to the public as part of Phase 3 as outlined in the State of Massachusetts phased reopening plan with a target date of July 9. The Center will open to non-essential staff, volunteers, and the public ONLY when safety protocols established by this document are in place and in accordance with the phased opening of the State of Massachusetts and the City of New Bedford.

All staff and volunteers will participate in a mandatory training regarding these protocols prior to resuming in-person activities at the Center.

Office

- Staff will continue to work remotely when possible and on days that the Center is closed to the public.
- Staff will adopt a staggered schedule to limit the number of staff in the shared office space to no more than two persons at any one time.

Center Visitation

- No more than 10 visitors will be allowed in the Center at one time
- As per mandates of State and City, all visitors will be required to wear masks and will be refused entry if they refuse to do so without an underlying medical condition that prevents them from doing so.
- Staff/volunteers will operate remote for orientation video. Remote will be cleaned with a disinfecting wipe after each use.
- Indoor guided tours will be suspended indefinitely.
- Visitors will be offered single use paper self-guides for the exhibit.

Signage

- Signage clearly stating the requirements of masks, social distancing, and other health protocols and the Center’s right to refuse entry to any visitor who is not following safety precautions will be posted at both entrances to the facility.
• Public Health reminder signs will also be posted in shared workspaces and bathrooms to promote: Physical distancing; Handwashing; Coughing/Sneezing etiquette; Staying at home if sick.

**Enforcement**

• Staff/Volunteers may refuse entry or ask a visitor to leave the premises if the visitor refuses to wear a face covering or to follow other safety protocols.

**Communication**

• Messaging about new safety protocols will be shared on the Center’s website, in the July e-newsletter and on the Center’s Facebook and Instagram pages.
• The reopening document will be shared with the board, staff, and volunteers.
• All staff and volunteers will participate in a mandatory training regarding these protocols prior to resuming in-person activities at the Center.
• A summary document will be made available on the Center’s website.

**Volunteers**

• All volunteers who wish to return to in-person activities at the Center will be required to participate in a training about new health and safety protocols and will be asked to sign off on a COVID-19 safety protocol policy after the training.
• Volunteers will be permitted to return as of July 9.
• Any volunteer who does not wish to return will be invited to continue to serve the Center from home if they choose.

**Sickness and Sick Leave**

• Staff and volunteers will be required to certify that they are healthy each day that they are working at the Center.
• If you are sick do not come to the Center.
• If you believe you have been exposed to someone who may have or has COVID and are awaiting test results do not come to the Center.
The Executive Director may at her discretion extend the amount of paid sick leave for any employee needing it for self-quarantining.

Should an employee or volunteer be diagnosed with COVID-19, the Center will contact all staff, volunteers, and visitors who were in contact with that person.

Any staff member or volunteer who was in direct contact with that individual will be quarantined for 14 days and asked to report the contact to their doctor.

A staff member or volunteer who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 may return to work only once they meet all the following criteria:

- They are fever-free for 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine
- They have been cleared by a medical professional to return to work
- Respiratory symptoms have improved
- It has been at least 10 days since the onset of their first symptoms
Resources

- **Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Information**  

- **Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Information**  

- **City of New Bedford COVID-19 Information**  
  [https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/health-department/coronavirus/](https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/health-department/coronavirus/)

- **COVID-19 Facts**  

- **Reopening Massachusetts**  
  [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts)

- **How to Wear a Face Covering**  

Additional Documents

- FHC Re-opening Control MA Form
- Mandatory Safety Standards Poster
- Employee Re-opening Poster
- Cloth Face Coverings Guide