

Pakachoag Music School

In-Person Safety Handbook for Covid-19 & Variants

Original: August 12, 2020

Updated: August 11, 2022

In the spirit of doing our part to curb the spread of COVID-19, we are requiring that anyone who anticipates visiting the school at any time this school year read this handbook and plan to follow these guidelines. Thank you.

OVERVIEW

Please note these guidelines are subject to update in keeping with MA Dept of Health Guidelines. Any update will be distributed to currently enrolled families by email notice within 72 hours of an update.

We will be adhering to the following foundational safety guidelines:

- Mandatory facemasks outside of studios/classrooms for all persons over the age of 2 years.
- Frequent hand washing / sanitizing while on-site
- Social distancing outside of studios as is practical
- Social distancing inside studios as is practical
- Wearing of masks inside studios, at the discretion of teaching and family/student
- Whenever possible, large spaces will be utilized over smaller studio spaces to maximize distancing options
- Heppa-13 Medical Grade filters in all studios / classrooms in use (use high setting to circulate/clean air every 15 to 20 minutes)
- Open windows whenever possible
- Plexiglas barriers (4 feet by 6 feet; 6 inches off ground) available to assist with distancing

Playing music, singing and teaching music brings inherent risks, from rapid movement of air for vocalists and wind instruments to the on-going need to address physical/technical skills involved in the production of sound which traditionally requires occasional hands-on guidance.

While, together, we can help minimize the effects of COVID within the facilities we use, it is still possible that a case of COVID-19 among staff, faculty or enrollees may arise during the course of our work.

These guidelines are intended to mitigate spread and to ensure that all persons connected with Pakachoag Music School are working together to make a good faith effort in adhering to local and state health guidelines in connection with COVID-19.

Please note that any teacher who is uncomfortable teaching in-person due to health considerations has the option to teach remote-only as long as COVID-19 remains a public health concern.

Likewise, any student / family that is uncomfortable receiving instruction in-person due to health considerations similarly has the option to choose remote-only for those activities which offer remote options (or to withdraw, in keeping with our usual withdrawal policies).

Please note for non-adult/independent students: Because some students may be entering the building and/or studio without parent, please review these entry/exit protocols with your child in advance of your first lesson.

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PROTOCOLS FOR VISITING STUDENTS / FAMILIES

ARRIVAL

- When possible, please leave an empty parking space between yourself and other cars.

ENTRY

- Please do not bring guests with you to lessons as long as COVID-19 remains a public health concern. Our expectation is to restrict in-person visits, whenever possible, to just student(s) and, if needed, one parent.
- All visitors to the music school or any of its satellite locations are required to wear a mask upon entry, except children under the age of 2 or an individual with a condition that makes wearing a mask not possible.¹
- If anyone outside the noted exceptions above arrives without a mask, please call the office upon arrival and we will greet you at the back door entry to provide a mask (first mask is complimentary; repeat masks – we'll ask for a 25-cent donation). Arrival with your own mask greatly appreciated.
- For students aged 12 and above, we prefer that accompanying family member(s) wait in car during lesson time.
- For students under the age of 12, we respect that you may wish to accompany your child to the studio. If you are not needed in the lesson studio, please wait in your car and meet your child at the back door at end of lesson or class.
- Everyone is encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon entry, in the first floor lobby.

WAITING / PRIOR TO LESSON TIME

- If you are visiting the school or one of its satellites for a class or lesson, kindly wait in your car rather than an entry area or waiting room until a few minutes prior to your assigned class or lesson time; also, for anyone other than student, during lesson/class time when possible.
- Social distancing is requested whenever possible.
- Please be kind enough to wait and stand back for other families to exit a studio before entering.
- In hallways and stairwells, please stand back where possible to allow others to pass.
- Waiting areas will be closed except to support social distancing as people move through hallways.

¹ If you have a child over the age of 2 who cannot wear a mask, please inform the school office AND your teacher in advance of your first class or activity.

- Walkers are asked to arrive two minutes prior to their appointed lesson/class time to limit time spent in public spaces.
- If any teacher is not ready to dismiss a student on time and accept the next student on time, the preferred course of action is for the teacher to text or call their next family and ask the family to delay entry. Some minimal delays around studio entry are likely. Teachers will do their best to avoid persons waiting for more than a few minutes in public spaces.

IN THE STUDIO

- Every student should bring 2 to 3 sharpened pencils to their lesson so that pencils are not shared.²
- Please practice social distancing in the studio.
- Music instruction often benefits from physical guidance related to positioning of the instrument and body. If you are concerned about hands-on instruction, please let your teacher know.
- **Masks in studios may be removed, by mutual agreement between the student/family and teacher. If you have any concerns about this issue, please email Kristjon@pakmusic.org prior to your first lesson.**
- Please use hand sanitizer as you enter the studio; and prior to using a piano or keyboard.

BATHROOMS

- Please supervise younger children whenever possible if using bathrooms to ensure handwashing for at least 20 seconds with soap. Sing Happy Birthday or hum the first 8 measures of Bach's Minuet in G two times and count to five 😊 = 20 secs.
- Bathrooms are cleaned/disinfected regularly. If you notice any spills / unsanitary conditions in the bathroom, please inform staff at time of your visit.

EXITING the Studio and Building

Please maintain distance from other visitors when exiting. On days which might have a little extra traffic flow, we may request that you exit via Vinton Hall vs. main staircase.

For students entering building without family (preferable for students aged 12 and older), please meet your child outside the back door. No student should be waiting for more than a few minutes in building for pick-up (except in an emergency). No student should ever wait outside the building at any time. Please be reminded that parent or caregiver is responsible for your child/ren immediately before and immediately following your assigned activity.

OFFICE VISITS

The office is open for inquiries and scheduling/billing questions. Please note that the office is not available as a waiting area.

Payments and Office Support

- If you are dropping off a payment, please deposit payments in a sealed envelope in the outside mailbox at our main home. That mailbox is at the rear entrance, off parking lot (via Pleasant Street), or mail in by regular US Postal service.

² You can purchase additional pencils by leaving 50 cents in the pencil tin in office or in the check in form basket in your studio.

- If you have concerns about safety practices when visiting the school, please email the office right away.

It is our desire to work with everyone to do our best to ensure an environment that adheres to these safety guidelines.

AT HOME AND COVID

- If you, a child, or other immediate family member are tested positive for COVID-19 at any time, please inform the school office within 24 hours and confirm the date, time, and place of your most recent visit to the school. This will help us contact other families who visited within a similar time frame. Please remain absent from any activities until all in your household are cleared by your doctor or other health official.
- Please do not attend a lesson or class if you or your child are experiencing any sickness of any kind, including colds.
- Please do not attend lessons if you have been asked to quarantine. With advance notice, we can likely arrange to flip to remote lessons.
- Please note that we cannot guarantee more than one make-up for each half of the year, in keeping with our standard make-up policies. With 48 hours advance notice, some teachers may be able to flip an in-person lesson to remote.
- Last minute absences cannot be made up but may qualify as your one make-up available for each half of the school year. We do not offer make-ups for summer lessons.

Additional DETAILS related to safety protocols

Face Masks

- Acceptable face masks range from cloth material to medical grade N-95 masks. The mask is to fit over the nose and mouth.
- Please bring your own face masks.
- The school will have face masks on hand for occasional "I forgot." A 25-cent donation will be asked per mask to help us replenish the supply when needed.

Frequent Hand Washing/Sanitizing

- Please bring your own hand sanitizer whenever possible
- Please sanitize hands upon entry and exit to/from the building and upon entry and exit of your assigned studio.
- We will also have pump sanitizers on hand in the event you do not have your own sanitizer with you.

Social Distancing

- The school will do its best to allow for social distancing within reasonable guidelines.
- Each studio will include a keyboard to assist teachers and students in remaining separated as much as possible.

If staff, faculty, or students have any of these symptoms prior to or on the day of your scheduled lesson, you should stay home or return home. We recommend that you get a test for active COVID-19 infection prior to returning to in-person activity.

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Headache when in combination with other symptoms
 - Muscle aches or body aches
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms
- It is crucial to the safety of all individuals enrolled with Pakachoag that this brief symptom check be completed no more than 30 minutes before you arrive for your assigned activity. If you have any of these symptoms, stay home and notify the school.
 - Our regular make-up policy remains in place, one student make-up for each half of the year. With a minimum 48 hours advance notice, your teacher may be able to schedule a remote lesson in place of an in-person lesson.
 - We reserve the right to send a student, teacher, or staff member home if symptoms present themselves while on-site.

Additional Safety Protocols

- Any personal water bottles or thermos left unattended will be thrown away as soon as noticed.
- No sharing of pencils. Bring 2 sharpened pencils to every lesson.
- Please bring a notebook. Many teachers have traditionally written notes in student music books. Teachers will not write in music or notebooks but will request that students make their own notes whenever possible.
- Arrange to have everything you need to complete your lesson or class on hand before you begin lessons.

Reminders:

- Please remind your child to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- We should all cover our mouths and noses with a tissue when we cough or sneeze, or use the inside of our elbow. Please place used tissues into your own bag to take home and immediately wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Learn more about [coughing and sneezing](#) etiquette on the CDC website.