



Adelaide Chamber Singers COVID-19 Operating Protocol

Updated October 2021

Preamble

The World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 disease to be a pandemic on 11 March 2020. In response, a major emergency was declared and to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the State Coordinator made a Declaration of a Major Emergency under the Emergency Management Act 2004. This remains in place today, with restrictions relating to our industry being amended from time to time through the Public Activities Directions.

The Board of Adelaide Chamber Singers is keen that a clear plan and lines of communication with our artists, operations personnel and collaborators are in place.

There are currently no specific guidelines for 'vocalising' contained in the SA Government's directives although directives about masks are made from time to time. However, singing can involve forceful exhalation and may involve aerosoliation of fluids from the mouth and nose, which could increase the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

The Adelaide Choral Network produced *Risk Management Guidance* for group singing which was subsequently endorsed by SA Health and remains a good source of information regarding the current scientific research and the mitigation of risks of transmission through singing. However, detailed scientific research in this regard remains in its infancy. It is therefore beholden on us to balance the risk of transmission within the current known possibilities, against the risk of transmission here in South Australia and mitigate against those risks accordingly.

Condition of Engagement

The Board has determined that it will be a condition of participation in ACS engagements from January 2022, or prior in the event that COVID-19 spreads in this State, that all artists and operations personnel comply with the *Adelaide Chamber Singers COVID-19 Operating Protocol* as it exists from time to time, as a condition of engagement.

Vaccination

The South Australian Government advice is that vaccination is the best way to protect ourselves and the ones we love from COVID-19. The Board recognises that this applies in particular to singing together safely and for the safety of others engaged to perform and rehearse with us from time to time. Vaccination reduces the risk of transmission of the virus and, if the virus is caught, reduces the risk of severe symptoms and hospitalisation. This must be balanced with the privacy and individual health decisions of singers.

At October 2021, the Board has determined that it will be a condition of participation in ACS engagements from January 2022, or prior in the event that COVID-19 spreads in this State, that all artists and operations personnel be either fully vaccinated (i.e. double dose) or able to provide an appropriate medical exemption from a medical practitioner.

For the purposes of this Protocol, 'Fully Vaccinated' means receipt of the required dose (s) and any future additional doses (booster shots) of a COVID-19 vaccine that had been approved for supply by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

Engagement will be conditional on, prior to the commencement of the engagement and at any time upon request during the engagement:

- (a) being Fully Vaccinated and being able to provide evidence via
 - a. an online [immunisation history statement](#);
 - b. a COVID-19 digital certificate from the [Australian Immunisation Register](#), or
- (b) providing a medical exemption from a medical practitioner in the form recommended by [ATAGI](#) or any relevant legislative instrument, including but not limited to a relevant public health order or direction.

Those with a medical exemption may be required to produce the result of a negative COVID test on a regular basis (to be determined).

This Protocol recognises that from time to time Adelaide Chamber Singers will enter into agreements with other agencies that may not meet these conditions, in which case artists and operations personnel will be advised and provided with an opportunity to negotiate their ongoing participation.

Physical Distancing

- artistic personnel should maintain the physical distancing principle of 1.5 metres separation at all times including when moving into a new stage position and in breaks
- if artistic personnel are unwell, they must stay home and remain in isolation until a negative test result is received before returning to rehearsals
- the duration of any activity will be limited to 2.5 hours
- ACS will provide singers with a spacing plan for both rehearsals and performance ahead of the first rehearsal and ensure it is monitored throughout, recognising that modifications may be necessary
- Where appropriate, ACS will provide numbered and colour coded floor markers to indicate singers' positions – singers may move from marker to marker, but the position of the marker remains unchanged
- artistic personnel should comply with physical distancing principles in relation to members of the public at all times
- we acknowledge that everyone's risk-tolerance will be different and encourage an environment of respect for each other

Masks

The current State Government [Emergency Direction](#) requires that masks be worn by singers at all times during rehearsal and performance. Adelaide Chamber Singers will, from time to time, request exemptions from wearing masks from SA Health for professional engagements where possible but cannot guarantee that exemptions will be approved.

Adelaide Chamber Singers believes it is not possible to perform or rehearse to the professional standard we strive to achieve and will not require artists to wear masks unless the current Government Direction requires it. ACS will instead ensure that other measures are in place to mitigate the risks, including hygiene and physical distancing as laid out below.

For fee-for-service engagements—i.e. performances for which Adelaide Chamber Singers is engaged by another organisation, the protocols of the contracting organisation will need to be followed.

Hygiene

Artistic personnel should:

- bring a music stand to rehearsals if they wish to use one
- not share pencils, tuning forks, water bottles, music, music stands or any other supplies
- consider applying makeup etc prior to arrival the venue
- keep personal belongings to a minimum and keep them within a personal space rather than in a communal area

FOH/Production Staff will:

- ensure bathroom and kitchen areas have been cleaned with special attention to touchpoints such as taps, door handles and push plates
- provide hand sanitiser and encourage use
- ensure electric hand dryers or single use hand drying towels are available
- remind all staff of cough etiquette
- endeavour to manage bathroom traffic to ensure physical distancing
- where possible, arrange for public and artistic personnel to have separate bathrooms
- consider enacting windows of exclusive use for singers immediately prior and post-performance if singers must share bathrooms with the public
- ensure good ventilation, opening doors and windows wherever possible

COVID-Safe Plan

ACS venue/operations staff will:

- complete a SA Government COVID-Safe plan for each venue, noting that the maximum number of people per separate room must not exceed 1 person / 2 square metres of accessible space including both artists and audience
- ensure that the Plan is in accordance with the plan submitted by the venue operators
- encourage patrons not to attend if unwell
- make the Plan available on site at rehearsals and performance
- maintain attendance (contact tracing) records (on entry) for all artistic personnel, production staff and members of the public and provide sufficient pens and cleaning equipment to enable single use between cleaning
- be prepared to be flexible, including cancellation of rehearsals and performances, should COVID-19 circumstances and government regulations change
- provide audience with information in programs about modifications to staging due to COVID-19
- provide on-site briefings for all staff at the beginning of the first rehearsal in any venue to run through COVID-Safe measures for that venue

COVID-awareness

ACS requests that artists and operations personnel maintain awareness around avoiding current COVID-19 risk areas, and avoid travelling to any high-risk locations during the period of engagement if at all possible. If this is not possible for any reason, we request that we are made aware of the situation, in order that we can inform other members of the company as a matter of courtesy.

Review

Adelaide Chamber Singers will review this protocol from time to time as Government Directions and health advice changes.