

ATTIC COVID-19 POLICY

Attic has a duty of care to all its staff, freelancers, practitioners and beneficiaries to keep them safe during the Covid-19 pandemic and where possible keep as many people as possible at least 1m apart (preferably 2m) and ensure they have the appropriate PPE to prevent the spread of infection.

The law on social distancing is subject to constant change and as such this is a living document and will be updated in line with changing guidance. We will ensure that all our provisions have comprehensive plans and risk assessments in place to respond appropriately any changes in circumstances, guidance and legislation.

Currently, the majority of our services have pivoted to online delivery and we have implemented protocols for safe working such as Best Practice Guidelines for Online Classrooms, Remote, Flexible and Lone Working policies all with the aim of supporting staff and beneficiaries in these unprecedented times.

Attic will not re-open face to face provision unless we are confident we can do so safely - to ensure as far as reasonably practicable that staff and participants are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. We will request staff and contractors complete the Staff Wellbeing Risk Assessment Questionnaire and where possible will consider the accommodation of reasonable adjustments for any high risk staff or contractors.

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

The transmission of COVID-19 is thought to occur mainly through respiratory droplets generated by coughing and sneezing, and through contact with contaminated surfaces. The predominant modes of transmission are assumed to be droplet and contact.

If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough or a high temperature or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) they are advised to follow the stay at home guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

Currently: 10 days from the start of symptoms to prevent them from passing the infection on and contributing to the overload on the NHS. Those who live with others and where one person has symptoms must self-isolate as a household for 14 days from the day when the first person in the house became ill. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 10 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14- day isolation period. Those who are considered extremely vulnerable are advised to "shield" themselves at home. See the stay at home guidance for further information.

The government has launched an NHS Test and Trace service to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging. The service:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus to find out if they have the virus
- gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to help them share information about any close recent contacts they have had
- alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self-isolate to help stop the spread of the virus

General hygiene advice:

Attic will implement and request the implementation of good hygiene practices, such as:

- Regularly clean and disinfect hand contact surfaces and allow staff to take frequent breaks to wash their hands, to help to control the spread of this disease. (see <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>).

- Use hand sanitisers where available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not into your hand.
- Dispose of tissues into a disposable rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser.
- Open the windows regularly to ensure open ventilation.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent from getting infected.
- Face coverings are required by law in some public places unless exempt because of your age, health or another condition. It is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in other enclosed public spaces where social distancing may be difficult and where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Risk Assessments

We will take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission, in line with COVID-19 Secure guidance and including completion of a risk assessment for each activity, venue and our staff.

Assessment of risk

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues will be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- the environment – location, security, access
- the context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk history
 - any previous incidents in similar situations
- any other special circumstances

Where risk assessments reference discussion with staff members this will be undertaken in conjunction with and as follow up to the completion of the Staff Wellbeing Risk Assessment Questionnaire

Where risk assessments reference 'reasonable adjustments' this includes but is not exclusive to:

1. Limiting duration of close interaction with users
2. If possible, maintaining a two-three metre distance from users
3. Avoiding public transport/ rush hour through adjustments to work hours
4. Asking users to wear a mask for staff member interaction
5. Providing comprehensive PPE for staff members for all interactions with users
6. Redeploying staff to a lower risk area
7. Encouraging remote/digital working where possible.

Where risk assessments reference PPE this includes but is not exclusive to:

1. gloves
2. face masks
3. face visors
4. high-visibility clothing

Where risk assessments reference 'Social Distancing' this means 2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable

Actions Attic will take prior to resuming face to face activities

Attic will:

- Implement enhanced cleaning procedures to ensure that communal areas and touch points remain safe within the office and any venues that are hired by Attic without onsite staffing.
- Engage with venue managers and/or cleaners/cleaning contractors to ensure there is an adequate and satisfactory increased cleaning regime to accommodate staff and users.
- Provide all staff with the opportunity to purchase appropriate PPE to a maximum of £50 (including hand sanitizer/issues etc.). We request that where possible equipment, is biodegradable/recyclable/reusable and that it is maintained and disposed of appropriately. We request that disposable masks/gloves are not used.
- Provide a level of spares and additional provision of PPE for users. Attic has a selection of biodegradable gloves and reusable face masks that can be made available and kept as substitute emergency items for staff and participants.
- Provide clear guidance for users as to safety precautions in place, capacity numbers for activities, expectations for users' own precautionary measures.
- Maintain an open dialogue with all staff to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing is considered and to keep abreast of any changes both societally and personally.
- Make reasonable accommodations for staff and maintain/alter these adjustments when and if necessary, in order to support their return to work and continuance in post.
- Welcome feedback from staff and users as to any issues or alterations to our protocols, policies or delivery that may impact upon the activities and help to create a safer working environment for all.
- Ensure that no activities are delivered where there is a real threat to the health and safety of our staff and users, taking into consideration any vulnerabilities that may arise from the demographics of the users we work with. Where such threat exists, live delivery shall be postponed and where possible/appropriate we will pivot to online delivery until such time as all precautionary and safety measures can be/are satisfactorily implemented.
- Maintain an online provision of activities to support those shielding or vulnerable and unable to take part in live sessions.
- Provide and maintain up to date policy and risk assessments for all activities in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic and be responsive to change in legislation and government/National Institute for Health Protection (formerly Public Health England) advice.
- Obtain and review risk assessments and supplementary documentation from all venues utilised to ensure their compliance with Covid-19 Secure precautions.
- Provide all venues utilised with Attic's own policies and protocols for Covid-19 Secure precautions and ensure venues are aware of the need for our staff to adhere to these protocols (where any conflicting protocols arises, the more cautious option shall be adopted).

Work with older people

The risk of severe illness increases amongst people aged 70 and over and those with underlying health risks, such as diabetes, heart disease and lung disease and those with weakened immune systems. Pregnant women have also recently been included in the "at risk" group and there is growing evidence that very obese BAME individuals are disproportionately affected.

Individuals who fall within these groups are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household.

As Attic's participatory work is focused on some of these groups, we will take additional precautions to mitigate these risks.

Attic will inform these groups in particular of the symptoms of COVID-19 and current stay alert and social distancing guidance. We will at all times adhere to the guidance laid out within the Government's Performing Arts Guidance and Multi Purpose Community Settings guidance

Work with young people

The majority of our work with young people takes place in school settings. Attic will adhere to the safety precautions and frameworks set out within each school. These include specific year group 'bubbles'.

However, currently the majority of students are not required to socially distance within their bubble. We will at all times adhere to the guidance laid out within the Government's Education and Childcare guidance

As many of our staff are freelance and work in multiple locations and community settings Attic will implement a 2m social distance between staff, participants and students, regardless, and will require staff to wear appropriate PPE. A session checklist will also be undertaken prior to the start of each session. All participants will be asked for medical information. Reasonable adjustments will be made to any 'high risk' participants.

Work with the community/general public and our audiences

As a company we are not bound by the constraints of a physical space. This guidance also sets out how organisations will want to think about managing audiences, with outdoor performances with a socially distanced audience

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

Staff pre-session checklist (live delivery)

Check there is adequate provision in the space of:

General use:

- Tissues
- Hand Sanitizer
- Gloves (for money handling)
- Face masks (spare)

Check Social distancing measures are in place such as:

- Tables and/or chairs spaced at 2sqm distance
- Doors are propped open where possible
- Windows are opened and there is adequate ventilation
- Bins are available and clear of rubbish

Miscellaneous:

- Ensure staff have necessary PPE equipment and employ these protective measures
- Remind participants of expectations for behaviour at each session
- Maintain a social distance of 2m at all times with participants
- Confirm with hosts of venue that the space has been cleaned prior to entry

If you have any questions or comments on this policy, please discuss these with Victoria Hibbs, General Manager

This procedure is owned by Attic Theatre Company

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