Long-Term Closure Re-Entry Checklist for Cultural Institutions and Collections Care Stewards

This checklist for re-entry into a cultural institution is offered as a helpful tool following a long-term closure. The checklist is a template that can be customized and adapted based on the capacity of staff and resources available to each individual institution. It is recommended that each institution work as team and approach the re-entry following the same steps as provided in this checklist. Those steps are:

1. Activation

2. Assessment and Situation Analysis

3. Site Stabilization

4. Re-opening

5. Ongoing Assessment and Situation Analysis

These steps are found repeated throughout the three provided scenarios, which account for multiple orders of re-entry following a long-term closure. It is impossible to plan for all scenarios that might affect the re-opening of cultural institutions, but these checklists can and should be adapted. It is suggested that a committee or task force be formed to oversee the completion of the checklist to ensure the institution is safe and ready to open for both staff and visitors.

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1. Access:
   Gain permission from proper authorities to safely enter and re-open cultural institution
2. Health and Safety:
   Ensure the safety and health of staff to prevent future (re)closures
   a. Check on and respond to the physical and mental health of staff returning to duty as well as those considered essential to report onsite during the closure and those who have been / will be covering for any absent staff
   b. Begin to restock cleaning supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as needed
   c. Adjust procedures of people gathering or working in tight spaces or in large groups
3. Communication:
   Ensure broad communication of any adjustment to procedures, reporting assignments, and safety protocols

Re-entry – immediate activity (first day or during coordinated entry)

4. Walkthrough:
   Perform walkthrough of all exhibition, storage, and office spaces for any damage, lost or missing items, or emergency events the require immediate attention
5. Initial Damage Assessment:
   Perform Initial Damage Assessments, if needed, based on walkthrough (step 4)
   a. If damage has occurred to objects, artifacts, archival, or library materials, consult emergency plan for next steps
   b. If collections are missing, file applicable report(s) with the proper state, national, and/or international authorities
6. Environment:
   Check the status of the site's environment and stabilize, especially if HVAC has been turned off for the duration of the closure
   a. Consult with conservators to ensure safe and slow increase of environmental controls if they had been turned off for extended periods (ideally avoid fluctuations of more than 5% humidity change in a 24-hour period)
      i. If greater fluctuations and/or a complete shutdown of the HVAC has occurred, notify collections staff so that appropriate actions can be taken to respond, and lender notifications issued
   b. During Walkthrough (step 4) ensure no environmental damage has occurred (i.e. mold and pest)
7. Maintenance:
   Check the list of scheduled maintenance for life safety and collections equipment and confirm they were completed during the closure or, if unable to be completed during the closure, prioritize any system maintenance that was missed for immediate service
8. Update:
   Provide situation update to staff, volunteers, managers, donors, and key stakeholders through any a pre-determined method based on crisis communication plan

Re-entry –once above has been completed

9. Loans:

    Contact lenders, borrowers, insurers, and TSA to inform them the institution is resuming normal operations and resolve any outstanding paperwork

10. Acquisitions:

    Check mail and drop off locations for any delivered acquisitions during the closure

    a. Consider isolation for a certain period for 6 to 9 days

11. Integration:

    Gather all work completed offsite or at home by staff, interns, volunteers, and fellows into the museum database and/or file systems in accordance with departmental data retention and institutional archiving procedures

12. Installation:

    Install any objects that were removed from display locations prior to closures

13. Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP):

    Discuss and develop or review the continuity of operations plan for long-term recovery from the closure

Re-Opening Resources

- American Enterprise Institute: *National Coronavirus Response: A Road Map to Reopening*
- ICCROM, COVID-19 Risk Assessments: https://www.iccrom.org/tools-identifying-risks-monitoring-impacts-assessing-needs
- Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative: *COVID-19 Resource Hub*
- Smithsonian Safety Manuel Table of Contents
- National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training: *COVID-19 Basics: Re-Entry to Cultural Sites* (video)
- Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC) and Risk Evaluation and Planning Program (REPP): *Walk-through Checklist*
- Museum Study: *Cultural Institution Crisis Response* (free online course)
- The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material: *Closed by COVID-19? A Practice Guide for managers of heritage collections that are closed at short notice because of an epidemic or pandemic*

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		Re-Entry Scenarios		
Scenario Type	**Role**	**Responsibility and Task**	**Date**	**Notes**
Scenario 1	**Operations Team**	**Initiate full re-opening and return to "normal" business operations with events, programs, tours, volunteers, and docents all in place.**		**Trigger: State or National government declare end of end of restrictions and permit a return to normal operations.** **(10 working days to activate and re-open)**
Prior to Re-Opening: Activation				
	Administrators	Notification to the Board or governing body of intention to move into a full re-opening scenario based on applicable trigger from the State or National government		
	Administrators	Notify staff via email, phone, and/or mass notification system to report to duty specifying future date, time, and PPE requirements		Text should be carefully considered and developed by a team, preferably the communications staff if applicable
	Administrators	Develop a Safety Plan to ensure the safety of the staff as they return to work onsite with any new protocols clearly established and consistently communicated (masks, gloves, social distancing, etc.). Example: https://www.sifacilities.si.edu/safety_health/Safety_manual/safety_manual_toc.asp		Can be incorporated into an already existing safety manual
Prior to Re-Opening: Initial Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	All	Confirm staffing levels to achieve a full re-opening		Assess staff that are unable to return due to new employment, illness, or childcare issues and any cross-training needed to reopen
	Collections / Registration / Conservation	Onsite to assess: 1. Galleries 2. Object storage areas 3. Labs		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Libraries and Archives	Onsite to inspect: 1. Library spaces 2. Archives storage		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed

	Exhibitions	Onsite to: 1. Determine changes in gallery flow and limitations if necessary 2. Work with Education and Visitor services on assessment on hands-on interpretive elements		
	Custodial	Custodial staff and/or third-party are notified or contracted with timeline and guidelines for opening		Cleaning will need to be up to CDC standards
	Facilities	Onsite to perform assessment of any building issues		
	Grounds	Onsite to perform assessments to determine the risk, damage, and needs to prepare grounds for opening		If gardens are part of the collection, perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Outdoor Collections	Onsite to: 1. Conduct walk through of all out-buildings for any overlooked maintenance needs 2. Conduct walk through of all outdoor sculpture and garden structures for inventory and damage		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Education /Interpretation	Assess activity spaces, interactive, and technology components		
	Visitor Services	1. Determine how many visitors can access the institution at a given time 2. Assess and acquire resources when tours can begin again		Perhaps begin using timed tickets
	Kitchen/Café	Assess the feasibility of opening according to CDC regulations		Options could include carryout or pre-packaged only
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for staff onsite 2. Assess the status of all equipment		
	Information Technology	Run test to ensure all IT components are working: 1. Phone lines and computers 2. Technology hardware and software 3. Servers		
Prior to Re-Opening: Site Stabilization				
	Advancement	1. Collect donor checks from lockbox 2. Update important donor or board liaisons		

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	Grounds	Onsite to: 1. Clean any debris and repair any damage to the grounds 2. Secure any unsafe areas from visitors		
	Collections / Registration/ Conservation	Onsite to: 1. Reinstall collection objects in galleries 2. Remove additional security measures 3. Complete rotations and exhibitions necessary prior to reopening 4. Dust collections on display		If working within confined spaces, might need to reduce staff and work on rotation
	Exhibitions	Onsite to: 1. Install wayfinding elements for crowd control in galleries 2. Remove any unsafe hands-on elements 3. Assist Collections with the reinstall or deinstall of artifacts from galleries		
	Kitchen/Café	Onsite to: 1. Clean café according to CDC standards 2. Begin food preparations as necessary 3. Coordinate with third-party providers to re-open food and beverage operations with limited seating 4. Implement increased disinfecting, social distancing, disposable products, and staff safety operational measures		May need to consider take-out only options for any or all food and beverage service locations to serve guests upon re-opening Café services with disposable service ware and limited seating with an upgrade to china, glass, and silver as restrictions on services are lifted
	Outdoor Collections	Perform any treatment or stabilization needed for the preservation of the outdoor collections		
	Custodial	Provide thorough cleaning to the institution based on assessment		
	Facilities	Onsite to: 1. Turn on air handlers 2. Resume lighting schedule 3. Perform any building maintenance		
	Education/ Interpretation	1. Reinstall and/or deinstall activity spaces and interactive components, as determined by assessment, and update signage, as applicable, for closures		May reduce interpretive elements to encourage social distancing and reduce touching

		2. Adapt programing to be appropriate for health and safety of visitors		
	Information Technology	Onsite to: 1. Repair any malfunctioning IT components 2. Provide support to staff as issues arise		
	Library and Archives	Onsite to: 1. Update/adopt guidelines to maximize staff and public safety. 2. Dust collections 3. Remove extra security measures		
	Marketing / Communications	1. Update website 2. Send out member email, staff email, notices for vendors, partners, clients, donors, and members 3. Update signage on-site		
	Events Staff	Prepare to facilitate events and programs with increased disinfecting, social distancing, disposable products, and staff safety operational measures		
	Visitor Services	1. Work with Education in adapting programming and visitor interactions 2. Open sales of tickets		Ticket sales should be based on previous assessment
	Retail	1. Reactivate e-commerce site 2. Cleaning and reset of onsite Museum Shop 3. Perform inventory, if needed		
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Train on new safety procedures 2. Ensure all security equipment is functioning 3. Provide security for the staff		
Day of Re-opening				
	All	1. Staff return to work according to guidance provided by administration and with the proper safety protocols 2. Staff begin operations as normal		Allow staff to work with managers to facilitate working offsite if caring for kids or someone who is sick; or if they have underlying health conditions
	Visitor Services	1. Provide calm, welcoming environment to visitors 2. Assist with crowd control, if needed		
	Marketing /	1. Provide messaging to visitors about the re-		Visitors might be hesitant to visit historical sites,

	Communications	opening in signs or website 2. Create talking points for staff interacting with visitors regarding maximum number of guests at a given time, social distancing measures, etc.		so messaging must be clear on how you are protecting them
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for visitors and staff 2. Assist with crowd control if needed		
	Custodial	Provide a quick cleaning of high-use surfaces		Doorknobs, bathrooms, benches, etc.
After Re-opening: Ongoing Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	Administration	Monitor state and national situation in case any of the above steps need to be reversed to a full re-opening with limitations (Scenario 2), a partial re-opening only (Scenario 3), or a full re-closure of the institution		
	All	Continue to monitor health and situation within departments to report to administrators		

Scenario 2	**Operations Team**	**Initiate full re-opening with limitations on gatherings (no programs, events, or tours) - using normal seasonal operating hours; consider extended hours if demand requires and staffing can support (no volunteers)**		**Trigger: State or National government lift restrictions on stay at home and gatherings of 10 or fewer people / events smaller than 250 in indoor spaces** **(5-10 working days to activate and re-open)**
Prior to Re-Opening: Activation				
	Administrators	Notification to the Board or governing body of intention to move into a full re-opening with limitations on gatherings scenario based on applicable trigger from the State or National government		
	Administrators	Notify staff via email, phone, and/or mass notification system to report to duty specifying future date, time, and PPE requirements		Text should be carefully considered and developed by a team, preferably the communications team, if applicable
	Administrators	Develop a Safety Plan to ensure the safety of the staff as they return to work onsite with any new protocols clearly established and consistently communicated (masks, gloves, social distancing, etc.). Example:		Can be incorporated into an already existing safety manual

		https://www.sifacilities.si.edu/safety_health/Safety_manual/safety_manual_toc.asp		
Prior to Re-Opening: Initial Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	All	Confirm staffing levels to achieve a full re-opening		Assess staff that are unable to return due to new employment, illness, or childcare issues and any cross-training needed to reopen
	Collections / Registration / Conservation	Onsite to assess: 1. Galleries 2. Object storage areas 3. Labs		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Libraries and Archives	Onsite to asses: 1. Library spaces 2. Archives storage		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Exhibitions	Onsite to: 1. Determine changes in gallery flow and limitations if necessary 2. Work with Education and Visitor services on assessment on hands-on interpretive elements		
	Custodial	Custodial staff and/or third-party are notified or contracted with timeline and guidelines for opening		Cleaning will need to be up to CDC standards
	Facilities	Onsite to perform assessment of any building issues		
	Grounds	Onsite to perform assessments to determine the risk, damage, and needs to prepare grounds for opening		If gardens are part of the collection, perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed.
	Outdoor Collections	1. Conduct walk through of all out-buildings for any overlooked maintenance needs 2. Conduct walk through of all outdoor sculpture and garden structures for inventory and damage		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Education /Interpretation	1. Assess activity spaces and interactive components 2. Discuss feasibility of continuing programming online		
	Visitor Services	1. Determine how many visitors can access the institution at a given time		Perhaps begin using timed tickets

		2. Assess and acquire resources of visitor flow to prevent clumping		
	Kitchen/Café	1. Assess the feasibility of opening according to CDC regulations		Options could include carryout or pre-packaged only
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for staff onsite 2. Assess the status of all equipment		
	Information Technology	Run test to ensure all IT components are working: 1. Phone lines and computers 2. Technology hardware and software 3. Servers		
Prior to Re-Opening: Site Stabilization				
	Advancement	1. Collect donor checks from lockbox 2. Update important donor or board liaisons		
	Grounds	Onsite to: 1. Clean any debris and repair any damage to the grounds 2. Secure any unsafe areas from visitors		
	Collections / Registration/ Conservation	Onsite to: 1. Reinstall collection objects in galleries 2. Remove additional security measures 3. Complete rotations and exhibitions necessary prior to reopening 4. Dust collections on display		If working within confined spaces, might need to reduce staff and work on rotation
	Exhibitions	Onsite to: 1. Install wayfinding elements for crowd control in galleries 2. Remove any unsafe hands-on elements 3. Assist Collections with the reinstall or deinstall of artifacts from galleries		
	Kitchen/Café	1. Clean café according to CDC standards 2. Begin food preparations as necessary 3. Coordinate with third-party providers to re-open food and beverage operations with limited seating 4. Implement increased disinfecting, social distancing, disposable products, and staff safety		May need to consider take-out only options for any or all food and beverage service locations to serve guests upon re-opening Café services with disposable service ware and limited seating with an upgrade to china, glass,

		operational measures		and silver as restrictions on services are lifted
	Outdoor Collections	Perform any treatment or stabilization needed for the preservation of the outdoor collections		
	Custodial	Provide thorough cleaning to the institution based on assessment		
	Facilities	Onsite to: 1. Turn on air handlers 2. Resume lighting schedule 3. Perform any building maintenance		
	Education/ Interpretation	Reinstall activity spaces and interactive components		May reduce interpretive elements to encourage social distancing and reduce touching
	Information Technology	Onsite to: 1. Repair any malfunctioning IT components 2. Provide support to staff as issues arise		
	Library and Archives	Onsite to: 1. Update/adopt guidelines to maximize staff and public safety. 2. Dust collections 3. Remove extra security measures		
	Marketing / Communications	1. Update website 2. Send out member email, staff email, notices for vendors, partners, clients, donors, and members 3. Update signage on-site		
	Visitor Services	Open sales of tickets		Ticket sales should be based on previous assessment
	Retail	1. Reactivate e-commerce site 2. Cleaning and reset of onsite Museum Shop 3. Perform inventory, if needed		
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Train on new safety procedures 2. Ensure all security equipment is functioning 3. Provide security for the staff		
Day of Re-opening				
	All	1. Staff return to work according to guidance		Allow staff to work with managers to facilitate

		provided by administration and with the proper safety protocols 2. Staff begin operations as normal		working offsite if caring for kids or someone who is sick; or if they have underlying health conditions
	Visitor Services	1. Provide calm, welcoming environment to visitors 2. Assist with crowd control, if needed		
	Marketing / Communications	Provide messaging to visitors about the re-opening in signs or website		Visitors might be hesitant to visit historical sites, so messaging must be clear on how you are protecting them
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for visitors and staff 1. Assist with crowd control if needed		
	Custodial	Provide a quick cleaning of high-use surfaces		Doorknobs, bathrooms, benches, etc.
After Re-opening: Ongoing Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	Administration	Monitor state and national situation in case any of the above steps need to be reversed to a full re-opening with limitations (Scenario 2), a partial re-opening only (Scenario 3), or a full re-closure of the institution		
	All	Continue to monitor health and situation within departments to report to administrators		

Scenario 3	**Operations Team**	**Initiate partial reopening of Outdoor spaces only (buildings, galleries and historic houses remain closed; no food & beverage)- using normal seasonal operating hours**		**Trigger: State or National government lift restrictions on stay at home and gatherings of 10 or fewer people / events smaller than 250 permitted** **(5 working days to activate and re-open)**
Prior to Re-Opening: Activation				
	Administrators	Notification to the Board of intention to move into a partial re-opening of Outdoor spaces only scenario based on applicable trigger from the State or National government		
	Administrators	Notify staff via email, phone, and/or mass notification system to report to duty specifying future date, time, and PPE requirements		Text should be carefully considered and developed by a team, preferably by the communications team, if applicable

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	Administrators	Develop a Safety Plan to ensure the safety of the staff as they return to work onsite with any new protocols clearly established and consistently communicated (masks, gloves, social distancing, etc.). Example: https://www.sifacilities.si.edu/safety_health/Safety_manual/safety_manual_toc.asp		Can be incorporated into an already existing safety manual
Prior to Re-Opening: Initial Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	All	Confirm staffing levels to achieve a full re-opening		Assess staff that are unable to return due to new employment, illness, or childcare issues and any cross-training needed to reopen
	Facilities	Onsite to: Perform assessment of any building issues		
	Grounds	Onsite to: Perform assessments to determine the risk, damage, and needs to prepare grounds for opening		If gardens are part of the collection, perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Outdoor Collections	Onsite to: 1. Conduct walk through of all out-buildings for any overlooked maintenance needs. 2. Conduct walk through of all outdoor sculpture and garden structures for inventory and damage		Perform new risk assessment with the considerations of the new hazards. Perform damage assessments if needed
	Education /Interpretation	1. Assess activity spaces and interactive components		
	Visitor Services	1. Determine how many visitors can access the outdoor spaces at a given time		Perhaps begin using timed tickets
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for staff onsite 2. Assess the status of all equipment		
	Information Technology	Run test to ensure all IT components are working: 1. Phone lines and computers 2. Technology hardware and software 3. Servers		
Prior to Re-Opening: Site Stabilization				

	Advancement	1. Collect donor checks from lockbox 2. Update important donor or board liaisons		
	Grounds	Onsite to: 1. Clean any debris and repair any damage to the grounds 2. Secure any unsafe areas from visitors		
	Facilities	Onsite to: 1. Resume lighting schedule for garden, if applicable 2. Perform any structural maintenance 3. Provide bathroom facilities in gardens if none are present		
	Outdoor Collections	Perform any treatment or stabilization needed for the preservation of the outdoor collections		
	Education/ Interpretation	1. Reinstall activity spaces and interactive components 2. Adapt programing to be appropriate for health and safety of visitors and only for outdoor spaces		May reduce interpretive elements to encourage social distancing and reduce touching
	Information Technology	Onsite to: 1. Repair any malfunctioning IT components 2. Provide support to staff as issues arise		
	Marketing / Communications	1. Update website 2. Send out member email, staff email, notices for vendors, partners, clients, donors, and members 3. Update signage on-site		
	Visitor Services	1. Work with Education in adapting programming and visitor interactions 2. Open sales of tickets		Ticket sales should be based on previous assessment
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Train on new safety procedures 2. Ensure all security equipment is functioning 3. Provide security for the staff		
Day of Re-opening				
	All	Staff return to work according to guidance provided by administration and with the proper safety protocols		Allow staff to work with managers to facilitate working offsite if caring for kids or someone who is sick; or if they have underlying health

				conditions
	Visitor Services	1. Provide calm, welcoming environment to visitors 2. Assist with crowd control, if needed		
	Marketing / Communications	Provide messaging to visitors about the re-opening in signs or website		Visitors might be hesitant to visit cultural institutions, so messaging must be clear on how you are protecting them
	Security	Onsite to: 1. Provide security for visitors and staff 2. Assist with crowd control if needed		
After Re-opening: Ongoing Assessments and Situational Analysis				
	Administration	Monitor state and national situation in case any of the above steps need to be reversed to a full re-opening with limitations (Scenario 2), a partial re-opening only (Scenario 3), or a full re-closure of the institution.		
	All	Continue to monitor health and situation within departments to report to administrators		
	Outdoor Collections	Perform weekly walk-throughs of garden inventory and potential damage to garden structures and exterior of out-buildings		