



Preface

The SLC Safety Committee has researched and carefully considered possible policies for rehearsing together in person, keeping in mind above all the safety of our community. We developed this document to reflect our values as a community and extensive information currently available from infectious disease scientists and public health agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, and Washington State and King County health departments. Links to specific sources of information can be provided on request.

We are a warm, welcoming community. We are activists, rebels, strong-minded, independent folks who also understand the importance of solidarity in promoting the common good. We value and respect all members and want all to be as safe as possible in community rehearsals. In our extended community, there are members and family of members who are immune compromised or might have serious health consequences from a COVID infection. In determining guidelines for in-person rehearsals, we have had in mind the need to protect these most vulnerable folks.

We believe these needs of our community, and the special contagion risks of group singing, can require precautions more stringent than those recommended for the larger society in general.

No matter how extensive our precautions are, they will not guarantee zero percent risk of virus contagion at rehearsals. It is each member's individual decision the risk of rehearsing in person. SLC members who need or prefer to avoid in-person rehearsals will continue to have online access to all rehearsals.

The Covid pandemic is an ever-evolving, continuing medical health issue. The committee will do its best to monitor the latest information and will recommend changes to the protocols as appropriate. That might mean more relaxed precautions, but it could also mean closing indoor rehearsals if we believe our community to be at risk.

Masking and vaccinations continue to be the best way to protect oneself and others from Covid.

As of September 2023, the Seattle Labor Chorus has determined the following to be accurate statements reflecting the science that must guide our rehearsal protocols during the pandemic.

- Singing is a unique activity that involves the forceful release of respiratory droplets into the air, and COVID-19 spreads person-to-person through the air.
- Case studies and scientific research have shown that singing generates 1.5 to 3.4 more aerosol mass than speaking. In other words, singing can release up to three times more aerosol into a room than talking does.
- People can carry and spread COVID-19 who do not show any symptoms and are unaware of having a virus load. There is evidence that this is true even with those who are fully vaccinated and boosted.
- The WHO, CDC, Washington State, Seattle-King County, and Keystone Church all set and periodically modify policies for coping with the pandemic. In determining SLC protocols, we will continually monitor and consider those policies as well as current scientific/medical literature.
- Masks have been documented to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 (as well as other respiratory illnesses).
- Many variants are highly infectious. For choral singers in these circumstances, masks and physical distance from each other are essential ways to minimize the risk of virus transmission.
- For the reasons listed above, Seattle Labor Chorus will observe the following **protocols and guidelines for in-person rehearsals and outdoor gatherings** until further notice.
 1. To attend in-person rehearsals, you must be fully vaccinated and fully boosted *and* provide proof of vaccination and booster. Please email a photo of a vaccination certificate or certification in another form to the Administrative Coordinator at seattlelaborchorus@gmail.com. (Note: This is not the email address for chorus membership as a whole.)
 2. We are updating our policy to allow masks to be optional but we continue to highly encourage them.
 3. Seats will be spaced 6 feet apart. Our rehearsal space will accommodate 25 to 30 singers.
 4. Windows will remain open. Please dress accordingly.
 5. Singers attending a rehearsal will fill out a checklist of health screening questions. SLC will maintain these records of attendance in case of a known or possible virus exposure and the resulting need to trace contacts.
 6. If you, or anyone in your household, have been exposed to COVID, you will need to attend rehearsal remotely for that week. Contact Alice Friedman alicef.54@gmail.com or Patty Lyman patty.lyman@gmail.com to discuss testing and return to in-person rehearsals.

7. If a member has a positive COVID test at any time, that member should alert Alice or Patty as soon as possible as well as other chorus members if necessary to discuss when to return.
8. Places such as airports, public transportation, crowded spaces indoors or outdoors are particularly at high risk for transmission of COVID. We strongly recommend masking in those situations.
9. Please check each Tuesday for last-minute alerts. Unforeseen circumstances can create a need to cancel indoor rehearsal. We will try to do that no later than 5:00 p.m.
10. SLC is committed to offering a hybrid rehearsal option. We will livestream rehearsals on Zoom.
11. Masking protocol for an indoor performance will be decided within 2 weeks prior to a performance. It will be either: a) required, or b) optional, with home testing.

Note: A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test remains the “gold standard” for diagnosing COVID-19 because it’s the most accurate and reliable test. Please have a PCR test done if you test negative on an antigen test, but have symptoms of COVID.

We expect all community members to consider the risk of the community above their own personal desire to attend in-person rehearsals.

Singing masks:

There are masks that are structured that give you some "breathing room" around your mouth and still have a good seal. RESONANCE masks can be found at

<https://www.mymusicfolders.com/product/resonance-95-mask/>

NIOSH certified N95 masks:

Here is the CDC source for companies making certified masks. NON-VENTING MASKS ONLY thank you! https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/default.html

Antigen Tests: <https://sayyescovidhometest.org/> for WA residents. Individual insurance companies are also offering antigen tests.