

GUIDANCE FOR THE RETURN OF CHOIR SINGING

This document includes guidance and suggestions to assist choirs in their return to rehearsals and performances in line with models being adopted internationally. The recommendations in this document - that may be subject to change in line with scientific developments - should be considered in conjunction with other, official, documents issued by the Health Authorities and the [Transition Guidelines for Theatrical Performances](#) issued by Arts Council Malta. As safety remains everybody's top priority, choirs are encouraged to adopt any additional precautionary measures they deem most appropriate in their particular circumstances.

Rehearsals

1. Rehearsals should be carried out in well-ventilated spaces or outdoors. In other spaces the air should be changed as frequently as deemed fit.
2. For the time being choirs should consider shorter rehearsal times.
3. Physical rehearsal time should ideally focus on the most essential musical elements (such as balance, interpretation, etc.) while choral teaching and preliminary rehearsing is encouraged to continue online.
4. Initially, choirs may consider rehearsing in smaller groups while respecting at all times the applicable physical distancing guidelines, including before and after rehearsals.
5. Choristers should sit facing the same direction.
6. Choristers should wear a mask or visor at all times except during the rehearsal proper.
7. Choristers should apply an alcohol based hand sanitizer at the door. Choirs should also provide sanitizing wipes for the cleaning of all surfaces.
8. Clear attendance records should be kept for contact tracing purposes.
9. Conductor should keep an adequate distance from the choir and should wear a visor/mask throughout the rehearsal.
10. Resources (sheet music, pencils, keyboards, water bottles, etc.) should not be shared, and, where possible, digital copies of music used.

11. Choristers should refrain from certain standard social habits (shaking hands, hugging, etc.)
12. Choristers should carry out their own risk assessment before attending a rehearsal. Anyone registering a temperature of 37.2°C or more *or* is visibly unwell *or* has respiratory symptoms should not attend the rehearsal.

Performances

1. The return to performances (including singing during church services) is determined by a number of factors such as size of venue, ventilation, number and positioning of singers, number and positioning of audience/congregation etc.
2. Each choir should carry out its own risk assessment of the various factors outlined above and determine its own safety parameters.
3. The number of choristers in a performance should be proportional to the available space in a way that social distancing between choristers is respected.
4. Face-to-face singing and unnecessary movement on stage should be avoided.
5. Appropriate social distancing between the choir and the audience/congregation should be maintained.