



January 2022

Workplace Safety Guidelines

As musicians return to the stage and pit in front of live audiences across the state of Georgia, safety during this precarious time will be top of mind for everyone. We are in a delicate balance as new variants will continue to arise and community spread will fluctuate from region to region. This means, particularly for freelance musicians, job safety will look vastly different from contract to contract, employer to employer, and venue to venue.

Vaccinations, strict masking policies, and stringent testing procedures are our greatest tools to protect our return to work. While not everyone will find all of these safety precautions necessary, many musicians are depending on them to feel safe returning to work while protecting themselves, their career, and their family. The following guide suggests safety precautions and measures, endorsed by Atlanta Federation of Musicians and its Local Executive Board, musicians can ask of their contractors and employers.

What does accountability look like?

Employers, contractors, and venues have a responsibility to create and maintain a safe work environment, and we as musicians have the responsibility to help support and sustain this safe environment. We strongly encourage accountability for all safety protocols communicated to musicians when they accept and arrive for an engagement. As a collective, we must unify to protect the needs of the many.

Accountability begins with asking for musician, venue staff, and audience safety protocols from the contractor/employer that will appear on the signed contract before accepting an engagement. This information should be immediately available by most contractors/employers/venues, and we encourage all musicians to understand and ask questions to get a full picture of what to expect when you arrive and how to ensure the safest possible workplace.

Standard Safety Measures

Masking – All musicians regardless of vaccination status, including choirs, should be masked except while playing wind and brass instruments. Acceptable masks are surgical, KN95, KF94, or fabric masks with a filter insert. Masks should be worn at all times while indoors, including backstage and while loading and unloading. Wind and brass players should mask as much as possible while on stage when not playing.

- *Rule of thumb – If you can blow out a candle through the mask, it is not effective enough.*

Social Distancing – Masked, non-wind playing musicians should ideally be arranged four feet apart, while wind instruments should ideally be placed in a well-ventilated area with close to six feet on all sides. Musicians should be arranged a maximum distance from the audience, and capacity limits should be in place in line with local, state, and federal recommendations.

Testing and Vaccinations – It is *strongly* encouraged and recommended that contractors/employers/staff utilize vaccination policies and/or testing procedures to maintain a safe return to live music. The following are current Local recommendations of best practices:

- Vaccinated musicians should bring proof of vaccination and continue a boosting regimen as recommended by the CDC, as well as using at home antigen tests on the day of as an extra precaution.
- Unvaccinated musicians are strongly encouraged to bring proof of negative PCR tests taken within 72 hours prior to the start of first service and also regularly utilize at home antigen tests on the same day as the engagement.
- Additionally, as musicians and other artists and staff arrive for an engagement, temperature checks are an important and effective screening tool at the time of entry.

Ventilation – Backstage and onstage, ventilation is extremely important for the health and safety of both musicians and audiences. Measures should be in place to maximize air ventilation for wind and brass players away from other musicians and the audience.

Cleaning Materials and Personal Items – Musicians should plan to bring and not share any personal items backstage or during an engagement except for music stands. Ask if cleaning materials like hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes will be provided by the employer and what cleaning protocols happen between services. It is recommended musicians bring their own supplies as backup.

- For any instruments that release condensation, the player should bring a towel and or other method of containing condensation, and any areas exposed should be thoroughly sanitized by the player prior to leaving the engagement.

Enforcement – Before accepting an engagement, it is always important to know when, if, and how the above recommendations will be enforced. The union contractor, who creates and signs the employment contract, serves as your representative to enforce Local and Federation Bylaws during an engagement. It is their duty to enforce all obligations contractually agreed to for each engagement, and per Local Bylaw 12.3A, advise members of any hazardous conditions to which they may be exposed during the engagement.

- For safety measures to be enforceable by a Local contractor, they must be written in the “Additional Provisions” section of an L2 contract and signed by the employer.

Questions to Ask Before Accepting a Gig:

- Will you, as the contractor/employer/venue, commit to providing a safe work environment for all musicians working this engagement by filing an L2 contract?
- What are the social distancing guidelines outlined for the engagement?
- What is the testing policy for musicians, employees, and audience?
- What is the vaccination policy for musicians, employees, and audience?
- What is the masking policy for musicians, employees, and audience?
- How much distance will there be between the audience and the musicians?
- What are load in/load out procedures, and is there a backstage or greenroom available?
- Will there be cleaning materials provided (hand sanitizer, masks provided for those without one)?
- How are these policies enforced, and who is the contact for enforcement on the day of the engagement?

L2 Contracts:

As a musician accepting a live music Union engagement, we strongly encourage you to have a conversation with the contractor or employer about COVID-19 safety measures in place to protect everyone on site. To document safety measures important to you and your peers, an L2 contract with additional safety measures can and should be filed alongside the typical LS-1 contract. This document allows the contractor to put in writing ahead of time in the “Additional Provisions” section what protocols will be followed leading up to the engagement and what will happen on site to hold employers accountable and protect all musicians on the contract.

Disclaimer:

This document is not meant to be interpreted as medical advice. This is created as a tool for musicians of all types to return to and support a workplace that is as safe as possible. It is a list of possible items to discuss with employers/contractors/venues as contracted work returns to Georgia. Compiled in accordance with local government health and safety guidelines as well as reputable data from sourced safety experts, this list cannot be considered complete or binding. As the science of COVID-19 changes, so shall the recommended safety guidelines. This document, created to help musicians develop their own personal criteria for workplace safety and communicate that to employers/contractors/venues, is not authoritative, only suggestive.



Atlanta Federation of Musicians
www.atlantamusicians.com
551 Dutch Valley Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30324
(404) 873-2033