

Mark Morris Dance Group Operational Safety Plan

Last updated August 26, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

This document serves as Discalced, Inc. / dba Mark Morris Dance Group's (MMDG) New York State mandated [Business Safety Plan](#). MMDG will make this document available on-site in print and in digital formats. MMDG has reviewed and understands the state issued industry guidelines, and is fully compliant with the directives of the governor's office, as communicated in [NY Forward](#).

MMDG has prioritized opening safely rather than quickly. The health and safety of everyone who works from and visits the Dance Center is paramount at every step of the way. All decisions have been informed by federal, state and local rules and recommendations and are grounded in public health, science, and infection control.

MMDG has developed a comprehensive staged reopening plan of the Mark Morris Dance Center, which outlines how we plan to resume operations at the Dance Center while addressing public health concerns prior to welcoming dancers, students, faculty and staff back and prioritizes the mitigation of risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

It is understood that any reopening plan will include some degree of risk. No individual control method is sufficient to eliminate risk, just as no one single entity or person has sole responsibility. Rather, MMDG's goal is to minimize risk by pursuing a multi-layered defense integration strategy with shared responsibilities across staff, faculty, students and our community.

We acknowledge that our response to the pandemic must be dynamic, just as the knowledge we are gathering about the virus is changing and evolving over time. As more information becomes available from the scientific and medical communities about the source, transmission, and treatment of COVID-19, and as federal, state and local entities respond, we expect that our own plans and policies will likewise adapt to these changes. Thus, this plan does not and is not intended to cover every issue that may arise in the context of MMDG's reopening, as we will need to continually adapt to confront issues as they arise. What this plan is intended to do is provide the basic strategies and protocols by which we will operate in the days and months ahead.

We are committed to building trust with our staff, faculty, students, and community members by providing transparency and open communication of our strategies and practices.

SUMMARY OF STAGED REOPENING PLAN

In accordance with New York State (NYS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and recommendations, the Mark Morris Dance Group will reopen the Dance Center in stages. The decision to reopen and the stages was carefully planned with consideration of the changing infection rate, transmission risks, local mitigation efforts, our ability to effectively and efficiently adopt and implement new policies and protocols, and guidance as provided by various partners in the industry. For details on how federal and state reopening requirements have impacted our plan, visit the [Path to Reopening](#) section of this document.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is necessary to create a culture of health, safety, and shared responsibility among staff, dancers, faculty, and community members, who all play an important role in the success of any risk reduction plan. This common understanding is achieved through a combination of information sharing, educational forums, scheduled discussions about new policies, community agreements, and regular health screening. The Reopening Task Force has sought guidance from experts in various fields and will adhere to requirements and consider best practices laid out by the CDC, NYS DOH and other government agencies.

If a visitor or employee observes someone who is non-compliant with MMDG's safety requirements or observes an unsafe condition, they should report their observations and/or feedback to the Site Safety Monitor (a designated member of the Operations, Facility, or program staff, scheduled by day and stationed on the ground floor of the Dance Center) who is responsible for screening all visitors and ensuring compliance with all aspects of this safety plan.

Vaccination Policy

As of August 16, 2021, in accordance with the "[Key To NYC](#)", proof of vaccination will be required, for all who are eligible (currently ages 12+), to enter the Dance Center, including:

- All staff, contractors and faculty.
- Students ages 12 and above.
- Renters, parents and visitors ages 12 and above.

Proof of vaccination may be provided in the following ways:

- Vaccination Card
- NYC COVID Safe Pass
- NYS Excelsior Pass
- Other NYS supported pass

MMDG is in the process of building systems accepting proof of vaccination in advance. Regular Dance Center occupants will be required to upload proof of vaccination in advance using the following systems:

- Children/Teens - Active Network upon registration
- Adult Students - MindBody upon registration
- Renters - MindBody upon registration
- Staff, contractors, faculty - HR platform (Ascentis)

Visitors and vendors will be screened upon arrival. Entry will not be permitted without proof of vaccination.

[How to Request Vaccine Records from NY](#)

Mask Policy

Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant currently circulating in the United States, **masks remain required in all common/public spaces** and most other situations within the Dance Center. MMDG will continue to follow guidelines and requirements from CDC and NYS and update its mask policy to reflect the evolving situation. Additional details regarding our mask policy can be found below.

- Excluding accommodations for those under the age of two and those unable to medically tolerate such covering, masks are required in any space.
- Renters with fully vaccinated parties may request an accommodation to use a private space (studio, private office) unmasked. Proof of vaccination must be provided for everyone in their party in advance.
- All Dance Center occupants must wear a mask in all common/public spaces, regardless of activity or physical distancing.
 - Common/public spaces within the Dance Center include:
 - Front Desk

- Hallways, stairwells, lobbies, and lounges
 - Locker rooms, multi-stall restrooms and changing rooms
- When eating/drinking in areas where masks are required, masks may be removed temporarily as long as everyone is physically distanced a minimum of six feet.
- Masks must fit properly and cover both the nose and mouth. Acceptable masks include cloth and surgical masks. Masks with one-way valves are prohibited. For up-to-date guidance on picking a mask, see the CDC's [Guide to Masks](#).
- MMDG maintains an adequate supply of disposable adult and child-sized masks should any person require one when at the Dance Center.
- For workplace activities requiring a higher degree of protection, such as the use of an electrostatic cleaner by MMDG's facilities team members, N95 respirators or other PPE used under existing industry standards will be provided and used, as is defined in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
- All MMDG employees, independent contractors, and temporary workers are required to be vaccinated as of September 13, 2021.
- As of September 13, 2021, should the CDC not require masks indoors, masks for vaccinated employees are optional in the following areas of the Dance Center which are designated specifically for employee use only:
 - 3rd Floor
 - Employee Lounge (4th Floor)
 - Basement, including
 - Basement Conference Room
 - Archive Office
 - Facilities Office (Mezzanine)
 - Visitors invited to access any of the employee designated areas must provide proof of vaccination in advance. Alternate meeting space will be designated in the event that a visitor is unable to provide proof of vaccination.
 - Rehearsal studios designated for exclusive use by MMDG employees

Watch a video from the World Health Organization- [how to wear a fabric mask](#)-which offers general guidance on mask wearing, whether disposable or reusable.

Health Screening

MMDG asks all visitors to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms and infections prior to coming to the Dance Center. Upon arrival visitors will be asked to provide proof of vaccination and confirm verbally that they have not tested positive for COVID-19 and/or are not experiencing [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) in the prior 10 days. Delivery personnel and visitors who do not enter the building beyond the front vestibule shall be exempted from this screening.

Information collected during the screening process will be accessible by the Site Safety Monitor on duty and will be kept confidential.

Self-Monitoring COVID-19 Symptoms

- **Self Check:** use this [Coronavirus Self-Checker](#) tool on the CDC website.
- **Keep Track of your Symptoms:** Review CDC's recommendations for what to do if you're sick [here](#).
- **Seek Medical Attention** immediately if you exhibit any of these [emergency warning signs](#). Consult your doctor if you have any additional concerns.

Facility Modifications

In an effort to minimize interaction between building occupants and to support physical distancing requirements and other protocols, MMDG has:

- Closed or repurposed communal spaces
- Reconfigured workstations to allow for ample distance between employees
- Where possible, converted water fountains to water bottle filling stations
- Created plexiglass partitions between the public and staff at the Front Desk
- Modified HVAC systems

We ask that all occupants:

- Follow traffic patterns – Always stay to the right to help encourage safe movement/distancing.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Use the front stairwell for ascending and the rear stairwell for descending.

Ventilation & Air Purification

Optimizing the ventilation of our building is an important strategy to reduce airborne transmission of COVID-19. The concentration of virus in indoor air can be reduced by bringing more fresh, outdoor air into the building and by filtering and sanitizing re-circulated air to remove and kill airborne viral particles.

To optimize the performance of our HVAC system, MMDG has increased fresh-air intake, upgraded to MERV-13 filters, and installed iWave bipolar ionization units as an additional method of disinfection. MMDG's HVAC system automatically maintains a relative humidity between 40% and 60%, which is believed to help reduce the viability and transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

For smaller spaces with less ventilation, MMDG will provide portable air purifiers with HEPA filtration.

MMDG's Safety Plan satisfies the requirements of the New York HERO Act Airborne Prevention Plan.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures

MMDG adheres to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH).

The following definitions from the CDC have been listed below to ensure there is a shared understanding of the meaning of these terms.

CLEANING is the removal, usually with detergent and water or enzyme cleaner and water, of adherent visible soil, microorganisms, and other debris from the surfaces, devices, and equipment by a manual or mechanical process that prepares the items for safe handling and/or further decontamination.

SANITIZING requires the use of an agent that reduces the number of bacterial contaminants to safe levels as judged by public health requirements.

MMDG is committed to:

- Blocking out sufficient time to deep clean and sanitize all spaces within the Dance Center
- Sanitizing the Dance Center using electrostatic equipment with CDC approved disinfectants a minimum of once per day
- Mopping floors and sanitizing high touch surfaces throughout the day
- Providing convenient access to disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer, containing at least 60% alcohol, throughout the Dance Center
- Cleaning and sanitizing bathrooms regularly and more frequently with increased use
- Making available, upon request, details on EPA approved cleaning supplies being used
- Posting and maintaining cleaning logs on-site to document date, time, and scope of all cleaning activity

Space Usage

Building modifications, policies, and systems allowing for physical distancing have been adopted.

3 Lafayette Entrance

- Staggered, timed entry windows are set for each activity.
- Visitors are admitted one at a time.
- Pre-registration is required for all on-site activities.
- Pickups and deliveries are done with as little contact as possible.

Rockwell Place Exits (from 1st floor lobby, rear stairwell and basement)

- 1st Floor occupants exit using the 1st floor lobby exit to Rockwell Place.
- Studio F (basement level studio) occupants use the 1st floor lobby exit.
- 2nd Floor/Mezzanine-5th Floor occupants exit using the rear stairwell exit to Rockwell Place.
- Basement office occupants use the basement exit to Rockwell Place.

Wellness Center

- A limited number of practitioners and their clients have permission to access this space.

Offices

- MMDG has taken measures to limit on-site interactions and congregation by reducing in-office workforce and avoiding multiple people working in one area.
- Workstations have been modified or reconfigured to restrict the number of workstations, employee seating areas, and desks, so that employees are at least six feet apart in all directions.
- Shared workstations are limited. In the instance that a workstation must be shared, it will be cleaned and disinfected between use.
- In-person meetings are held in a well ventilated area where proper physical distancing can be achieved by all parties. Hybrid meetings are conducted using video conferencing software.

Studios

- Studio capacities, set in accordance with current New York State Department of Health interim guidance, vary by activity and vaccination status of the group.
- Video filming and streaming equipment has been installed in six of the Dance Center's nine studios to support live online instruction.

Employee Training

MMDG has developed a training program for employees (administrative staff, faculty, dancers) to establish a baseline understanding of public health and infectious disease transmission and to educate them on practices and policies intended to minimize risks associated with COVID-19.

We expect that this shared knowledge will result in a higher level of compliance with new procedures and policies, comfort with the steps MMDG takes as it moves forward, and a higher level of confidence in explaining new procedures and policies when interacting with the public.

Updated guidance and recommendations based on new data around disease transmission and risk-reduction as it pertains to MMDG operations will be communicated to all. Department-specific questions and concerns will be addressed as needed. Prior to moving to any increased level of activity, we will reevaluate all protocols and policies and determine if modifications are necessary.

RESPONDING TO A SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE

If a person becomes symptomatic while in the Dance Center:

- They will be isolated and then sent home immediately.
- They will be advised to seek medical care if symptoms are severe.
- The Site Safety Monitor should be informed.
- MMDG will disinfect any areas and common surfaces they may have touched.

If within 10 days of being at the Dance Center, a person who experiences COVID-19 symptoms, tests positive for COVID-19 or has been in significant close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they must immediately notify Mark Morris Dance Group by emailing trackandtrace@mmdg.org.

Per the CDC, if you are fully vaccinated and have been around someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you should get tested 3-5 days after your exposure, even if you don't have symptoms. You should also wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative. You should isolate yourself for 10 days if your test result is positive.

Contact Tracing

MMDG will ask anyone who reports a suspected or confirmed case to complete a digital form to relay details required for MMDG and NYC DOH contact tracing. MMDG will do preliminary contact tracing so we may inform close contacts that they may have been exposed and determine whether there is reasonable evidence that the disease was contracted at the Dance Center. MMDG will follow OSHA reporting standards if a connection is suspected or confirmed.

Individuals who are alerted that they have come into close contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted via tracing, tracking, or other mechanism, are required to self report to their employer at the time of alert and shall follow the protocol described and referenced above.

To better understand our response process, review our [decision tree](#).

MMDG will notify the New York City Department of Health immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by someone who occupied the Dance Center within the previous 10 days and will cooperate with them to trace all contacts in the workplace. Using the visitor log, MMDG will provide the names of all visitors who entered the location during this time. MMDG will maintain confidentiality to the extent possible consistent with employee safety and as consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Individuals should review CDC [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).

Upon notification, all areas that the individual who tested positive entered and touched, including all work areas and equipment they may have interacted with, will immediately be cleaned using disinfecting products that are effective against COVID-19, per the CDC guidance on [cleaning and disinfecting your building or facility if someone is sick](#).

- All common areas in the building where the individual may have spent time or common items the employee may have touched will be disinfected as well (bathrooms, doorknobs, etc.).
- Whenever possible, after a COVID-19 case has been reported in an area, MMDG will wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting that area to ensure the safety of the cleaning staff.
- If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection will not be necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection will continue.

Returning to the Dance Center

Consistent with WHO/CDC Guidelines, persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation and once again participate in activities at the Dance Center under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptom onset AND
- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- Other symptoms have improved.

Persons infected with SARS-CoV-2 who never develop COVID-19 symptoms may discontinue isolation and other precautions 10 days after the date of their first positive RT-PCR test.

If The Dance Center Is Required to Shut Down Temporarily

- MMDG will promptly execute any one or all of the following actions:
- Transition to a fully online live program for the School and Adult programs
- Suspend non-essential operations of the Dance Center

Communications Plan

Up to date health and safety information will be accessible on [MMDG's website](#).

Opportunities to review the Safety Plan and discuss the health and safety measures that MMDG has implemented have been provided through Town Hall meetings with students and parents in the School and staff meetings for MMDG employees.

All anticipated visitors will be sent a pre-visit email notifying them of what to expect when they enter the building. Unanticipated visitors, when allowed, will be informed of our safety requirements before they are admitted.

Timely correspondence will be sent to the MMDG's Dance Center community and staff regarding any positive COVID-19 cases connected with activity at the Dance Center.

PATH TO REOPENING

Alignment with Federal and State Reopening Requirements

On **March 16, 2020**, MMDG established a Business Continuity of Operations Task Force in response to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in New York City and elected to suspend all on-site in-person activities at the Mark Morris Dance Center and pivoted to a fully online schedule of programming. All MMDG staff moved to off-site work.

On **March 20, 2020**, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.6, directing all non-essential businesses to close.

On **April 26, 2020**, Governor Cuomo announced a phased approach to reopen businesses in New York based upon a data-driven, regional analysis. In response, MMDG established a Reopening Task Force with representation across the organization to develop a reopening plan.

Effective **August 24, 2020**, “museums and other cultural institutions will be allowed to open in New York City” [Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said on Friday](#), following five months of a pandemic shutdown that has resulted in substantial layoffs and financial crises for many of these organizations.” “The directive does not allow theaters and other performing arts venues to open.” The Dance Center remained closed as a result.

As a result of conversations with the Governor’s office, there was agreement in **late August**, proven out by the FAQs on the NYForward website, that performing arts organizations could reopen for specific allowable activities, such as Media & Production, Office Work, and Rentals. Each activity would need to be certified using the Business Affirmation form for that activity, rather than certifying the entire organization. Theaters were/are still not permitted to operate. MMDG certified for Media & Production, Office-based work, and Venue rentals and facility maintenance. All activities were subject to reduced capacities and compliance with New York Forward interim guidance.

On **April 2, 2021**, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that performing arts and entertainment venues could reopen at 33 percent capacity, allowing MMDG to increase capacities for all activities.

Effective **May 19, 2021**, [New York Adopts CDC's Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#) for Most Businesses and Public Settings.

“Given that the CDC has advised that fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks and over 52 percent of New Yorkers over the age of 18 are fully vaccinated, the State will authorize businesses to continue to require masks for all in their establishments, consistent with the CDC guidance. In most settings, vaccinated individuals will not be required to wear a mask. Unvaccinated individuals, under both CDC and state guidance must wear masks in all public settings.

As previously [announced](#), most business capacities — which are currently based upon percentage of maximum occupancy — will be removed on May 19. Businesses will only be limited by the space available for patrons or parties of patrons to maintain the required social distance of 6 feet.

However, given that the CDC has advised that fully vaccinated individuals do not need to maintain social distance, businesses may eliminate the 6 feet of required social distancing, and therefore increase capacity, only if all patrons within the establishment - - or a separate designated part of the establishment -- present proof of full vaccination status. Proof of full vaccination status can be provided by patrons through paper form, digital application, or the State's [Excelsior Pass](#).”

In response, MMDG allowed renters to use a private space without masks and distancing upon request if proof of vaccination was provided. Additionally, the Mark Morris Dance Group company members met the criteria to rehearse unmasked without distancing in a private studio. Children/Teen and Adult class capacities increased in July, with the start of summer programming.

As of **June 25, 2021**, the New York State Travel Advisory is no longer in effect. As such, travelers arriving in New York are no longer required to submit traveler health forms. All travelers, [domestic](#) and [international](#), are asked to continue to follow all CDC travel requirements.

As of **July 27, 2021**, given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant currently circulating in the United States, the CDC updated their recommendations for fully vaccinated people, encouraging them to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission. Kings County, location of the Mark Morris Dance Center, qualified as an area of high transmission at the time of the announcement. Masks remain required in most situations within the Dance Center.

Staged Reopening Plan

STAGE 1 (September 2020 through January 2021): The Dance Center remained closed to the public and all programs were delivered 100% online, through live and on-demand video platforms. The Dance Center was accessible for limited hours to teaching artists who live-streamed interactive classes and filmed on-demand classes from studios. Limited staff worked on-site. Visitors were not permitted. Individual MMDG dancers (or those cohabitating) were allowed limited access to a studio.

STAGE 2: Starting February 2021, a limited number of education programs were delivered in a hybrid format blending in-person and online participation. MMDG remained prepared to pivot from partially to fully online learning. Visitors and guardians were not permitted. The Wellness Center reopened and other Dance Center programming, including MMDG's Subsidized Rehearsal Space Program, began to phase back in. On-site classes in pod configurations (with a rotating schedule and/or streaming from different studios) and solo rehearsals resumed for the company.

STAGE 3: Starting May 19, 2021, with the change in mask and distancing guidelines from the CDC and NYS, the Dance Center moved into Stage 3. We continued to offer online instruction while increasing the capacity of our hybrid programming, making it possible for more students to take classes in person at the Dance Center. Additional staff returned to work on-site. Pre-registration was still required for all activities. A limited number of visitors and guardians were permitted. Full company class and group rehearsals resumed.

STAGE 4: Planned for September 2021, the Mark Morris Dance Center will see an expansion in programming. MMDG's vaccination policy will go into effect.

MMDG remains prepared to pause, shut down, or revert to a previous stage in response to a decline in the health metrics, suggesting that New York City's COVID-19 caseload has increased.

Development and Execution Reopening Plan

In developing this plan, we have relied upon guidance as laid forth by some of the major service organizations, educational institutions, and cultural institutions who are likewise determining best protocols to protect their members, staff, and the public at large. To this end, we would like to acknowledge the work done by HERE Arts Center, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Repertory Theatre, and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in developing and making public reopening plans, which created a foundation for this plan.

The successful execution of this plan is the responsibility of the administration, led by Executive Director, Nancy Umanoff.

MMDG's COVID-19 Task Force manages policy development, informs ongoing communications with external and internal stakeholders, and ensures compliance with all federal, state, and city regulations/guidelines. Working Groups within the Task Force work in a coordinated and collaborative fashion to achieve the institution's objectives under this plan.

Working Groups:

- Policies Development and Training
- Communications
- Programming
- Reopening the Facility

Guidance from External Agencies

MMDG will closely follow the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure compliance with all health department directives. Valued sources of information include:

- COVID-19-related guidelines issued by federal agencies:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
 - U.S. Department of Education (DOE)
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - U.S. Department of State
 - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- COVID-19-related guidelines issued by state and regional agencies:
 - "New York Forward" issued from the governor's office
 - New York State Department of Health
 - New York City Department of Health
 - New York State Education Department (NYSED)
 - Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)