

*Statement by American Choral Directors Association, Barbershop Harmony Society, Chorus America, and National Association of Teachers of Singing*

## **Singing Organizations Response to Aerosol Research Study**

*August 7, 2020*

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the American Choral Directors Association, Barbershop Harmony Society, Chorus America, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing are working together to provide a unified voice for leaders of singing ensembles and voice professionals throughout the United States and North America. We continue to seek evolving solutions for our field as more information is available and more research is conducted. To that end, we have been supporting and closely following progress on the Performing Arts Aerosol Study led by researchers at the University of Colorado Boulder and the University of Maryland. The second round of preliminary results of that study related to singing were released today.

These latest findings focus on how singing relates to the distribution of aerosols, a potential mechanism for spreading the COVID-19 virus, and, most importantly, how to mitigate those effects. We know how crucial this data is to our field, and we advise the singing community to turn to this and other evidence-based scientific research to inform scenario planning for the months ahead.

While these findings are preliminary and have not yet been peer-reviewed, these key takeaways can help inform leaders' decision-making going forward:

- Preliminary findings support much of the research and best practices for lowering the risk of transmission that have been discussed since the early days of the pandemic, including the importance of wearing well-fitting masks in both indoor and outdoor environments, limiting exposure times (a 30 minute rehearsal limit is the preliminary recommendation), physical distancing, and singing in areas with good ventilation (preliminary results show that outdoors is best).
- There is no way to eliminate all risk from gathering singers together in person, but that risk can be reduced. If you decide to gather singers in person, you should strictly adhere to all recommended safety procedures carefully and completely.
- There is no “one size fits all” approach. We all have a personal responsibility to monitor our local and CDC guidelines, understanding that different regions are impacted differently. As new information arrives, we will need to continually adjust our perception of the risk and our ensuing practices. We have included a variety of links below that you may find helpful as you make your own assessments.

Our organizations will present a joint Q&A-style webinar with study researchers on Monday, August 10 at 5:00 pm ET, livestreamed on the [National Association of Teachers of Singing](#)

[\(NATS\) YouTube channel.](#)

Fortunately, our field is full of resilient and resourceful leaders. In the face of great uncertainty, leaders of singing communities have made enormous adaptations to our rehearsal, assessment, performance, teaching, and community-building. As the field's leadership service organizations, we advocate a measured and cautious approach to resuming in-person singing in order to contribute to good health and the healing of our communities. We also remain positive, determined advocates for one another, our singers, and our field, in hopeful anticipation that we will soon have full access to the music-making that inspires and sustains us.

Catherine Dehoney, President and CEO, [Chorus America](#)

Allen Henderson, Executive Director, [National Association of Teachers of Singing](#)

Marty Monson, CEO, [Barbershop Harmony Society](#)

Tim Sharp, CEO, [American Choral Directors Association](#)

### **Performing Arts Aerosol Study**

Please visit the [main study website for full information](#), including an [FAQ](#). These preliminary results, which have not been peer reviewed, are to be used strictly for general consideration and will be updated as new information becomes available. The study's final results are expected in late November/early December.

The University of Colorado Boulder has also developed a [pilot risk assessment tool](#) for aerosol transmission to help decision-makers estimate the infection risk for a number of basic situations such as college classrooms, choirs, and being outdoors.

### **Additional Resource Links**

[Georgia Tech Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool](#)

[Know Your Own Tolerance for Risk](#)

[CDC Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#)

[Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide](#)

[University of Cincinnati College - Conservatory of Music COVID Research](#)

[Western ACDA Division paper](#)

[ACDA COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Chorus America COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Barbershop Harmony Society COVID-19 Resources](#)

[NATS COVID-19 Resources](#)