



## NAVIGATING THE COVID-19 SURGE SPECIAL GUIDANCE FOR CURRENTLY WORKING COMPANIES DECEMBER 2020

With COVID-19 rapidly spreading across the United States, the continued health and safety of AGMA and SDC members is of paramount importance. The [Return to Stage & Performing Arts Playbook](#) was designed to help our companies and members get back to work safely when the spread of COVID-19 was *decreasing*. This is reflected in the Playbook's levels of reopening. Now, however, with rapidly *increasing* community spread of the virus, we must reassess and adjust, if necessary, the protocols in place at each of our companies. Returning to previous levels of protection or adding additional controls must be considered at this time in order to continue working safely. And, while our goal remains to keep working, we all recognize that there might come a point during this COVID-19 surge when the safety and health of our members and our company administrators requires a pause of in-person activity.

The case number data points and suggested actions outlined in the table below are designed to guide your decision making. Compliance with all government requirements for reopening or reclosing, personal hygiene, size of gatherings, and mask wearing is a given. Companies should also follow the guidelines in the [Return to Stage & Performing Arts Playbook](#) whenever they are stricter.

During this surge, the primary driver of concern is **NEW CASE RATES PER MILLION**. The three other factors, listed below, should help inform your response when your locality is near the cut-off point for each alert level. These other data points can be used as follows:

1. Generally, the **14-day case trend** is a negative factor, if increasing, and a positive indicator, if decreasing. There can be fluctuations, however, and even a flat or declining case rate may still pose a risk if new case rates per million are high.
2. Ideally, **COVID test positivity rates** should be less than 5%, with more than 10% being a cause for concern, and over 20% indicating an uncontrolled spread of the virus.
3. The **Transmission Rate (Ro/Rt)** is the estimated number of new cases resulting from each infection. Greater than 1 indicates the pandemic is growing; less than 1 indicates the pandemic is declining. Greater than 1.2 suggests caution should be taken.

### DATA SOURCES:

- [State Level Data Source](#) showing the spread of the disease (New Case Rates Per Million, Disease Trends, COVID Test Positive Rates)
- [State and County Level Data Source](#) showing Transmission Rate (Ro/Rt)

The following table recommends appropriate action based on the key COVID-19 metrics described above. ***In all cases, please discuss the appropriate course of action for your company with your AGMA or SDC contact.***

ALERT LEVEL 1 100-150 New Cases Per Million	ALERT LEVEL 2 150 – 200 New Cases Per Million	ALERT LEVEL 3 >200 – 500 New Cases Per Million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review all <b>safety protocols</b> to ensure they are working and effective</li> <li>• <b>Do not progress</b> to the next level / consider retreating a level</li> <li>• Optimize <b>HVAC system</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase fresh air intake and number of air changes per hour</li> <li>○ Increase filtration to MERV13 if feasible</li> <li>○ If MERV13 not feasible, add portable HEPA filtration with UV-C</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Everyone wears a <b>mask</b>, including singers and dancers</li> <li>• Reinforce <b>safe behaviors</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>All actions in previous alert level plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider returning to <b>Level 1 or 2</b> if at a higher level</li> <li>• Consider developing <b>pods<sup>1</sup></b> to limit impact of an infection</li> <li>• Consider developing a <b>bubble<sup>2</sup></b> to isolate performers and support staff from the community</li> <li>• <b>Minimize</b> on site personnel</li> <li>• Essential <b>visitors</b> only or no visitors</li> <li>• Limit <b>travel<sup>3</sup></b> across state lines and encourage use of personal transport versus public transport</li> </ul>	<p><b>All actions in previous alert level plus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strongly consider return to <b>Level 1</b></li> <li>• Further <b>minimize</b> personnel on site</li> <li>• If continuing operations, consider adding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Testing:</b> Introduce frequent routine mandatory testing</li> <li>○ <b>Travel:</b> Discourage use of public transportation</li> <li>○ Protect <b>High Risk Individuals</b> or living with/caring for someone at higher risk from COVID-19</li> <li>○ Have everyone formally commit to <b>safe behaviors</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### WHEN A PAUSE OF IN-PERSON ACTIVITY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

A pause of in-person activities for at least 4 weeks should be discussed with your AGMA or SDC representative if any of the following conditions exist:

- New cases per million are >500 (7-day average) +/-
- COVID test positivity rate >15%
- More than 20% of employees are quarantined because they have had COVID-19 or had significant exposure
- Evidence of workplace transmission

If the situation improves after a 4 week pause, companies should restart at level 1, working back through the levels over time as outlined in the playbook.

## TRAVEL GUIDANCE

Both companies and artists may have questions regarding travel during this period. While quarantines and testing can mitigate the risk of exposing others, please note the following [travel warning prominently featured on the CDC website](#):

Travel can increase your chance of **spreading and getting** COVID-19. Postponing travel and **staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.**

You and your travel companions (including [children](#)) may feel well and not have any symptoms, **but you can still spread COVID-19 to family, friends, and community after travel.**

If you have a **known exposure** to COVID-19 you should [delay travel](#), [quarantine](#) yourself from other people, get [tested](#), and monitor your health. Check your [state or local health department](#) for information about local quarantine requirements.

**Don't travel if you are sick** or test positive for COVID-19. Don't travel with someone who is sick.

Anyone who chooses to travel during this period should adhere to the following guidelines:

If travelling from a country, state, or locality that meets the 'hot spot' definition (more than 100 per million new cases per day and more than 10% COVID test positivity rate), there are two options:

1. Quarantine for a period of 14 days, OR
2. Have a PCR negative test within 72 hours prior to travelling AND quarantine for 3 days upon arrival AND obtain a PCR test on day 4. If this second test is negative, individual may exit quarantine.

Please note:

- If someone has symptoms of COVID-19 they **MUST** quarantine for the full 14 days and be symptom free before leaving quarantine. If someone has had a high-risk exposure to a known or suspected case of COVID-19 they should quarantine for 14 days.
- All forms of travel pose risks, although traveling alone in a private car is safest.
- If traveling from a country, state, or locality with less than 100 per million new cases per day and less than 10% COVID test positivity rate, then follow local quarantine requirements.

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1. The 'Pod' concept involves segregating groups of employees into groups or pods which remain intact and do not interact with other pods. The advantage of the pod concept is that if a pod member is found to be COVID-19+, then this only impacts that one pod and not the entire company. This concept can be effective in certain situations but requires strict adherence by members of the pod

2. A 'Bubble' is the concept of keeping an entire company quarantined from society – as though they were in a bubble. Once they have been initially screened and tested, or a designated time has passed since entering the bubble with no evidence of COVID-19+ cases developing, then all those in the bubble can interact with each other without physical distancing and use of masks. However, it should be noted that it is exceedingly difficult to truly have an impenetrable bubble and many attempts have failed.

3. Several states have implemented travel restrictions – latest restrictions can be found [here](#).