

NVYO's fall 2021 Covid-19-specific materials, safety and hygiene protocols, and behavioral guidelines

- A. **General:** This season, NVYO is once again following guidelines appropriate for local, regional and state COVID-19 community risk levels, as well as the CDC guidelines for youth activities and the latest scientific findings of the music-specific aerosol studies from the University of Colorado—Boulder and the University of Maryland. As the studies are refined and reviewed, some adjustments or slight changes to the rules and guidelines outlined below are possible. Any changes or adjustments will be communicated through email/Remind. If you observe any signs or symptoms of Covid-19 or have been told you must quarantine due to close contact, **do not come to rehearsal**; complete the absence form and watch for ways to practice or participate at home. NVYO highly encourages all eligible musicians to be vaccinated. *Note that as guidelines adjust, vaccination status may become a factor in decisions regarding who must follow certain protocols, depending on recommendations from local, national and international experts. Please complete the supplemental health form in the Active registration.*
- B. **Physical Distancing:** A minimum of 3 feet physical distancing will be maintained for indoor activities. This includes entrance and exit from the rehearsal/performance space, during breaks, and any social activities. Chairs will be spaced out at a minimum of a 3 foot radius and each musician will have their own music stand if necessary to make that possible.
- C. **Masks:** At this time, all students must wear a mask (non-surgical disposable, medical, or cloth mask) that securely covers nose and mouth at all times during all indoor rehearsals, performances, as well as any ensemble-related social activities. For rehearsals and performances, string and percussion players may wear any regular mask above; wind and brass players must either wear a specifically designed mouthpiece/reed mask (NVYO has distributed these; your teacher or school may have already provided one), or a disposable mask with a slit or hole. If wind and brass players choose to use a mask with slit or hole, a second intact mask is to be put on whenever they are not playing for more than 30 seconds, and anytime they choose to speak. Bandanas or knitted masks/gaiters are not appropriate, masks with valves are not appropriate. If you need help or resources in acquiring or creating a mask, please reach out.
- D. **Bell covers/end covers:** All wind/brass bells and instrument endings are to be masked/covered, as well. NVYO has some of these to distribute (or you may have one of our NVYO-issued covers from last season using the filtered fabric ("Merv 13") recommended in the guidelines. Here is a comprehensive guide on do-it-yourself bell covers:
- Flutes, bassoons:** Any breathable product (such as nylons or sock) that you can secure to the end of the foot joint/bell with a hair elastic or rubber band.
 - Oboes, clarinets:** Merv 13 Fabric attached to the end of your bell, ideally along with one additional layer of another fabric or nylon.
 - Trumpets:** One layer of MERV 13 fabric attached to the end of your bell and a thin stretchable nylon to hold it on
 - Horns:** No bell covers required but encouraged. Always have your hand sanitizer in rehearsal, and use it frequently.
 - Trombones, tubas:** 80 denier (thickness) nylons work as a basic required bell cover. An added layer of MERV13 is recommended, but not required.
 - f.
- E. **Condensation/liquid collectors, and disinfection:** Wind and brass instruments will be provided with disposable absorbent material each rehearsal for emptying spit valves as needed. These absorbent pads are to be disposed of quickly, appropriately, and responsibly at the end of rehearsals **by each student**.
- F. **Resources:** We will provide disposable masks, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies for your use in case your supplies are compromised or misplaced.
- G. **Rehearsal/break segments:** Rehearsals will be broken up into approximately two 50-minute-long segments separated by a break **during which time everyone must leave the room** . We will go outside if at all

possible. Masks are not required outdoors at this time. Air exchange is key in preventing spread. We are fortunate that the Empire HVAC system has been upgraded recently.

- H. **Cases:** For all but the largest instruments, put cases in the auditorium seating. You should also keep hand sanitizer, extra masks, etc., close by, if possible. For larger cases, we will designate an area to space apart and unpack.
- I. **Entering and exiting the rehearsal space:** We will have designated entrance and exit doors. Please maintain a minimum physical distance of 3 feet at all times. Be patient with and mindful of your fellow musicians, and respect the process that is in place to protect us all and to ensure we can continue to make music together.
- J. **The rehearsal space** may require set up or tear down at the beginning of rehearsal. Assistance is welcome.
- K. **Cleaning protocols:** All garbage, recycling etc. must be disposed of. For disinfecting/cleaning, the Empire will clean thoroughly for us, with exception of the spit valve collectors mentioned above!
- L. **Plexiglass/vinyl barriers:** the latest study findings do NOT encourage the use of plexiglass barriers or vinyl boxes/ barriers in ensemble settings as they can disrupt air ventilation flow. Some plexi music stands/single shields may be used but not in a barrier setting.
- M. **Recording policy:** In the event that a number of students must quarantine themselves and are unable to attend rehearsals in person, we are hoping to again offer a Zoom option; the log in would be shared through Remind/email. Recordings of class sessions that include student participation are considered archival, and will be intended for viewing/participation purposes only (not downloading or copying.) Students may not record rehearsals without the advance permission of the instructor, and without the consent of the other students in the class. These recordings are for personal, educational use and may not be distributed to others.
- N. **Eye coverings, other personal protective measures:** While we do not require you to cover your eyes with a specific barrier, health officials and scientists have advocated their effectiveness. Feel free to add any layers of protection to the above-mentioned required measures.
- O. **Dignity, Respect, Care, Trust, Grace:** *Our top priority must be our own and everyone else's safety and health—that includes physical, mental, emotional, and academic health. We agree to make our best efforts to learn about each other; learn to understand each other better; respect each other even in disagreements; care about each other, and appreciate each other as individuals with our very own unique strengths, dreams, goals, attributes, quirks, and flaws, as well as members of a global community in which we are dedicated to contribute towards peace and harmony rather than discord and negativity; to encounter each other with grace and forgiveness.*