

Reopening after COVID-19 closure

Frequently asked questions



The following questions have been collected as part of The History Trust of South Australia's ongoing commitment to supporting community history groups and associations through our South Australian History Network.

Questions include:

- What are we required to do before re-opening?
- Do we have to collect people's contact details?
- How many people can we let in?
- We have an unattended site, can we put up a sign about numbers and let people in?
- People touch our heritage stairs/desk/historic item, how do we clean it without damaging it?
- We have elderly volunteers who want to come back onsite. Can we let them?

Q. What are we required to do before re-opening?

A. You must complete a [COVID-Safe Plan](#) before re-opening. Initial messaging suggested this had to be done by 1 June, but we have confirmed it can be done later, and ideally in the lead up to your re-opening.

We recommend you follow [Safe Work SA guidelines](#), and take time to [identify any hazards](#), or areas at your site that may need special consideration, conducting a [risk assessment](#) to help plan your safety measures and preparation.

Q. Do we have to collect people's contact details?

A. Yes, it is a requirement of the South Australian government that organisations keep details of every adult in a group and the names of children (plus clearly indicate that children are part of the group with the adults).

You can do that using the [Record of Attendance](#) template.

Q. How many people can we let in?

A. The [COVID-Safe Plan](#) site has a calculator (scroll down) to help you work out how many people you can fit in any one space. Consider things like traffic flow, points of congestion and how easy it is going to be within your space for people to keep a safe distance of 1.5m between themselves and other visitors.

Q. We have an unattended site, can we put up a sign about numbers and let people in?

A. Ultimately, this will be dependent on your risk assessment. It is important to conduct a [risk assessment](#) of individual sites and assess whether it is going to be safe for people to be accessing your site.

In order to safely reopen you need to have steps in place to ensure that visitor numbers will not exceed maximum capacity at any of your sites. One of the most effective ways of doing this is to 'count in' and 'count out' visitors as they enter and exit your site.

While risk mitigation strategies regarding signage and sanitiser are good practice, relying on these safeguards alone at an unattended site is not likely to be considered acceptable, should your site be inspected.

There is no one size fits all, and ultimately you have to assess whether these measures are enough to keep people safe while visiting your site.

Q. People touch our heritage stairs/desk/historic item, how do we clean it without damaging it?

A. The first preference for any frequent touch point is to remove access to the area where possible. This may be by removing the object/item, installing a barrier around the item, or moving it to a space where visitors cannot access it. When it is not possible to remove access to an item you should put in place measures to mitigate the risk of exposure to the item, including increased cleaning.

Cleaning advice depends on the materials, access, and practicality of putting in place measures to stop people touching things. If in doubt contact the [Community History](#) team for specific advice.

Providing hand sanitiser before and after the touch point is an option that can help mitigate the risk, however your site will still need daily cleaning at a minimum. If the areas are frequent touch points, daily cleaning may not be sufficient for the volume of people using the area. In this case you will need to ensure that the item is cleaned more regularly in a way that does not harm the object.

If you are considering using santiser stations in areas with herigate items you will want safeguards in place to stop people touching them while their hands are still damp.

Q. We have elderly volunteers who want to come back onsite. Can we let them?

A. Under Work Health and Safety laws organisations have a duty of care to volunteers and must provide a safe work environment. The primary concern when considering if volunteers can be on site is whether or not it is safe for them to do so.

Again there is no one size fits all. Assess your work areas, and the tasks your volunteers are being asked to do. Training may be required to address new ways of working. Extra equipment might be needed to ensure volunteers are protected.

Communication is key, whether volunteers are on site, or asked to wait until restrictions ease further to return.

For more volunteer specific information consult the [Volunteering SA & NT website](#).

More information from The History Trust is available at [COVID-19 Guidance for Community Museums page](#)