

# OIGC Fall 2022 COVID FAQs and Triggers for Changes in Rehearsals/Protocols

*The COVID-19 pandemic is currently an ongoing and dynamic situation, and these triggers are being captured to guide decision makers on how and when protocols and organizational responses will occur. Our primary goal is for our genuine love and concern for one another to be present and visible in everything we do.*

**GOAL:** OIGC has remained absolutely committed to the health and well-being of our members and community. We will continue to meet or exceed state/local health guidelines. We will consult experts for informed decision making, and “*care on the side of caution.*”

**DECISION MAKERS:** The board stands by its March 2020 decision to comply with all CDC and state/local health guidelines. The board has empowered and entrusted Maren Amdal as Executive Director, and Terrance Kelly as Artistic Director to make real-time decisions in the best interest of the health and safety of our singers and community. A diverse Task Force representing choir and community members as well as health and emergency management expertise was commissioned in Summer 2021 to furnish insights and provide external resources and expertise to facilitate informed decision making – while *ad hoc* members of this task force continue to provide insight and expertise to facilitate informed decision making. With the acquisition of OYC, our expanded staff now features a Certified COVID Compliance Officer. The Executive Committee will be consulted on matters which seem novel or for which executive staff seek additional insights or approvals. The Board of Directors will receive updates as part of the Executive Director's Report.

## TRIGGERS FOR CHANGE:

- If COVID conditions remain the same or improve from their standing as of August 2022, OIGC rehearsals will take place in-person with defined Safety Protocols.
- If COVID conditions worsen, we may again pause in-person activities. ‘Worsen’ could be defined in numerous ways. Executive staff will continuously monitor, and determinations will be made based on available data.
- If COVID conditions significantly improve, for example no new infections have occurred in a given period, or some other Official advisory, Executive staff will respond accordingly with removal or reduction of appropriate protocols/restrictions as seems fit.
- If it appears multiple infections have occurred directly connected to an OIGC activity, we will respond appropriately, including notification of our community members and reassessment of activities and protocols.

**STAFF:** All instructors and staff are fully vaccinated and up-to-date with boosters, and will be masked at all times during rehearsals and performances.

**LOCATIONS/VENUES:** Pertaining to all in-person locations where OIGC gathers, rehearses, and performs, our defined Protocols\* are the minimum which OIGC participants will embrace. When a venue or location’s guidelines are of a higher standard, we will meet those; if not, we will employ our own minimum standards wherever our activities bring us. Known venue requirements have informed our protocol decisions, along with input from medical and emergency management experts. *\*Protocols distributed separately.* Based upon local community Covid-19 case counts, OIGC reserves the right to move all rehearsals, performances and other events online to safeguard the health of our singers and staff.

**PARTICIPATION:** Please do not attend an in-person OIGC activity if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 including but not limited to cough, fever, difficulty breathing, changes in smell or taste, or fatigue; digestive upset can also be a symptom with Omicron and subvariants; or if you have been instructed to self-quarantine; or if you have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days; or if you have self-identified as unwell. Participation is welcome through virtual resources, such as video performances and Zoom-based social meetups. As of August 2022, virtual rehearsals will no longer be offered; all rehearsals will be in-person.

**CAPACITY:** In rehearsal spaces, we will seek venues that allow our participating roster size to equal 75% or less total room capacity to allow for adequate social distance between singers (minimum of 6 feet, optimal 10-15 feet.) This policy exceeds current county guidelines.

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**ADVANCED REGISTRATION:** Choir members may participate in in-person rehearsals only if they have registered in advance, have completed COVID vaccine/booster verifications, and comply with other defined protocols.

**VACCINATIONS:** OIGC will require all in-person participants to be fully vaccinated and boosted, as [defined by the CDC](#). Vaccination status will be verified in advance of rehearsals and performances, and confidentially noted in participant's Chorus Connection record. This requirement is for the health and safety of our entire community and complies with many local venue requirements. We recognize that there are many reasons people may not be vaccinated. We, too, look forward to a time when we can sing together in person without these restrictions.

**MASKS:** All participants at OIGC activities will be required to mask while indoors, and while singing, singers will be required to wear so-called "singers masks" which have been specially designed to fully seal the face while allowing room for jaw movement and inhalation/exhalation. As a backstop in case of breakage, participants may choose to wear a paper mask under their singer's mask to ensure full face coverage while singing. Clear plastic face shields may also be worn as an additional layer of protection; however, they must be used IN ADDITION TO a mask.

**BIO BREAKS:** We will no longer have mid-rehearsal intermissions, and instead request that bathroom and bio breaks happen intermittently to prevent congestion in small rooms. Please take turns, and do not congregate in doorways.

**SANITATION:** Lysol spray will be available for immediate surface cleaning. Hand sanitizer will be available for use.

**NOTIFICATION:** In the event that you or a close family member receives a positive Covid-19 diagnosis, please notify us immediately. In such an event, choral families affected will be notified of potential exposure (no specific individuals will be named), and for OYC ensembles, in-person rehearsals will be moved online for a minimum of seven (7) days.

**VIRTUAL REHEARSAL:** We recognize that participating virtually was a successful means of maintaining connection amongst our community during the past two years. At this time, we have paused virtual rehearsals. If conditions worsen, we will revisit this alternative.

**DUES:** OIGC recognizes the financial hardships many of our members are currently experiencing. If you can pay dues, please continue to do so. If you need support or a waiver, please contact your respective Section Leader.

**SECTIONAL REHEARSALS:** Section Leaders may conduct sectional rehearsals which comply with OIGC standard COVID safety protocols.

**EXPOSURE NOTIFICATION:** We ask all participants not to attend any OIGC activity if any potential risk of COVID exposure has occurred. If you become exposed, please notify OIGC as soon as possible. Our COVID team will have access to [health@oigc.org](mailto:health@oigc.org) or you may contact: Executive Director [maren@oigc.org](mailto:maren@oigc.org). We also encourage members to sign up for CA Notify to receive exposure notifications: <https://canotify.ca.gov/>

**PROTOCOLS:** While we understand that not everyone will be able to meet current or potential future protocols, we are committed to keeping everyone's health and safety at the forefront. We maintain our sincerely held commitment and concern for all our beloved community members, and we will always act in ways that *care on the side of caution*.

**PRIVACY:** As always, OIGC is respectful of member privacy in all matters related to personal data. As we are not a health organization, HIPPA does not apply to us. As an Employer, we are bound to OSHA health and safety regulations, and we seek to keep our staff, singers, volunteers, audience, and community safe. We will require verified vaccine records for all in-person participation, and if exposure occurs, we will require negative test results prior to resuming in-person activities. This data will be tracked confidentially in our data systems, accessible only by authorized users. We will comply with outside contact tracing requests, while protecting privacy.