

# REOPENING

**A plan to safely sing**

Approved by the  
Board of Directors *of the* Pensacola Children's Chorus  
July 30, 2020





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## INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus pandemic has created many new challenges in our daily lives, so much that the safety of numerous activities that we enjoy, especially singing, has been questioned. In response, the Staff and Board have been hard at work collecting data, reading research, and gauging our community about how to best proceed with our upcoming season. The information and decisions contained herein are informed by national and international research, recommendations from national professional organizations on music and choral singing, as well as local data sources.

This plan is not perfect, but it is ours nonetheless.

## ADAPTATIONS

This plan is a living, breathing document. Plans and policies will change as the impact of the coronavirus continues to weave uncertainly through our daily lives. We are especially eager to incorporate the guidance from an [unprecedented international study on the distribution of respiratory aerosol](#) as a result of performing arts and aerobic activities. A [preliminary summary of results](#) has been released, with further guidance expected in August. Minor organic changes will be implemented at the will of the Staff. Major pivots will be reviewed first by the Board.

## OPTION 1: IN-PERSON

The Resident Choir Program will begin as scheduled in the fall, with an option to join in either September or October, depending on each family’s preference. This new program layout, as well as the numerous modifications to protect the health and safety of our singers, parent volunteers, and staff, are outlined below:

### SEPTEMBER ENROLLMENT

Parents may elect to enroll their singers in September, with rehearsals starting the week of September 6 (excluding Labor Day). Groups of no greater than 32 singers will rehearse at a time in order to accommodate physical distancing recommendations (6-ft. radius). Depending on enrollment, this means that larger choirs may have to be divided into smaller groups. These small groups will act as independent ensembles, and singers will be given the opportunity to create their own choir’s unique name. As self-contained entities, singers will rehearse and perform music that is uniquely their own.

### Fall Performance

Those who enroll in September will work toward a special fall performance entitled *PCC in the Plaza*. This dynamic musical spectacular will be held outdoors on **October 4** at Museum Plaza, which is located directly behind the T.T. Wentworth, Jr. Museum between Jefferson and Tarragona Streets in Downtown Pensacola. This family-friendly event will include a live performance from our singers as well as the opportunity to support our local food trucks.

Some music learned for *PCC in the Plaza* will be incorporated into *Christmas on the Coast*.

### Tuition & Fees

In-person participants will be assessed the following fees, which are akin to last year’s fee structure. Tuition assistance will continue to be made available for all singers.

<u>Choir(s)</u>	<u>Grade(s)</u>	<u>Reg. Fee</u>	<u>Tuition</u>
Preparatory	1-2	\$ 185.00	\$ 55.00
Choristers	3	\$ 365.00	\$ 65.00
Festival & Lyric	4-5	\$ 365.00	\$ 85.00
Concert	6-8	\$ 365.00	\$ 85.00
Ensemble	6-8*	\$ -	\$ 45.00
Choraliers & Chorale	9-12	\$ 365.00	\$ 95.00
Young Singers	9-12	\$ -	\$ 45.00
Ambassadors	7-12	\$ -	\$ 15.00



## OPTION 1: IN-PERSON (continued)

### OCTOBER ENROLLMENT

Parents may elect to enroll their singers for in-person rehearsals in October, with rehearsals starting the week of October 4. These singers will be added to choir groups established in September to increase numbers to no greater than 40, which is the maximum capacity that our rehearsal hall can hold with recommended physical distancing requirements (6-ft. radius).

Members who join in October will work almost exclusively on music slated for *Christmas on the Coast*.

Members who wish to join in-person beginning in October will also have the option of participating in our virtual **eSing program** for the month of September. Details can be found on page 5.

### Tuition & Fees

Tuition & fees for members enrolling in October will be the same as those enrolling in September (as outlined on page 3). Tuition assistance remains available for all members.

### TRANSITIONING FROM VIRTUAL TO IN-PERSON & VICE-VERSA

Singers will have the option of beginning the season online for the month of September before transitioning to in-person participation the week after *PCC in the Plaza* (10/4). In this scenario, membership fees will reflect the eSing structure for the month of September, and in-person fees beginning in October. With regard to the registration fee, families will be responsible for making up the difference between the eSing and in-person registration fee at the time of in-person enrollment.

At this time, members may transition from virtual to in-person in October or after *Christmas on the Coast*, but not in between.

Singers who are participating in-person but wish to transition to virtual may do so at any time. In this scenario, the eSing monthly tuition rate will apply for the month *after* the date of transition. The difference between the eSing and in-person registration fee may not be applied to tuition.

### ENSEMBLE, YOUNG SINGERS & AMBASSADORS AUDITIONS

Singers in Grades 6-12 have the opportunity to join Ensemble (Grades 6-8), Young Singers (Grades 9-12), or Ambassadors (Grades 7-12) in addition to their core ensemble (Concert, Choraliers, or Chorale). These groups rehearse separately and have higher performance expectations. These auditions will be held at the following times:

Ensemble	Thursday, August 20	5:00-5:45pm
Young Singers	Friday, August 21	5:00-5:45pm
Ambassadors	Thursday, August 20 (Gr. 7-8)	5:45-6:15pm
	Friday, August 21 (Gr. 9-12)	5:45-6:15pm

Interested singers who have conflicts with their scheduled time should contact Bekki Youngblood, Program Director, at [bekki@pensacolachildrenschorus.com](mailto:bekki@pensacolachildrenschorus.com).



## OPTION 1: IN-PERSON (continued)

### REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

The rehearsal schedule has been modified to allow for proper cleaning, sanitization, and physical distancing. Final rehearsal times will be determined ultimately by enrollment.

<u>Choir</u>	<u>Grade(s)</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Weekend Rehearsals</u>	
Preparatory	1-2	Thursday	3:45-4:30p	n/a	
Choristers	3	Wednesday	3:30-4:30p	n/a	
Festival	4-5	Monday	3:30-4:30p	Select Saturdays	9:00-10:00a
Lyric	4-5	Monday	5:00-6:00p	Select Saturdays	10:30-11:30a
Concert	6-8	Thursday	5:00-6:00p <i>or</i>	Select Saturdays	12:30-1:30p <i>or</i>
		"	6:30-7:30p	" "	2:00-3:00p
Ensemble	6-8	Monday	6:30-7:30p	Select Saturdays	3:30-4:30p
Choraliers	9-12	Tuesday	5:00-6:00p <i>or</i>	Select Saturdays	9:00-10:00a <i>or</i>
		"	6:30-7:30p	" "	10:30-11:30a
Chorale	9-12	Tuesday	8:00-9:00p	Select Saturdays	3:30-4:30p
Young Singers	9-12	Wednesday	5:00-6:00p <i>or</i>	Select Saturdays	10:30-11:30a
		Thursday	8:00-9:00p	" "	2:00-3:00p
Ambassadors	7-12	Monday	8:00-9:00p	n/a	

### OPTION 2: VIRTUAL

Parents may elect to enroll their singers in PCC's revamped online program, **eSing**. This revitalized virtual platform takes a modular approach toward performance and choral singing, with a new project to be launched every 4-6 weeks.

Singers may participate in eSing for the month of September or all the way through the week of December 13. Virtual offerings beyond *Christmas on the Coast* will be announced at a later date.

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

September	Virtual choir recording project for a newly-commissioned, world premiere piece
October	Exchange with youth choirs within the United States and the World
November	Virtual choir recording project to be featured in <i>Christmas on the Coast</i>
December	Virtual choir recording project to be released on New Years' Day

### REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

eSing participants will meet with their instructor at least once per week for a full-group lesson. Some singers will be asked to meet in small groups with their instructor at an additional time. The final schedule and age grouping will be determined by final enrollment numbers. At the time of publication, the rehearsal schedule is as follows:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Weekly Day</u>	<u>Weekly Time</u>	<u>Add'l Day</u>	<u>Add'l Time</u>
1-3	Tuesday	4:45-5:30p	Thursday	4:45-5:30p
4-5	Monday	4:45-5:30p	Wednesday	4:45-5:30p
6-8	Thursday	6:00-6:45p	Monday	6:00-6:45p
9-12	Tuesday	6:00-6:45p	Wednesday	6:00-6:45p

### TUITION & FEES

eSing participants will pay a \$285.00 registration fee and \$75.00 monthly tuition. Tuition assistance is available.



## **IN-PERSON HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES**

In accordance with the Board's [COVID-19 Response Framework](#), passed on May 20, 2020, the safety and well-being of our singers, families, staff, and supporters is of the utmost importance. Guided by feedback solicited from our parents and singers, as well as recommendations made by the CDC and local health experts, numerous health and safety measures will be implemented for in-person programming. Many of these have already gone into effect.

### **DROP-OFF PROCEDURE**

A modified drop-off procedure will be implemented which will include a verbal symptom screening, contactless temperature check, and adult-supervised handwashing. Face coverings will be worn during the duration of this process.

### **HANDWASHING**

Singers will wash their hands for at least 20 seconds upon arrival at the PCC building. (A list of suggested song refrains that meet or exceed this time limit will be posted above each sink!)

### **FACE COVERINGS**

While promoting an educational mission, PCC is nonetheless a not-for-profit corporation, and therefore is not subject to exemptions afforded to schools through current and any future mask ordinances or laws. As such, all building occupants will wear face coverings at all times unless directed otherwise by a member of the PCC staff. Acceptable face coverings include surgical masks and cloth masks. Face shields without the tandem use of a mask will not be permitted.

### **HAND SANITIZER**

Hand sanitizer will be abundantly available. Singers will not need to get up from their seats to receive hand sanitizer, and a special hand sign will be taught to signal its need. Additionally, each singer will receive hand sanitizer upon the conclusion of rehearsal as they exit the building.

### **CLEANING & SANITIZATION PERIODS**

A period of 30 minutes will follow each rehearsal to allow for adequate cleaning and sanitization.

### **SURFACE SANITIZATION**

High-contact surfaces will be cleaned with an EPA-approved disinfectant. These surfaces include (but are not limited to) chairs, music packets, door handles, light switches, and countertops. High-touch surfaces in bathrooms will be wiped down with a disinfecting wipe after each use.

### **AIR PURIFICATION**

The HVAC system regularly recycles indoor air from an outdoor intake. The cycle of airflow within the rehearsal hall has been analyzed, and operations to control the flow of air have been implemented. During the cleaning and sanitization period following each rehearsal, the HVAC system will be set to recycle air only from the outside. If necessary, the large garage door at on the south wall of the rehearsal hall may be opened to increase airflow. Additionally, HEPA air filters will be used to filter air during rehearsals, and the rehearsal hall atmosphere will be sanitized using an EPA List N-verified airborne disinfectant in preparation for the next group.

### **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

Singers will occupy an assigned seat that is at minimum 6-feet away from the nearest singer. At the same time, we recognize that confidence is often inspired by close proximity to fellow singers. Therefore, singers will be (safely) grouped in quartets (4) or sextets (6) to enable a positive social experience and provide peer support while learning music and movement.



## **CONTAINMENT PROCEDURES**

In addition to numerous aforementioned procedures, certain containment procedures will further protect the health and safety of our singers, parent volunteers, and staff.

### **BUILDING USAGE**

Access to the PCC building outside of rehearsal hours will remain by appointment only. Additionally, access to the lobby, staff offices, office hallway, and costume room will be strictly limited.

### **OCCUPANCY**

Only singers and parent volunteers with assigned duties will be permitted to enter the building during rehearsal periods. Non-volunteer parents requiring assistance should strive to first seek help via phone or email before scheduling an appointment with a staff member. As opportunity allows, an informational station will be setup outdoors prior to the start of each rehearsal.

### **RECORDKEEPING**

Accurate attendance, as well as a written record of building visitors and volunteers, will be routinely kept. These and additional records will be used to assist in contact tracing if necessary.

### **VOCAL & MOVEMENT INSTRUCTION**

Rehearsals will be led by one director, one choreographer, and one pianist. Additional instructors may participate in rehearsal via Zoom, either from within the PCC building or at home.

In pre-coronavirus circumstances, a singer would typically asked to sing for a period no greater than 50% of the total rehearsal time. The other 50% is filled by music or movement-related verbal instruction, musical analysis, or idle time spent while the instructor(s) are working with other groups of students. No foreseeable change to this normal procedure is presented at this time. However, movement will be limited to a singer's own personal space. Dance positions will be stationary, and partner dancing will not occur.

### **SYMPTOM PRESENTATION**

PCC's planned health and safety procedures have multiple checks and balances that would prevent a potentially symptomatic singer or volunteer from ever entering a confined space with otherwise health singers. However, in the unlikely event that noticeable symptoms present themselves during an in-person event, a special room off the rehearsal hall shall be used for isolation. This room has an airflow system separate from the rehearsal hall. Provided with snacks and activities, the singer will wait in this space until a parent arrives. Parent and staff members who present symptoms will be immediately sent home.

### **CONFIRMED CASE**

Should PCC learn of a singer, staff, or parent volunteer with a confirmed case of COVID-19, all individuals who came in contact with that individual at their last appearance at the PCC building will be notified. In the case of a singer, each choir member will be notified, and all members of the diagnosed singer's small group will be remain home for the next two rehearsals with the expectation that they will participate remotely via live stream or Zoom. The use of written logs and procedures for contact tracing will be implemented, and expectations for testing will occur.



## **MAINSTAGE PERFORMANCE SERIES**

We will move forward with our Mainstage Performance Series, which includes *Christmas on the Coast* in December, as well as an added concert in October. Many factors beyond PCC's control could impede our ability to execute these events to the caliber and tradition that has come to be expected by our singers, families, and community members. In all possible circumstances, we will strive to offer the dynamic performances we've come to know and love.

### **PCC IN THE PLAZA**

New for this season, we will launch *PCC in the Plaza*, a dynamic outdoor performance at Museum Plaza, which is located directly behind the T.T. Wentworth Jr. Museum between Jefferson and Tarragona Streets in Downtown Pensacola. Held on October 4, this fun-filled evening will feature festive fall music as well as some tunes that will be able to be used in *Christmas on the Coast*. Food trucks will also be present!

### **CHRISTMAS ON THE COAST**

Plans for *Christmas on the Coast* are moving full-steam ahead. This beloved holiday tradition is scheduled for December 11, 12, and 13, at Pensacola's Saenger Theatre. In addition, we seek to partner with our local news stations and video production companies to record a version of this concert in a similar manner to *Let Freedom Sing*, to be aired on Christmas Eve or another agreed-upon date.

### **ONE WORLD, MANY VOICES & SHOWTIME**

At this time, we are planning to present *One World, Many Voices* (February 21) and *Showtime* (May 7, 8, and 9) as expected.



## REFERENCES

The following guidelines, research studies, and recommendations have informed our decision-making. We present them here for review.

American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)

*COVID-19 response committee report*

Dr. Lynne Gackle, president

[LINK](#)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

*Coronavirus (COVID-19)*

[LINK](#)

Choralosophy

*Episode 33: Risk Assessment for Group Activities with Dr. Amesh Adalja of Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security*

Chris Munce, host

[LINK](#)

Chorus Connection

*What does season planning look like amidst COVID-19?*

Tori Cook, director of sales and marketing

[LINK](#)

Data for Cultural Executives

*COVID-19 updates on individuals' perceptions and intentions to engage with cultural entities*

Colleen Dilenschneider, principal data collector

[LINK](#)

Erin Bromage, Comparative Immunologist and Professor of Biology

*The risks – know them – avoid them*

Erin Bromage, author

[LINK](#)

Hochschule für Musik Freiburg

*Risk assessment of a coronavirus infection in the field of music*

Claudia Spahn, PhD, MD, & Bernhard Richter, MD

[LINK](#)

National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS)

*A conversation: What do science and data say about the near term future of singing*

[LINK](#)

National Federation of State High School Association

*Preliminary recommendations from international performing arts aerosol study based on initial testing results*

Shelly Miller & Jelena Srebric, lead scientists

[LINK](#)