



COVID-19 Response Framework 2020-2021

Mission: To encourage the personal and social growth of our singers and inspire our community through impactful performances and music education.

Adopted by the Board of Directors on June 30, 2020

PREAMBLE

As the governing body of Rainier Youth Choirs (RYC), the Board of Directors recognizes its role in providing necessary guidance and oversight as the organization navigates current and upcoming challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the 2019-20 season ended prematurely, our staff has actively researched best practices and resources from across the country. We have developed this framework to guide crucial decision-making in the near and distant future.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles, in order of importance, will guide Rainier Youth Choirs during the pandemic:

1. Above all, the **safety and well-being** of our singers, families, staff, and supporters is of utmost importance.
2. We will **fulfill our mission** to encourage the personal and social growth of our singers and inspire our community through impactful performances and music education.
3. The strategies we employ and decisions we make will be to ensure the **current and future success** of RYC for years to come and to emerge from this pandemic stronger.

Principle 1: Above all, the **safety and well-being** of our singers, families, staff, and supporters is of utmost importance.

The feeling of safety is not something presumed; it is earned. At the same time, current research suggests that the spread of aerosolized viruses (such as COVID-19 and influenza) can be magnified through singing and aerobic activity. Therefore, we will implement the following measures.

Facilities

- *At a minimum*, we will implement measures recommended by national and local health agencies aimed at minimizing risk to health and/or safety of staff, singers, and volunteers.

Well-Being of Singers

- It is clear that mandatory isolation and distance learning has taken a toll on the mental well-being of young people. As such, RYC's staff will intentionally strive to ***create a supportive learning environment that mitigates feelings of stress and anxiety.***
- RYC singers will begin the season online using weekly video conferencing (Zoom) with the expectation that singers will fulfill their personal contribution to the success of their individual choir.
- When in-person activities resume, we will implement a ***modified attendance policy*** to allow singers with questionable symptoms or who are uncomfortable with attending in person to remotely access rehearsals online.

Principle 2: We will fulfill our updated mission to encourage the personal and social growth of our singers and inspire our community through impactful performances and music education.

The mission of Rainier Youth Choirs is to encourage the personal and social growth of its members and engage the community through inspirational musical experiences. Even during a global pandemic, this mission will be our guiding light as we strive to meet the needs of our singers and serve our community to the fullest.

Personal and Social Growth of Singers

- RYC's staff will **prioritize each singer's personal and social growth** through online means of engagement and when in-person activities resume.
- Retreat-type activities and musicianship training will be a part of each weekly rehearsal.

Performances

- A sticking point in societal reopening plans is mass gathering which creates an obstacle for live musical performance. Because of this we **will offer alternate performance options that will minimize risk** to the health and safety of our singers, staff, volunteers, and patrons.
- Our plan is to divide the season into three three-month sessions, each culminating in some sort of performance, either as a virtual choir, a live stream event, an in-person concert, or a combination of these.

Principle 3: The strategies we employ and decisions we make will be to ensure the current and future success of RYC for years to come and to emerge from this pandemic in a stronger position.

RYC is fortunate to have stored resources to weather the financial onslaught wreaked by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, these resources are finite, and measurements must be taken to ensure that RYC's legacy of transformative music can continue for years to come.

Tuition Assistance

- Historically, RYC has offered partial tuition assistance as needed. With the sweeping loss of jobs due to the pandemic, we anticipate an increased need for tuition assistance for several years. Therefore, RYC will pursue fundraising strategies to **raise enough funds to cover the financial need of all eligible singers**.
- RYC's Finance Committee will weigh each family's **current and future economic challenges** to determine scholarship amounts.

Financial Stability

- RYC will not hesitate to **alter or cancel an event due to unforeseen financial risk**, especially if health and safety measures pose a significant threat to fiscal stability. In doing so, we will strive to communicate abundantly with patrons and financial contributors how our decisions are made.
- We will be **respectful of the economic challenges** facing many families due to the pandemic as we continue our fundraising efforts.

Telling Our Story

- We will maintain open lines of communication with our community, especially with our singers, families, and financial supporters.
- Successful storytelling is key in sharing the impact of RYC on our youth. We will strive to ensure our story is told in a positive light even among challenging circumstances.