



Return to Live Gigs Guidance Principles

Musicians Australia

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit our industry hard. In a recent national survey of musicians, 57% of respondents believed that certain safety measures at gigs will need to be adopted permanently to ensure the safety of music industry workers. A further 67% of musicians believe old business models for live gigs will not be sustainable when they return to work after restrictions are eased. This demonstrates the necessity of a consistent approach to safety and broader music industry practices in the second half of 2020.

1. *By Agreement.*

Protocols, rules, procedures, and related matters should be dealt with through good faith negotiation between the union, venues, and relevant industry and government bodies. A clear, concise and consistent code of practice should be agreed to by stakeholders before the resumption of live-gigs to ensure the safety of all music industry professionals.

2. *Informed by facts, and consistent with relevant law and regulation*

Any agreement reached by industry stakeholders must contain safety protocols that are consistent with both scientific consensus and orders from the relevant authorities.

3. *Core Principles*

Any agreement between industry stakeholders should contain the following core principles which union and non-union members as well as health professionals believe to be necessary for a safe return to live performance:

- a. Venue Cleaning Standards: Venues should be cleaned regularly before, during and after gigs to ensure compliance with regulation and safety standards. In particular, cleaning of shared equipment and spaces such as microphones, restrooms, and other 'high risk' zones is essential.
- b. Distancing Measures: Distancing of at least 2 metres between the musicians and audience. Where necessary, security guards and barriers should be positioned near the stage to ensure compliance with distancing measures.
- c. Ad-Hoc Measures: additional measures as needed (e.g. temperature checks upon entering the venue)
- d. Government and Council Support: Increased support, including for live music in outdoor, open spaces to ensure safety and keep the music flowing.

4. *Cause no harm*

Musicians should not have to return to work if they reasonably believe that doing so would put their health at risk or jeopardize the health of a family member. Obviously, that means anyone in an at-risk category (over 60, underlying health condition, immune-compromised), but also those who may come into contact with someone in an at-risk category. This also means that musicians should not be penalised in any way; for example, musicians should not be forced to accept unreasonable reductions in fees to cover the additional cost burden of implementing safety procedures.

5. *No indemnity or waiver*

No musicians should ever be asked to sign a liability waiver, releasing the principle, the employer, the facility or any other entity, as a condition of returning to live gigs