

ICOM BRASIL RECOMMENDATION IN FRONT OF TO COVID 19

On collection conservation, management and security; professionals' protection; and management of museums, libraries and archives in times of Covid-19

Considering the humanitarian crisis caused by the pandemic of COVID 19 across the planet and the governmental decisions to close several institutions

Recognizing the impact of this crisis on memory institutions, cultural facilities, museums, archives and libraries

Understanding the need to adopt measures and strategies to ensure the preservation of collections under the protection of these institutions

Affirming the imperative to protect all professionals working in these institutions, as well as the public

This recommendation discussed within the scope of ICOM-Brazil members places the following guidelines to the community:

1. Regarding the coordination of actions

Each institution must organize an internal team to coordinate and communicate the actions with the internal body and the outsourced personnel. In case of a lockdown, the coordination must agree with local governance the presence of an institutional person for weekly inspection accompanied by a professional from the fire or the police department. The coordination should make available the list of contacts for emergency cases. The head must plan financial matters with public administration bodies, sponsors, associations and/or foundations to maintain the institution during quarantine.

2. Regarding professionals at risk

Considering the vulnerability of the population at risk – as people over 60; diabetics; hypertensive; obese; pregnant women; breastfeeding children; with chronic renal or respiratory failure; with cardiovascular disease; immunosuppressed; transplanted; in the treatment of cancer; and with symptoms of COVID-19 or companions of people in this situation – in accordance with the recommendations of the World Health Organization, institutions must raise a list of people in these conditions, determining their isolation and interrupting their presence in the institution during the period of the pandemic, as well as guaranteeing their labour rights.

3. Regarding routine teams

Knowing the need to maintain basic services, such as cleaning and security, we recommend institutions to establish a work schedule, as well as a routine of inspection and monitoring of collections, ensuring the use of personal safety equipment by the professionals. They must wear gloves and masks, and clean their hands with 70% alcohol gel, soap and water, which must be provided by the institution;

4. Regarding outsourced teams

The same recommendations set out in items 2 and 3 apply to outsourced teams, with the commitment of the institution and the companies to organize shifts and guide employees in relation to personal safety measures.

5. Routine, inspection and work shift planning

Each institution must establish a plan for routines and inspections that ensure the safeguarding of the collections in exhibition; in storage and consultation rooms; in laboratories and ateliers. This plan should describe the essential basic activities and determine the scale or work shift of the professionals, limiting the number of people exposed and ensuring the interchange of the agents involved. The cleaning, security and inspection teams should be guided to report any problems to the coordination, such as identification of biological attack, building problems and other occurrences - including from remote monitoring.

6. Internal communication plan

All actions must be organized and informed through an internal communication plan by a person or team determined by the coordination, using available information technologies, such as cell phones, social media, virtual meetings and e-mail. All decisions and actions adopted must be documented in a report for future consultation, as well as to reflect on the effectiveness of the measures taken, considering the unprecedented nature of the situation.

7. Risk management plan and maintenance team procedures: building maintenance

Considering internal or outsourced maintenance team, institutions should prepare themselves to promote building management based on the identification of emergency problems, such as infiltrations, leaks, microbiological and biological infestation and electrical outages, as well as ensuring the cleaning routines of gutters, essential pruning and inspection of the building. Non-emergency works - such as renovations, paintings or adjustments - should be closed during this period.

8. Maintenance management plan: air conditioning, dehumidifiers, climate monitoring

Institutions must ensure climatological monitoring - in person or remote - as well as the maintenance of environmental control equipment. Central systems, *splitter systems* or individual devices - such as humidifiers and dehumidifiers - should preferably be kept on, avoiding sudden variations in temperature and humidity in already stabilized environments. However, it is essential to ensure the periodic inspection - as provided for in item 1 -, such as changing filters and removing water from trays based on the action of a person or team determined by the schedule. Equipment that does not impact on environmental stability must remain off due to the risk of fire.

9. Risk management plan and procedures in case of fire, flood and natural disasters

If the institution does not have a Risk Management Plan, the cleaning, security and inspection teams on duty must have guidelines regarding actions that have to be taken in case of fire, flood and disaster. The coordination (indicated in item 1) must provide internal contacts - telephone and e-mail - as well as the telephone number of the nearest fire department, and guide the teams to call them in case of an emergency or out of routine occurrence. Institutions that do not have permanent security teams should request support from the community and local partners, to report any problems occurred during the *lockdown*.

10. Risk management plan and theft security protocols

Institutional areas containing collections must be locked, with limited access and key control. If the institution has remote monitoring chambers, these must be monitored remotely by predetermined people, who must maintain updated records of circulation in restricted areas. Depending on the type of alarm, institutions with no security staff should request support from the community and partners to report any problems that occur during their lockdown. Problems regarding security or stolen goods must be immediately reported to the coordination, which must

report to the local police and communicate to the municipal, state or federal governments. Disclosure must occur through various means of communication to assist in the identification and recovery of stolen goods. Internal or outsourced security teams should be instructed to report any problems to the coordination.

11. Cleaning management plan

Cleaning routines must be maintained with reduced staff. It is essential that the institution reduces the number of facilities in use – such as bathrooms – and organize working schedule with less simultaneous presence of people. It is recommended that cleaning of all rooms of the institution be carried out once a week. Internal or outsourced cleaning teams should be instructed to report any problems to the coordination, such as identification of biological attack, building problems and other occurrences.

12. Management plan and procedures in storage room and custody areas

- Make inspection visits, ideally, once a week, striving for the rotation of team members who know the collection and work with it daily;
- Disconnect the maximum amount of electrical equipment and be sure of electrical installation conditions in case the maintenance of connected equipment is required, provided for in item 8;
- Observe the volume of the dehumidifier reservoirs, evaluating the water dispensing routine, resizing the number of equipment in the rooms and other strategies;
- Turn off the lights, or keep the necessary minimum lighting in case there are security cameras that need light to film;
- The central air conditioning filters must be inspected and the responsible technician must be consulted about the possibility of automation with a "dead zone" and not a "set point" - saving energy mode;
- Assess the real need to authorize people who normally do not have access to the storage room;
- Inspect the environment for infiltrations, moving the works and the furniture away from the damp place when possible, or covering the furniture with plastic (such as map libraries and sliding files, impossible to move);
- Inspect the environment and the most vulnerable works for signs of biological attacks (fungi, insects);
- Monitor the level of dust and if the storage area shows signs of inadequate humidity or temperature;
- Assess the demand of the cleaning routine;
- If necessary, the floor should be cleaned with 70% alcohol, with due care of the collection. If possible, remove your shoes and use disposable slippers to enter the guard and storage areas;
- The collection must not be handled. Only in case of extreme need, trained people can do the mechanical cleaning of objects and other items;
- In case of emergency movement of collections or furniture from other rooms to the storage space, this material must be isolated in packaging for fourteen days or sanitized by qualified professionals, following the safety recommendations in item 3;

13. Recommendations for exhibitions: long-term exhibitions; disassembly and assembly of temporary exhibitions

- Restrict access to long-term exhibition areas;

- If necessary - depending on the type of windows, dust, lighting, etc. - cover the windows with non-woven fabrics (TNT, Tyvek, Reemay etc.) or porous fabrics (cotton, linen, etc.), ensuring their removal during inspections;
- Turn off the lights or keep the necessary minimum lighting, closing any natural light inlets;
- Maintain the routine of periodic inspection and cleaning, as per previous items;
- If necessary, move the most valuable collection to the storage area;
- Avoid activities that require many people simultaneously at the same place, such as setting up and dismantling temporary exhibitions, planning with the promoting institutions a new calendar based on cooperation agreements;
- Keep a list with the record of the works on display, according to internal guidelines and procedures for security, signaling the most vulnerable or sensitive works or objects;

14. Recommendation on works in atelier or laboratory

Works, objects, artifacts and documents in the laboratory or atelier must be returned to the storage area or storage furniture. If not possible, they must be covered with non-woven fabrics (TNT, Tyvek, Reemay etc.) or porous fabrics (cotton, linen, etc.), and protected from light and dust. Conservation or restoration intervention activities, as well as scientific research, should be interrupted for further continuity.

15. Recommendations on loans, research and returns to home institutions

- Research or loans should not be allowed during the quarantine period. Returns must be agreed between the institutions upon the return of activities; the status of works in transit must be assessed on a case-by-case basis;
- Suspend the movement and evaluate the schedule of future loans until the situation normalizes;
- Collaborate with and trust the employees of the institutions where the works are on loan, avoiding external inspections and maintaining contact with the employees who are responsible for the loan and custody;
- It is recommended not to send couriers to monitor the works;
- Assess each object and situation before deciding to disassemble and store the works in boxes during the waiting period for return. Remember that it is more difficult to carry out inspections of works in boxes. In the case of works in areas subject to natural disasters, prefer to leave them packed;
- Monitor disassembly, reports and packaging by videoconference;
- If it is necessary to extend the loan period, do not forget to add it in the contract, including new insurance policy or registration;
- Stay in contact with the institution or producer to periodically obtain environmental data from the space where the works are located.

16. Recommendation on documentation projects

- Prioritize actions that can be performed remotely, such as reviewing information in the database;
- Plan remote actions to search the collection or collections;
- Keep the documentation of the collections up to date, allowing, if possible, remote access, with information relevant to the location of the assets and state of conservation.

17. Recommendations regarding the public, communication, digital actions, educational actions

It is recommended that the institution develops or maintains routines for interacting with the public through social networks (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook etc.), following a plan to

disseminate its collections and stimulating consultation and research in databases or websites. During this period, produce material for digital publication (booklets of technical guidelines; digital catalog of exhibitions held, etc.) with clear and direct information, accessible to the public.

18. Activities Return Plan Development

- The Activities Return Plan should be discussed with the entire team, defining the actions that precede the opening to the public;
- Based on the WHO guidelines, protocols for the prevention of contagion (such as measuring body temperature and wearing masks), limiting people in closed spaces, cleaning and organizing exhibition, consultation and research spaces should be discussed;
- It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of circulation and air renewal in spaces with mechanical ventilation;
- Plan the disassembly schedule for the exhibition, return or loan of works so that the actions are not concomitant.
- Act together with the community in the process of opening, disseminating and recomposing institutional routines.

This recommendation aims to support the planning of institutions in the context of the protection of collections, professionals and the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, and may undergo changes during this period.

It is recommended to pay attention to municipal, state and federal regulations, as well as the guidelines of WHO and international and national institutions focused on cultural heritage.

Recommendation presented by ICOM-Brazil and developed in partnership with the following institutions and professionals.

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Collection Care Resources - https://www.culturalheritage.org/resources/emergencies/collections-care-amid-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR3LkVPaBFOVdqP3mfN1JgWHr3ize_UwZIBNIIP7Pv1S6APp-AaP5EvkmZg

<https://en.unesco.org/news/museums-facing-covid-19-challenges-remain-engaged-communities>

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