

## GUIDELINES TO HOSTING FESTIVALS IN 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic will result in festivals that look very different. SMFA is adapting, in order to offer the best possible experience to our participants.

With safety of participants and the public front of mind, SMFA has created this document with three format options for hosting safe festivals. Please choose the format that works best for your festival committee.

- **Important Note:** In order to safeguard all of our stakeholders, **only solo competitors (including lieder and concerto entries), duo piano entries, and duets limited to participants living in the same household will be allowed to enter SMFA competitions. Same cohort school bands/ensembles/duets/choral speech practiced and recorded in the school environment are allowed in virtual festivals.**
- District Festivals may consider adding addenda classes suitable for their festival. For example:
  - Recorded/Edited Ensemble Classes (ensembles recorded in separate locations and then edited together to create the performance - singing or instrumental).

Visit the [Government of Saskatchewan's COVID-19 webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information, self-assessment tool, testing information and risk level in Saskatchewan. The SMFA Guidelines are developed based on the Government of Saskatchewan [Re-Open Saskatchewan Guidelines](#) (Sports and Activities and Performing Arts Guidelines). Follow all current safety protocols issued by Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) including [indoor mandatory mask requirements](#). Most importantly, self-monitor for illness and stay home when sick. Those who become unwell with symptoms related to COVID-19 must immediately return home and call Health Line 811.

### Plan A:

- A **“Virtual” Music Festival** with safety precautions in accordance with current Public Health restrictions. Below is a list of protocols to follow in order to mitigate the risks of transmission of COVID-19, SARS, MERS and Influenza (the “Diseases”) which are highly contagious and are believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. Public Health Guidelines have indicated that risk of transmission increases through singing or the use of musical instruments and equipment. Event organizers and/or facilities owners are responsible for ensuring these guidelines are followed. All participants/volunteers must be familiar with the guidelines. If COVID-19 activity increases in your area, organizers must be prepared to cancel and/or scale back events.
- ***No in-venue audiences/spectators are permitted.*** Festivals can still operate in venues, with performers, committee members, videographers, adjudicators (if absolutely necessary), etc. but are unable to have an audience or spectators (**please read details on page 94 & 95 of the Re-Open Saskatchewan Guidelines**). Performances can be live streamed for audience viewing. Disable the “comment” option when live streaming.
- All participants/volunteers are responsible for assessing personal risk when attending.

#### **Competitors and accompanists are strongly advised:**

- to enter/attend the nearest district festival only; travelling between communities is discouraged.

#### **Everyone in attendance must:**

- maintain physical distance (**three metres**) between individuals not living in the same household.
- properly wear a mask inside the venue at all time. (see more information for performers below)
- follow directional signs for flow and seating.
- frequently use hand sanitizer provided, including when entering and leaving venue.
- check-in for COVID -19 screening, upon arrival at venue.

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## Competitors and accompanists must:

- complete waiver before festival and submit it electronically to festival committee.
- use frequent hand sanitization or hand washing in the case of pianists and accompanists between performances.
- not share instruments, drum sticks/mallets, music stands, costumes, props and other items.
- remain in designated performance area when performing, limit movement, and return to original seating after performing.
- wear a non-medical mask at all times during the performance except for musicians playing a woodwind, brass or other instrument operated by breath. Masks may be removed only if they can maintain a distance of **three metres**. Bell covers are recommended - masks with slits are not allowed. **Face shields are not a substitute for masks. Do not use face shields in place of masks.**
- Vocalists:
  - Solo vocalists may remove masks during virtual performances, provided:
    - The solo vocalist is facing away from the musician.
    - The solo vocalist remains behind a physical barrier that is large enough to prevent transmission of COVID-19. All backup singers/accompanying musicians must be a minimum of three metres away from that barrier and remain masked.
    - Five metres physical distance must be maintained between the singer and camera operator (if the camera equipment is being operated by staff during the performance).
    - Barriers must be disinfected between performances.
    - Solo vocalists must wear masks before and after their performances.
    - Multiple singers are not permitted unless they wear masks. This includes backup vocalists.
    - A single vocalist may be accompanied by musicians, who must remain masked (e.g. pianist, guitarist, etc.).

## Adjudicators

- In order to adhere to non-essential cross-border travel, only Saskatchewan adjudicators will be hired for live festivals.
- Adjudicators working virtually will be paid the same fee as for a live adjudication. The minimum time period for which an adjudicator can be hired is one day at the full fee.
- Hotel/motels will be used for adjudicator accommodations (no billeting). Advise adjudicators to bring cleaning items to wipe surfaces and to decline daily cleaning.
- Adjudicators are required to check-in with festival committee for COVID-19 screening. (re travel history, possible exposure, symptoms, etc.). Screening form will be available on the SMFA website.
- In order to adhere to our strict copyright regulation and reduce touch surfaces, Adjudicators are asked to source the required music (use their own, borrow from a colleague, search public domain websites, purchase online, etc.). For hard-to-source music, please contact the festival committee.
- Waivers will be signed by all adjudicators at live festivals.
- At venue(s):
  - Festival committee and adjudicators will maintain social distance and wear masks at all times.
  - To help in reducing common touch surfaces, adjudicators are asked to source the required music when possible (bring their own, borrow from a colleague, search public domain websites, etc.). For hard-to-source music, festival committee may need to accommodate a safe solution (eg. collect music 24 hours in advance and store it in a plastic box).
  - Fillable marking sheets will be provided electronically for both live and virtual festivals as an option to paper.

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- Adjudicators will be required to bring their own devices to complete the marking sheets/paperwork. Festival committees will distribute marking sheets and certificates, via emails, to the participants upon completion. **OR**
- If paper is used, adjudicators will use their own writing devices. A festival volunteer will collect the marking sheets and distribute them to the teachers/participants, along with certificates, after 24 hours or as recommended by SHA.
- Adjudicator remarks/demonstrating will take place in designated performance area. Masks must be worn at all times. Virtual festivals have the option of using recorded verbal adjudications or arranging for *Zoom* meetings.
- Microphones may be used for adjudicator's comments.
- Adjudicators may choose to have meals ordered to the venues. Private space will be provided.

### Venues

- Adhere to number of attendees allowed.
- Train dedicated volunteer(s) to look after COVID-19 protocols (sanitizing, screening, enforcing masks).
- Attendees must be made aware of the name and contact number of the person(s) responsible for the event.
- Attendees must be notified upon entry of the necessary measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the event area. Signage should be posted in visible locations at entrances and throughout the event areas.
- Limit the duration of the event. Organizers should provide participants with a suitable timeframe for arrival to the event to ensure social distancing.
- Use signs to indicate distancing, directional flow of movement through areas including entrances and exits. Cordons or other barriers are recommended in common areas with separate entry and exit points, where possible. Table barriers (provincial election style) for volunteers/adjudicators are available for pick up at provincial office.
- Manage attendees so physical distancing is maintained in common areas, and as they enter and exit the event area.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided and used at entry and exit points.
- Information will be requested by the Saskatchewan Health Authority only for the purposes of contact tracing if a COVID-19 exposure is linked to the event. **Attendee records should be retained for at least 30 days after the event.** Downloading and using the COVID Alert tracing app is recommended.
- Venue rules will apply. Chairs and other furniture must be cleaned every four hours, unless otherwise specified by venue-owner rules.
- Stage area /or well-marked designated performance area will be 14 to 20 feet away from other participants. Barriers between accompanists and performers may be required as an additional precaution.
- Frequently sanitize piano/organ. Other instruments should be cleaned and maintained at home or off site.
- No food or treats will be provided.

### Scheduling

- Get creative with your scheduling in order to limit flow of participants. Some ideas are:
  - Limit number of performers in venue at one time
  - Schedule similar aged performers and have them perform all selections in one session

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## Plan B:

- A **Recorded Music Festival** is an alternative to a live music festival. Solo performers will submit entry forms as usual, and be assigned a recording time. Performers will arrive individually at a designated venue on the scheduled recording time where festival officials will record the performance **with all Re-Open Saskatchewan Guidelines for Sports and Activities and Performing Arts Guidelines being followed. Please note masking policies for musicians noted above under Plan A.** The performance is recorded in one take unless the recording equipment fails or the recording is compromised. SMFA will provide recommendations for required recording equipment. Recorded accompaniment is allowed, for this festival format, when live accompaniment is not available.

## Plan C:

- A **Virtual/e-Festival** is also a recorded competition, only the performer is responsible for recording and submitting the performance. While Zoom is a great virtual meeting option, it is not an option for a Virtual/e-Festival. Recordings may be done in home studio or other location **with all Re-Open Saskatchewan Guidelines for Sports and Activities and Performing Arts Guidelines being followed. Please note masking policies for musicians noted above under Plan A.** Professional recordings are not required for the competition but good audio and visual quality is important. The quality on most cell phones is adequate. Recorded accompaniment is allowed, for this festival format, when no other option is available, when live accompaniment is not available.

Recordings will be submitted to the adjudicator and adjudicated remotely. Written comments and marks/placements, if applicable, from adjudicators are returned to students along with any certificates and award monies. Verbal adjudications may be recorded and provided to the students or a *Zoom* meeting may be arranged with groups of classes and the adjudicator. Each festival will decide how best to provide verbal adjudications.

### Benefits

- Recorded competitions allow your registered competitors to perform and receive feedback from the adjudicators, which is helpful for continued development and exam preparation.
- Recorded performances provide a goal to work towards and recognition of a student's efforts, reinforcing the value in their pursuit of musical excellence.
- Stabilizes your festival's financial revenues and expenses and provides continuity.
- Reduces inherent risk of spreading COVID-19 or other contagions that a live festival model holds.
- Allows your donors to be recognized, avoiding the need to return donations or lose donors.
- Reduces economic loss to adjudicators by honouring contracts and providing them work.

### Timeline

- Once you set your festival dates, stick to those dates. Your adjudicators have reserved your festival dates in their schedule so it is important to have the recordings processed and sent to your adjudicators by their intended start date.
- Deadline for submission of recordings should be a minimum of one week prior to your festival start to allow time for the committee to process the entry forms and recordings in an organized fashion and forward the files to adjudicators.
- Detailed written adjudications will be returned to you by the end of the scheduled days for the adjudicator.
- Electronic adjudication sheets and certificates can be sent to competitors via email. Award monies and recommendations to Provincials can be processed once notified.

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## Recording and Submission Guidelines

- Video recording:
  - Must include a clear picture of the student playing showing face or facial profile, hands and feet (in the case of pianist and instrumentalist), and instrument.
  - Camera angle must remain consistent throughout the performance.
  - The [Dolby on](#) app can be used for enhanced recording.
  - For classes requiring more than one selection [Provincial, Concert Groups, SK Excellence Classes etc.], selections may be performed consecutively on one video or submitted in separate videos. Please be aware of time limits, if applicable.
  - Video file is uploaded to a private **YouTube channel as an 'unlisted' video**. These videos can only be viewed by someone with the link. Link will be provided on entry form.

## Festival Processing Guidelines

- Prepare a document to send to teachers and students outlining recording process and submission email.
  - Include the contact information for the person managing receipt of submissions and/or the person on your committee who can provide technical support.
- Set a deadline for submission of entry forms and links as outlined under timeline above.
- You may consider a dedicated email for submissions as this will make it easier to track, or use Jot Forms. In Jot Forms, the data can be easily exported from the excel database for sorting.
- Determine the virtual storage format (i.e. Dropbox, link to **Unlisted YouTube link**) you want to use, based on what you are familiar/comfortable with.
- In the email and virtual storage platforms (i.e. Dropbox), set up a series of folders for each discipline you have entries in [Piano, Voice, Musical Theatre, Strings, etc.] Within each of those folders, create a sub-folder for each class that has entries. Organization is important.
- Check your spam folder regularly for potential misdirection of emails. This can be avoided with Jot Forms as the forms goes directly to the web based software storage.
- Prepare adjudication forms by classes/adjudicators as per your usual process. Fillable PDF Marking Sheets are available on the SMFA website. This form allows the adjudicator to type in their adjudication remarks and send the completed form back to you.
- Place the prepared adjudication sheets in the appropriate file [either by discipline or class depending on the number of entries].
- Provide the adjudicator with the video entries via the format of your choosing (email, link to YouTube, Dropbox, etc.).
  - Communicate clearly to adjudicators the instructions for your marking scheme, award system, list of eligible students for awards, award criteria etc.
  - Provide the adjudicator with the SMFA syllabus, your addendum and scholarship information.
  - Communicate your deadline for the returned adjudications clearly.
  - Upon receipt of results/adjudications from the adjudicator:
    - ✓ Prepare certificates; templates provided by SMFA Provincial office
    - ✓ Store adjudication sheets with corresponding certificates in competitors file (eg. Drop box).
    - ✓ Provide Provincial Finals recommendation forms and notify competitors as needed.
    - ✓ Distribute adjudications, certificates (via email or link to drop box) and award monies to students/or teachers.
    - ✓ Process payment to the adjudicator.

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### Additional Considerations

- Do not overcrowd your program.
- If your committee does not have a technically savvy member, high school students who are comfortable with technology may be asked to assist. It may be a way to engage the next generation involved in volunteering!
- Announcements of winners in classes and awards may be posted on your website and Facebook page.