

## COVID-19 Sample Reopening Plan

Baxter Springs Heritage Center & Museum & Kansas Route 66 Visitor's Center

Submitted by: Mary Billington, Director

*May 2020*

To help museums share thinking as they navigate the challenges and uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alliance is compiling examples of reopening plans from individual institutions. These plans are specific to each museum's circumstances and are not meant to be definitive guidance for developing your own. Instead, they provide reference for what other museums are considering as they chart a course toward safely reopening. Check the Alliance's [reopening guide](#) frequently for updates, as we will be adding new examples as we receive them. If you have a plan or perspective on reopening you'd be interested in sharing with the broader museum field, please contact [content@aam-us.org](mailto:content@aam-us.org).

**Disclaimer:** This sample document serves as an example of how one museum addresses a particular issue. Museums should compose original materials based on their unique circumstances. Any document produced by the recipient should not substantially use the contents of this sample as the basis. Materials are provided "as is," without any guarantee or warranty of any kind, expressed or implied. Information shared here is not intended to supersede guidance from public health officials, medical experts, and federal/state/local governments. Museums are encouraged to seek legal and other expert advice on their specific circumstances.

### Support Free COVID-19 Resources for the Museum Field

AAM maintains an online collection of more than 1,000 sample policies, plans, and forms from museums of all types and sizes through the Alliance's [sample document library](#). Access is a benefit to staff of [Tier 3 member museums](#). Given the current crisis, this and other resources have been taken out from behind our member paywall to make them free and accessible for all. The current crisis is taking a distressing financial toll on cultural organizations, and AAM is no different. In these challenging times, we ask that if you can, consider supporting our [advocacy work](#) and making extensive [COVID-19 resources](#) freely available for our field, by [making a donation](#) or [becoming a member](#) of AAM. Thank you for your much-needed support.

## Introduction

I am in the unique position as the director of a large, small-town museum. The town is Baxter Springs, Kansas, and we are in the extreme southeast corner of Kansas. The Baxter Springs Heritage Center and Museum is a 20,000 square foot facility comprised of seven rooms over two floors. We also maintain the Kansas Route 66 Visitor's Center, a converted 1930's Tudor Revival style gas station, and as the name implies, we are located on Route 66.

I am the only full-time employee for the two locations. We do have two part-time employees; they are retirees who perform light maintenance and light housekeeping duties. All others are volunteers, with many of my docents are over 60.

As a small town, tourism has a tremendous influence on our economy. So, the question became, how do I accomplish both promoting tourism while maintaining the health and safety of my staff and docents? With the approval of my board president, I devised a series of "stages" to reopen to the public in what I hope is the safest manner possible.

## Reopening Plan for the Baxter Springs Heritage Center & Museum

Stage One, weeks one and two:

- Limit access; we have two floors, the main floor is less hands-on and more visual, we can open the main floor, leaving the lower level closed to the public.
- All guests MUST wash their hands upon entering the building, either in our washrooms or with their personal hand sanitizer.
- Limited number of guests, max capacity of 35, no groups larger than 5.
- Request that guests maintain social distancing.
- Request that all guests not touch displays.
- Masks & gloves will not be required, but encouraged.
- Cleaning the washrooms & entry doors every hour or more as needed.
- Cleaning the entire floor every day as part of our closing process.
- Limit our hours of availability, normal hours are Tuesday to Sunday, we will be closed on Sundays and closing earlier during the week to accommodate the extra cleaning process.

Stage Two, weeks three and four:

- Open the lower level to guests.
- Continue to request that guests wash their hands but not as strictly enforced.
- Continue cleaning the washroom and entry doors hourly.
- Continue limiting the number of guests, max capacity of 70, no groups larger than 15.
- Continue to request that guests not touch displays.
- Clean all touch surfaces in the museum as part of the daily closing process, walk-through wiping touch surfaces down.
- Limited hours as in stage one.

Stage Three, week five:

- We have full guest access and our standard daily and weekly cleaning procedures.

## Reopening Plan for the Route 66 Visitor's Center

Our Route 66 Visitor's Center, which is operated by volunteer staff, supplies tourists with Route 66 travel information and gift shop items, and requires a slightly different approach.

Stage One, weeks one and two:

- All guests MUST wash their hands upon entering the building, either in our washroom or with their personal hand sanitizer.
- Limited number of guests, max capacity of 5, no groups.
- Request that guests maintain social distancing.
- Request that all guests not touch gift shop items or the visitor information brochures unless they are acquiring the item. This will be the most difficult, as all displays are open shelving.
- Masks & gloves will not be required, but encouraged.
- Cleaning the washrooms & entry doors every hour or more as needed.
- Cleaning every day as part of our closing process.
- Limit the number of days we are open to Friday through Sunday.

Stage Two, weeks three and four:

- Follow stage one guidelines with the following changes:
  - Max capacity of 8, no groups
  - Open Thursday through Sunday

Stage Three, week five:

- We have full guest access and our standard daily and weekly cleaning procedures.

*Published May 2020*