

*"giving wings to the music inside you"*  
*Bergthorson Academy of Musical Arts Inc.*



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## **BERGTHORSON ACADEMY OF MUSICAL ARTS INC. – COVID SAFETY POLICY AS OF JUNE 22, 2020**

This policy is authorized by owner/director Robert Hornsey and Director of Operations, Stacy Fong, as of this date. **Our priority is always the safety of not only our students, instructors, and administrators, but also those at home and in everyone's closest social circles.** Grandparents, and otherwise immune compromised family members or close friends that you interact with at home are extremely at risk. Even if you personally have been carefully protective, one is never fully aware of how careful the non-family members around you have been. This sometimes-deadly pandemic virus is spread by microscopic droplets transmitted through coughing, breathing out air born vapors, singing, speaking enthusiastically, and touching lingering residues on hands, clothing and environmental elements touched by multiple people. These contagious viral traces can be spread by people showing no symptoms at the time. **As of this printing (June 22) BC has seen 2822 confirmed cases with 169 deaths. Nationally, Canada has seen 102,000 confirmed cases with 8,436 deaths.** The local, provincial, national and global circumstances surrounding the global pandemic are constantly evolving, therefore is subject to change depending on available data and understanding at the time. Our policy for instructors, administrators and students is also subject to change based on the best medical expert guidance at the time. **In order to preserve health and save lives these protocols MUST be followed. Teachers, students, and parents failing to follow the protocols will be barred from using the Bergthorson Academy facilities until a vaccine has been developed and applied throughout our community.**

**WorkSafe BC has established a requirement that all businesses planning to reopen their services to the public MUST have a written Safety Plan. Those plans will be monitored and inspected by WorkSafe BC. Penalties can be levied against non-complying companies. They have given detailed guidelines (available on their website) for a wide variety of business sectors. Our Music Academy seems to share elements with the School Protocols and one-on-one situations like Councilors, Doctors and Therapists.**

**One significant and unique feature of our situation is that the "alcohol and peroxide based hand sanitizers" have serious damaging effects on wood and lacquer surfaces. Some of our pianos, cellos, violins, and guitars are worth thousands, and in some cases tens of thousands of dollars. It is important that EVERYONE understand the danger to not only our human vulnerability but also the instruments that we love, cherish, and enjoy.**

## **Key factors under our control that limit the spread of Corona Covid 19 virus**

- 1. If You Are Sick In Any Way – Stay Home (Back-up Online Options Will Be Available)**
- 2. Prompt Lesson Starting and Finishing Times, Quick Drop Off And Pickup Procedures**
- 3. Social Distancing, Limiting Waiting Room, Staggering Lesson Start and Finish Times**
- 4. Hand Sanitizing For Everyone When You Arrive And Leave Lessons**
- 5. Face Masks To Guard From Infecting Others**
- 6. Equipment, Furniture, Counter Tops Wipe Down Sanitizing**
- 7. Online Lessons Will Remain An Option To Everyone And Will Be immediately Available For Anyone Needing To Stay Home For Minor Symptoms**
- 8. Any person who has been diagnosed with Covid 19 or has been in contact with a case or suspected case in your circle, it is essential that our Academy be notified immediately.**
- 9. Any person (or direct contacts) travelling outside of Canada are required to self-isolate for 14 days prior to returning to in person lessons – online options will be available.**

**\*Note that Special Considerations Apply For Limited Face-To-Face Lessons during July and August**

### **1. If You Are Sick In Any Way – Stay Home (Back-up Online Options Will Be Available)**

Evidence confirms that people without symptoms can carry the virus and infect others. Students, parents, instructors, and administrators who have any symptoms such as low-grade fever, runny nose, minor persistent cough, typical flu or cold like symptoms, **YOU MUST STAY HOME**. Instructors will be able to offer interactive online lessons, in the regular scheduled time, from the Bergthorson Academy Studios for students who must remain at home on short notice. **Unless the student is “bed ridden”, a stay at home for minor symptoms and the preparedness on our part to offer an online Lesson will be considered the same as a normal lesson.** Instructors also must stay home if they are sick and will have the option to offer their lessons online if they feel well enough to do so. Although we are trying to return to face to face studio lessons, the interactive **online lessons will always remain an option for those wishing to choose that format.**

### **2. Prompt Lesson Starting And Finishing Times and Quick Drop Off And Pickup Procedures**

The success of our Music Academy, and most successful teaching situations, stems from the relationships between Instructors, student, and their families. This Covid situation has created a new reality that interferes with the casual time we get to spend with each other to gain an appreciation for what is going on in our day to day family lives. Often it is the few minutes before or after a lesson when that important sharing occurs. Unfortunately, for the time being, Covid protocols limit the face to face time we have together with non-family members. Parents will be required to drop off and pickup students as close as possible to the start and finish of lesson times. Teachers are instructed to be very rigorous about lesson start and finish times. **There will no longer be the option for parents and siblings to wait in our waiting room while the lessons are in progress. We have a policy that we discourage situations where teachers and students are alone in our locations. In such a situation where there is not an administrator on hand in addition to the instructor, parents or their designate, will be asked to stay on site.**

### **3. Social Distancing, Limiting Waiting Room, Staggering Lesson Start and Finish Times**

In order to limit congestion at the turnover of lesson times we will be staggering the start and finish of lessons. **Session A lessons will begin on the hour and half hour. Session B lessons will begin 15 minutes before and after the hour.** As we may have 6 to 8 studios teaching at the same time, there is the potential for far too many people in a limited space to guarantee safe social distancing. **Should families arrive early we ask that they remain in their vehicle, or otherwise outside until lesson times.** At the Maple Ridge location, we will place a limited number of chairs, separated by social distancing circles, in the hall. Due to fire marshal regulations this will be an extremely limited option for exceptional situations.

### **4. Hand Sanitizing For Everyone When You Arrive And Leave Lessons**

There will be supplies of hand sanitizer at the entrance of each location (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows), as well as in each instruction studio, kitchen, and washroom areas. EVERYONE is expected to hand sanitize when you enter the Bergthorson Academy and to repeat the procedure upon leaving. Each instructor is expected to hand sanitize before and after every student lesson.

### **5. Face Masks To Guard From Infecting Others**

Instructors, administrators, students, and parents are expected to have their own protective face masks when in the Academy. The **Academy will not supply protective masks** to everyone. Masks can be removed for **singing lessons**, but social distancing is important in those instances as oral spray of virus droplets can project beyond six feet. For **piano instruction, and with other instruments** where social distancing may be difficult to instruct properly, it is most important that hand sanitizing and masking protocols are observed. **Remember the protective masks are to protect other people from being unintentionally infected by you.** Because we do not know how carefully everyone, in their own private lives, are at practicing safe distancing, staying away from crowds and practicing safe hygiene procedures, we must act on the side of caution. **Several of our instructors and administrators do ALWAYS have underlying immune compromised conditions. With hundreds of students enrolled in our Academy there is a statistical certainty that some students, their families back at home, or caregivers will also have immune compromised or age-related vulnerability.** I (Robert Hornsey) have had a close friend whose father died from the Covid virus and two other colleagues who have been in ICU conditions.

In the past we have had small group lessons for young children, our Preludes Program. These classes have been primarily conducted by our very experienced instructor Mrs. Maggie Van Wyk. As can be understood, young children 3 to 6 years old are full of energy and difficult to keep socially distanced. For that reason, **we will limit any Preludes classes to no more than two young children. Their parents can be in the room but must follow social distancing, sanitizing, and masking protocols for themselves.**

## **6. Equipment, Furniture, Counter Tops Wipe Down Sanitizing**

**THIS PROTOCOL IS VERY IMPORTANT, DELICATE, AND POTENTIALLY VERY EXPENSIVE SHOULD IT NOT BE DONE WITH EXTREME CARE.** In order for Hand Sanitizer products to be effective against the Covid Virus they must be at least 70% alcohol based. Antibacterial hand sanitizers are of no use. The products we use are alcohol, peroxide and glycerine based. That combination of ingredients is absorbed by wood, causing discoloration. It also dissolves acrylic and lacquer finishes. Our Grand Pianos, and many of the violins, cellos, guitars, and other instruments are worth thousands of dollars. Many are old vintage instruments with dry woods, and many guitars have beautiful lacquer, artistic finishes. **Contacting these instruments with even a residue of the alcohol-based sanitizer could cause irreparable damage.**

Having issued that note of caution, it is expected that instructors and administrators are careful to wipe down counter tops and chairs as frequently as possible before and after students and families enter and leave the building and teaching studios. We must remember that we are all in the same boat and that **these procedures are to protect everyone's health and well being and to protect our economic lively hoods.** Should an instructor, student, or parent acquire the Covid 19 Virus there is a good chance it would quarantine our business. **In this case we are our sister's and brother's keepers.**

## **7. Online Lessons Will Remain An Option To Everyone And Will Be immediately Available For Anyone Needing To Stay Home For Minor Symptoms**

Post Covid 19 times will create "a new state of normal." Our plan and expectation are that by September 2020 we will be able to resume one-on-one face to face music lessons at both our Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows locations. Although conditions are expected to have improved, we will still be committed to fully following direction from WorkSafe BC and Medical Health Advisories. Until a vaccine is developed and widely distributed throughout our community, we will all be required to observe the main precautions of:

- \*physical distancing
- \* sanitizing hands and public surfaces
- \* wearing masks when in close proximity to others
- \* avoid large group gatherings

We will always continue to make the option for on-line interactive lessons available to anyone more comfortable with that format. Starting in September those on-line lessons will be scheduled like face to face lessons and delivered during regular business hours (1pm-9pm).

The Bergthorson Academy of Musical Arts has always been proud of our bi-annual recitals which have ALWAYS been held the last three Saturdays in January and the first three Saturdays in June. We were all disappointed that the Covid conditions prevented our recitals for the first time in 17 years. Everyone at the Academy are hoping we will be able to resume our traditional recitals in January 2021.

**8. Any person who has been diagnosed with Covid 19 or has been in contact with a case or suspected case in your circle, it is essential that our Academy be notified immediately.**

**9. Any person (or direct contacts) travelling outside of Canada are required to self-isolate for 14 days prior to returning to in person lessons – online options will be available.**