



THE AMERICAN FEDERATION PUERI CANTORES

*Bringing together youth choirs throughout
America to sing the Peace of God*

January 28, 2022

As the American Federation of Pueri Cantores approaches the 2022 Festival season amidst the ongoing, challenging, and ever-changing Covid-19 environment, we are committed to the health and safety of our singers, families, conductors, and community.

On December 8, 2021, the American Choral Directors Association released a statement summarizing the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and results from the choral/singing-specific research which the ACDA has helped sponsor:

“Due to the emergence of the Omicron variant, and the Delta variant continuing to circulate in the United States, the CDC recommends that everyone who is able get vaccinated, as well as wear a mask in indoor public spaces in order to ensure maximum protection for yourself and to prevent potential spread to others. The protocols of masking, increased ventilation, and distancing work. Based on this updated guidance and the current research on singing and aerosols, ACDA encourages choral conductors to follow these protocols if singing inside.”

We are aware that protocols and restrictions vary widely around our nation, thus in the weeks leading up to a local festival the AFPC leadership, in conjunction with the local festival coordinators and host site staff, will discuss all state and locality mitigation guidelines/mandates which are in place. In addition, AFPC and our local leaders will evaluate any concerning local Covid/transmission rates, should that need to guide our actions. During festival days AFPC will follow those local ordinances and recommendations to reduce the risk of the potential spread of infection and help keep our young singers and all present safe.

The following protocols will be implemented at the 2022 Pueri Cantores Houston Festival:

1. There is not a mask mandate in the city of Houston. However, the [Houston Health Department](#) and [CDC](#) recommend that people wear masks in enclosed public spaces. AFPC encourages all singers, chaperones, choir directors, and individuals involved in the Festival to wear facial masks that cover their mouth and nose throughout the entire day, except for those periods when lunch or snacks are being consumed. Ultimately, mask-wearing will be left to the discretion of the singers' parents/guardians and each individual adult.
2. Within the limitations of the rehearsal and worship spaces, singers will be distanced from one another, as possible. AFPC will coordinate their efforts with the local representatives to arrive at working solutions in advance of the festival day, so that a seating plan for both the rehearsal and worship can be adopted.
3. Within the limitations of the rehearsal and worship spaces, efforts will be made to provide a renewed source of fresh air via open/cracked windows and doors/air filters/purification systems to encourage cross ventilation and air changes. AFPC will coordinate their efforts with the local representatives to arrive at working solutions.

4. Throughout festival days, efforts will be made by AFPC and the local representatives to encourage all choristers and chaperones to wash their hands thoroughly at regular intervals.
5. Protocols for the lunch and snack periods will be coordinated with the local hosts to ensure safe spaces for all choristers. When possible, meals and snacks should be consumed outdoors. When not possible, distancing between choristers should be strictly observed, especially during those periods when eating and drinking is taking place.
6. AFPC supports the efforts behind vaccinations and testing and encourages all involved in our festivals to be fully vaccinated, if able.
7. We ask that any festival participants (choristers, choir directors, chaperones, host location staff) who are feeling ill, have exhibited symptoms* of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 in the 5 days prior to the festival, to stay home and not attend the festival. Full refunds will be accorded on behalf of all paid participants affected.
*Symptoms include: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea (cdc.gov)
8. AFPC will continue to review and implement the above listed mitigation practices that have been shown to be successful, and as conditions evolve, AFPC and our local hosts should remain nimble and respond to potential increased risk by increasing the rigor of these mitigation strategies as needed based upon local community level data.

The American Federation of Pueri Cantores asks our conductors, coordinators, host church site personnel, singers, chaperones, and volunteers to join us in ensuring a safe and enjoyable Festival experience for all.

Let us once again unite in song for the Glory of God!

Thank you,

American Federation Pueri Cantores