

COVID-19 Operations Update from the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

Jamestown Settlement and American Revolution Museum at Yorktown to Reopen on June 24, Museums Taking Steps to Welcome Visitors Safely this Summer

WILLIAMSBURG, Va., June 4, 2020 – The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation remains closed in response to COVID-19, but anticipates Jamestown Settlement and American Revolution Museums at Yorktown to reopen on Wednesday, June 24, as Virginia moves into phase two of its Forward Virginia plan.

“We look forward to welcoming everyone back to our museums,” said Christy S. Coleman, executive director of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. “The past few months have allowed us to think deeply about our work, listen intently and affirm our commitment to serve our communities in a safe and healthy environment with impactful and meaningful experiences about our shared history.”

As the museums reopen, several adjustments are being made to operations and access to outdoor living-history areas and gallery exhibits to allow visitors to enjoy the museums while following social-distancing protocols.

In addition to enhanced cleaning protocols, adjustments to museum operations include:

- Masks will be required indoors and encouraged in outdoor public spaces for visitors and staff.
- Social distancing, of at least 6 feet, is encouraged between guests, individual family groups and staff. Informational videos and signage throughout the museums will reinforce protective protocols and help inform visitor decisions.
- In the outdoor living-history areas, capacity in the re-created buildings and structures, including access to one of the three ships, will be limited to a certain number of visitors at a time. Signage will indicate the number of visitors allowed at one time.
- In the indoor exhibition galleries, use of interactive touch screens will be prohibited, following guidelines outlined in phase two of reopening Virginia.
- Capacity in the museum theater and gallery films will be limited to a certain number of guests at a time.
- Plexiglass shields will be in place in front of registers and public-facing counters and cash registers in the visitor services areas, gift shops and museum cafes.
- Additional hand-sanitizing stations will be available throughout museum to supplement handwashing.
- Maintain increased efforts to disinfect high-touch areas including surfaces, doorknobs and stairwells, in both the exhibition galleries and outdoor living-history areas.
- The museums’ indoor galleries and films will be open with limited capacities from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. through August 15. Outdoor living-history areas are accessible for visitors from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation will announce additional reopening details soon, including plans for summer programming and special events.

In addition, all employees will receive advance training on safety protocols and social-distancing procedures developed to protect themselves and museum visitors, based on guidance from government and public health officials.

The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and its museums have been closed to the public since March 14 to support public health mandates to minimize the spread of COVID-19, with staff teleworking during the closure. The agency implemented cost-saving measures in April to mitigate expected losses in earned revenues in the current FY2020 budget, as well as to address unknowns in the FY2021 budget. Among the measures were the temporary furlough of 221 part-time staff beginning April 26 and a temporary workforce reduction, of 4 to 30 working days, for 152 full-time staff beginning June 1.

The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation continues to closely monitor public-health guidance and work closely with government agencies, healthcare and tourism organizations. It has aligned its plans and safety protocols with those recommended by Virginia Governor's Office, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health and other agencies. For more information, visit historyisfun.org/update.

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The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation is an educational agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Its mission is to foster through its living-history museums – Jamestown Settlement and American Revolution Museum at Yorktown – an awareness and understanding of the early history, settlement and development of the United States through the convergence of American Indian, European and African cultures and the enduring legacies bequeathed to the nation.

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