



Tips and Strategies: The Gradual Re-Opening of Clubhouses

For the last weeks and months, Clubhouses around the world have had to close their buildings while working to sustain a vibrant 'virtual' Clubhouse community. Now, in various parts of the world, many Clubhouses are beginning the process of gradually re-opening. We have asked Clubhouses to send us updates about how they are going about doing this, to optimally balance their enthusiasm about being together again with the need to remain vigilant about maintaining physical distancing and keeping the Clubhouse disinfected.

The following is a collection of strategies from many different Clubhouses. Each Clubhouse is required to comply with its local governmental requirements and restrictions, but within those parameters Clubhouses are working to find ways to be together that are safe and at the same time meaningful and satisfying. Thank you to the many Clubhouses that have shared their evolving reopening plans with us!

Some of these strategies include:

Consensus Decision Making

- The Clubhouse community is comprised of members, staff, board and administrators, with many different needs and various levels of comfort with how best to begin the reopening process. It is important to have community-wide discussions to hear the opinions and fears and hopes of the whole Clubhouse community, as part of the process of establishing a reopening plan. This open discussion will also help to ensure greater 'buy-in' from the whole community as the plan is implemented.

Contact tracing

- Keep records of who is in the building at different times during the course of each day, and what they were involved with, in order to be able to trace back to others who may have come in contact with anyone who later tests positive for the virus.

Daily Schedule

- Some Clubhouse are staggering hours, with members coming for different 'shifts' during the day to avoid crowding.
- Some Clubhouses are requiring members to sign up in advance for a visit to the Clubhouse to ensure that numbers remain low enough to be safe.
- If advanced sign-up is not required, some Clubhouses have organized a process so that if a member arrives but the Clubhouse is already at maximum capacity, a



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staff or member will come out and meet that person and go for a walk together in the neighborhood.

- Some Clubhouses are beginning their reopening process with only one or two days per week, with the expectation of gradual expansion of Clubhouse hours over the next few months.
- Daily or twice daily meetings are held using videoconference to allow everyone to remain at their desks and also include members still at home.
- Most Clubhouses are not having onsite evening and weekend social programs, but many continue to provide online virtual social activities.

Maintaining a ‘Hybrid’ Clubhouse – integrating the ‘virtual’ Clubhouse with the onsite Clubhouse

- Since many members will still be isolating at home, it is important to continue to offer the online, telephone, and mobile outreach efforts that had been implemented when the Clubhouse was closed. Maintain a vibrant online schedule of Clubhouse meetings and activities even as the Clubhouse is now open for members.

Daily Clubhouse Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Develop enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols for the Clubhouse, particularly for high-contact and shared locations such as doors, light switches, faucets, and elevator buttons. Make disposable wipes and/or spray cleaners available for facilitate frequent cleaning.
- Many Clubhouse have a daily schedule for thoroughly disinfecting (for example 9am, 11am, 1pm, and 3pm) these common areas.
- All communal items that cannot be easily cleaned, such as shared magazines and newspapers, should be removed from the Clubhouse.
- Desk areas, phones, faucets, keyboards, countertops, toilets and other high touch points should be disinfected after each use.

Measures to Avoid Person to Person Spread

- Promote and facilitate frequent and proper handwashing by providing sanitizer or hand washing stations at points of entry and at locations where goods are handled.
- Encourage coughing or sneezing into the elbow and prompt disposal of used tissues.
- Require that masks are worn while inside the Clubhouse. Many Clubhouses are providing masks and hand sanitizer.



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- Some Clubhouses are screening everyone who enters the building with a brief health survey, asking whether the person has had any known contact with anyone testing positive for COVID-19, or has difficulty breathing, persistent cough, diarrhea, vomiting, headache, fever or feeling feverish, unexplained achiness, skin rash, or appearing obviously unwell.
- Some Clubhouses are taking the temperature of everyone entering the building and not admitting anyone with a fever of greater than 38 C or 100.4 (Guidelines of US Centers for Disease Control).
- Provide a written set of guidelines, including description of effective handwashing technique and other safe hygiene practices and require everyone in the Clubhouse to sign it.
- Ask members and staff to bring their own pens to avoid spread of virus.

Ensuring Physical Distancing

- Restrict the number of people in the Clubhouse at one time. Most Clubhouse's local governments have provided guidelines for how many people can be in a room or building at one time
- Clubhouses that have gardens can establish an organized work-ordered day in the garden and expand the number of members 'in the Clubhouse' that way.
- One Clubhouse will schedule member work-ordered day activities one week in advance, so that members can sign up for days that are particularly interesting for them. All members who were active in the three month period prior to the physical closing of the Clubhouse building will be contacted by phone or social media and invited back. Staff will work out a mutually acceptable schedule for all members.
- Some Clubhouses will give priority to members who have been most challenged by the isolation of having been at home for this long period of time. Others will open attendance opportunities on a first come first served basis. Others will invite members show particular skills and talents are most required by the Clubhouse during this reopening phase.
- Some Clubhouses will limit times a member can attend in the course of a month, in order to ensure that any member wishing to come into the Clubhouse can have that opportunity.
- Eliminate all non-essential gatherings such as meetings.
- Some Clubhouses will continue to hold daily meetings via teleconference or videoconference (Zoom, Slack, Facebook Live)) formats, which will include colleagues in the Clubhouse as well as those still in their homes.
- Some Clubhouses are requiring the members and staff to remain in one designated work area, and not move around the Clubhouse during the day.



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Who can come, if space is limited?

- Some Clubhouses are contacting members with known high risk factors (underlying medical conditions, over 65 years old) and encouraging them to check with their doctor before coming to the Clubhouse.
- Some Clubhouses are using a 'first come first served' approach.
- Some Clubhouses are actively extending invitations to members who are most likely to be greatly challenged by the long period of having been isolated from others.

Arrangement of Furniture and Physical Space

- Place a carpet sprayed with diluted bleach at the entrance of the Clubhouse for wiping off shoes.
- Arrange chairs in shared spaces to discourage large gatherings and ensure that people maintain appropriate distance.
- Add tape markers to indicate six-foot (two meter) markings where needed.
- Place posters in prominent locations to remind everyone to practice hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Install physical barriers and increase separation between desks.
- Limit the number of people allowed in the smoking area.

Lunch (Clubhouse Food Service)

- Some Clubhouses are not making/serving lunch in the initial phase of their re-opening strategy.
- Clubhouses that are serving lunch might arrange the dining room so that there is at least six feet (two meters) between people, and people are all facing in the same direction rather than facing one another.
- Some Clubhouses that are serving lunch are having lunch in shifts to avoid crowding in the dining room. Members and staff sign up in advance for a particular lunch seating to prevent crowding.
- Weather permitting, many Clubhouses are also providing socially distanced outdoor seating for lunch.
- Disposable gloves are worn when handling food or drinks.
- Some Clubhouses are using disposable cups, plates and silverware for initial stage of reopening plan.
- Have members and staff bring their own utensils for meals.
- Some Clubhouses ask everyone to bring their own lunch,



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Visitors

- Clubhouses that are screening people coming into the building are using the same screening criteria for visitors
- No community presentations will occur inside the Clubhouse or in the larger community during the initial phase of reopening

Transportation

- Most Clubhouses are advising against use of public transportation.
- If the Clubhouse van is used, seats are left empty to allow for appropriate social distance.
- Members are encouraged to walk, bike, or drive themselves whenever possible.