

SOUND ADVICE FOR BASIC SECURITY DURING CURRENT CLOSURES

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Under normal circumstances (when open to the public), many museums, libraries, historic sites, live collection institutions, and other cultural properties staff their facilities 24 hours daily, to include late night patrols and monitoring station/control room operators. IFCPP is not, by any means, recommending elimination of these positions during current closures. If you can afford to do so, these positions should be maintained (and even strengthened) during current closures. Personnel making nighttime patrol rounds should be following predesignated routes either electronically or by written instructions. Any activity or facility irregularities should be documented and acted upon as soon as practically possible. Security control room staff should be acting in accordance with established Post Orders, and a current manual of operations. All such positions should be regularly checked by supervisory staff, at all hours.

There are, without a doubt, numerous institutions unable to continue afterhours staffing due to budgetary restrictions. Many other cultural properties are only able to lock the doors after normal business hours and hope for the best. During current closures, institutions are forced to maintain irregular and continually changing hours of operations and staffing.

The security of most institutions is also dependent upon properly selected, installed, monitored, and maintained electronic systems. As we all know, there is no guarantee that all systems are always operating as intended, or properly reporting conditions as expected.

What steps may be taken to enhance the protection of the institution, without the presence of around-the-clock security staff, and possibly, without the physical presence of security personnel at any time during current closures? Valuable collections warrant special protection measures, even when budgets won't allow for the staffing we would prefer. The following measures should be taken into consideration:

Secure the perimeter. Any and all access points should be properly protected. These include doors, windows, ventilation screens, elevator shafts, skylights, rooftop access, loading docks, or any other place where entry may be gained. Each of these points should be alarmed, or secured with impenetrable bars or grates.

Alarm systems should be selected and/or upgraded after a professional process has determined the most practical and cost-effective systems available. Every device on the system should be tested in accordance with manufacturer specifications. Current closures might provide a convenient opportunity to test all security and fire protection systems while visitors are not present.

Video surveillance should cover the perimeter of the building(s), recording all motion, at all times. Collection storage and all exhibit areas should be monitored by video surveillance as well. IP-based

systems allow authorized users to view live video remotely, from any location where Internet access is available.

Locking systems should be modern systems with limited distribution of keys and keycards, especially for perimeter doors. All exterior and some interior doors should be protected by electronic alarms and locking systems. Distribution of keys and keycards should be closely tracked, with recovery of keys at the time of termination of employment (or extended leave). Keys accessing collections storage spaces and other sensitive interior areas should not be taken out of the building, and stored in secure key cabinets. These keys should be checked out and tracked, via electronic software or hard-copy logs.

Monitoring of electronic security and fire protection systems should be by a UL Certified Central Alarm Monitoring Station, with alarm transmission by reliable communications systems. Backup/redundant transmission should also be installed, and alarm panel back-up batteries should be inspected and replaced every 3 years.

A third-party (contract) **patrol service**, should be retained (or available through an advance service agreement) to perform regular perimeter checks on all facilities, and/or supplement existing security personnel, as needed.

Please contact IFCPP if we can offer direction or advice for your specific concerns – www.ifcpp.org or rob@ifcpp.org

Stay safe and healthy as we all weather the storm together!