



577 During the Coronavirus Pandemic: Your Questions Answered

(updated 10/01/2021)

The health of 577's employees, instructors, volunteers, and visitors will continue to guide the decision-making process for our phased re-opening. For the safety of our visitors, staff, and instructors, we are being more cautious than is required.

577 is a place of joy, wonder, and coming together for each other. We emphasize the importance of watching out for those around us.

Since there are still vulnerable folks in our community, and because we don't want to be in the business of verifying vaccine cards, we ask that visitors continue to mask up indoors at 577 or when we can't be six feet apart. It's a continued sign of respect and care for others who may not be able to receive the vaccine.

Are you open?

The grounds are open for people to walk and play seven days a week between 9am to 5pm., including the outdoor nature play areas, StoryWalk®, and outdoor picnic tables and benches.

You may use the Courtyard bathroom in accordance with the posted guidelines.

The following buildings are open for visitors who follow the posted guidelines. All visitors must wear a mask inside buildings at 577, regardless of your vaccination status.

- Dome: opened June 15, 2021
- Log House: opened June 29, 2021
- Bee Room: opened July 4, 2021

Limited outdoor in-person classes will be offered. Please attend in accordance with the guidelines below. Online and remote classes will also continue.

The Book Center is currently only open during the monthly Book Fair. **The October Book Fair (+Pottery) date is Saturday, October 9, 9am to 1pm.** We will be accepting book donations at this event. We will also be accepting book donations and gently-used art supplies on **Wednesday, October 20, 3pm to 7pm.** Check the website for details on this event and the exciting plan for the Book Center this November.

All meetings, meeting reservations, professional photography, and guided tours are suspended at The 577 Foundation.

Offices remain closed to the public for the safety of our staff.

How can I stay safe?

Please:

- 1) Wear a mask inside buildings at 577, regardless of your vaccination status. Bring a mask with you just in case you need to use the restroom, enter a building, or greet a friend.
- 2) Stay home if you feel sick or have been exposed to illness.
- 3) Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet between you and members of other households.
- 4) Take only pictures, leave only footprints. Carry out all trash and recyclables. Keep things at 577 nice for everyone.
- 5) Touch surfaces at your own risk, or bring wipes to disinfect them before and after you use them.
- 6) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Hand washing is essential. Please do it often.

Why aren't you doing all of your regular offerings?

Our staff's efforts are focused on:

- 1) Keeping visitors, staff, and others safe and healthy.
- 2) Providing a beautiful outdoor space for people to enjoy during the pandemic that keeps them indoors and isolated.
- 3) Supporting our 50 community gardeners, packing the 577 gardens to grow the maximum amount of organic produce. *(We're doing our part to feed our neighbors across Northwest Ohio through local food banks. These are our "Virginia's Victory Gardens" in the spirit of our founder and benefactor, Virginia Secor Stranahan, who planted organic gardens during WWII right on the land where The 577 Foundation sits today.)*
- 4) Experimenting with different ways to offer classes.
- 5) Keeping 577's finances and business operations sustainable through a combination of steady state and innovation.

When will you be offering indoor classes again?

Our staff is eager but meager, and the pandemic has created more work for us just to keep things running.

We are currently piloting indoor pottery classes with students who have completed the prerequisite Adult Pottery: 6 Week Course.

Please know that we're working on bringing more options to you as we all move forward.



Are the outdoor play areas available?

Nature play areas are open. This includes Virginia’s Children’s Garden, the Kaleidoscope, Solar Panel Display, and Did’s Dig.

Please practice distancing on the play areas and stay at least six feet away from members of other households. Mask wearing is recommended just in case.

Please bring your own shovels and brushes for use in Did’s Dig. We will not be able to supply tools for the Dig this year.

Natural playscapes will not be wiped down. If you have concerns about using them, we recommend you wipe them before and after you use them.

Do you take book donations?

We will be accepting Book Donations during our Book Fair event and National Reuse Day celebration this month:

- Book Fair: Saturday, October 9, 9am to 1pm
- National Reuse Day Celebration: Wednesday, October 20, 3pm to 7pm
 - Pack donation items in boxes or bags that you do not want back. Cars can pull up, open the trunk, and unload the donations in the cart, and pull away.
 - Limit 4 boxes or bags of books per household per day. Please call if you have a large amount of art supplies to donate.
 - Books must be in like-new condition. We accept hardbacks, paperbacks, children’s books, nonfiction, fiction, and magazines that are less than 1 year old. We do not accept: Damaged, musty, or smoky materials, encyclopedias or textbooks, Readers Digest novels and magazines, National Geographics, magazines over 1 year old, or books on tape, CDs, records, DVDs, VHS
 - We are looking for art supplies over general craft supplies. Items accepted: paint, brushes, paper, pencils, scissors, sewing items, fabric, glue, markers, and more. View the link on the website for a full list.

May I come buy books from there?

We are holding a Book Fair (+Pottery) on **Saturday, October 9, 9am to 1pm**. You can purchase books and pottery there. All donations will benefit The 577 Foundation.

New! Join us this November for a unique semi-private shopping experience. Find your favorite pre-loved books in gift-worthy condition just in time for the holiday season. [Click here for details.](#)



I have been assigned a community garden at 577. May I tend it?

If you are one of the pre-assigned community gardeners, as of today you may come to plant and tend your garden within these guidelines:

- 1) Tools will be available in the Community Gardener Tool Shed. You may use those as long as gardeners don't congregate around the shed, and they consistently sanitize their tools before and after use. Or you may bring and use your own tools if you prefer.
- 2) Keep a distance of 6 feet from others. Just to be safe, make it two standard shovels' lengths apart.
- 3) If you're able to plant a tad more than normal to give to food banks in a few months, please do. There could be more hungry people in need this year than usual.

Are you having the plant sale this year?

We held our plant sale during May with tomato plants and water plants.

May I purchase tomato plants or water plants?

We won't be able to sell or give away water plants on-demand this year.

I'm a community instructor interested in teaching a class. Is that possible?

Classes at 577 are being taught online, remotely, or outdoors until further notice. If you'd like to teach in one of those formats, please email cstose@577foundation.org for details.

We will reach out to you when we are ready to offer in-person, indoor classes again.

I'm a pottery student. May I come for independent time?

We are currently piloting indoor supervised independent time for students who have completed the prerequisite Adult Pottery: 6 Week Course. Those students will receive an email from Julie with details. Independent studio time is still suspended.

We are also piloting a few indoor pottery classes for students who have completed the prerequisite Adult Pottery: 6 Week Course. Those students will receive an email from Julie with details.

We are offering remote "pottery to go" kits every month as well as outdoor classes. Check the online class calendar for details at <https://577foundation.recdesk.com/Community/Home>.



Can we do wood kiln or raku since that's outside?

Hybrid Raku to Go classes are being offered for students who have completed the prerequisite Adult Pottery: 6 Week Course.

Wood Kiln: We are in testing mode. Please contact Julie at jbeutler@577foundation.org for details.

I have a meeting scheduled there,

All meetings and gatherings of people are suspended until further notice.

OR I'd like to reserve one of your rooms for a meeting.

Scheduling priority will be given to groups whose meetings were cancelled starting in March 2020. We will not be booking any new meetings until further notice.

I'd like to bring a group for a tour or field trip.

All tours and field trips are suspended until further notice. We aren't accepting reservations for those at this time.

I'm trying to donate something to 577. Will you take it?

It depends on what it is! Give us a call so we can determine whether we need it or not. If you'd like to make a financial donation to help us weather this storm, you can do so online at <http://577foundation.org/Donate.html>

Or, consider donating to reputable social service organizations that are serving the most vulnerable people in our community right now.

Can we have a picnic there?

Yes! We welcome picnickers as long as:

- 1) The picnicking group is small – not a family reunion or group gathering with lawn games, volleyball nets, coolers, etc. We try to balance the space for many different people in the community, not just a single family or business's social gathering.
- 2) The picnic is carry-in – carry-out for all trash, food, and recyclables; take only pictures, leave only footprints. 577 is a conservation easement, so we try to generate as little trash here as possible.
- 3) Please don't feed the wildlife. Being in balance with nature is very important to us.

Several picnic tables have been set up for first-come, first-serve use. Leave things impeccably clean and sanitary for everyone else. Please bring your own wipes to clean them before and after you use them, and follow all of the general visitor guidelines from page 2 of this guide.



I'm a photographer and I'd like to take people's portraits at 577.

This activity will be suspended until further notice so that visitors coming for nature time have the priority.

Will The 577 Foundation be ok?

We have a bright, experienced team of people working to keep 577 Foundation executing our pandemic response plan. We are taking care of our staff, buildings, and grounds. You can help right now by taking preventative measures so that everyone stays healthy!

What can I do to help?

We always accept unrestricted monetary donations to help us keep our little corner of the world beautiful, our programs interesting, and our operations sound. You can send a financial gift, online at <http://577foundation.org/Donate.html>.

Or, consider donating to reputable social service organizations that are serving the most vulnerable people in our community right now.

AAAH! I'm a hugger. What do I do?!

We know. We are too. But for now, avoid social greetings like shaking hands and hugging. Our favorite alternative greetings include JAZZ HANDS! Put your hand to your heart, or put your palms together and bow to the other person.

Have some fun creating new no-touch greetings that you can do!

What's the big deal about COVID?

Let's talk about glitter. If you've ever had even a little bit of glitter in your house, you know that it spreads to places you couldn't have dreamed of for weeks after it first appeared. You end up with a speck of glitter on your face that you don't know how it got there. Your friends and family get it. It comes with you everywhere you go until it falls off somewhere. If we all walk around our daily lives with COVID and don't know we have it, the "glitter" still gets on everyone else.

This illness is especially dangerous because we might be spreading it around like glitter before we even know we have it. Some people don't feel sick at all when they have it, making their "virus glitter" especially spreadable if they don't take everyday precautions. As the virus mutates into new variants, even people who have had COVID once are at risk of getting it again. The vaccine seems to be working, but will likely need a booster within the first year after receiving it. All of the information on this is still evolving as new scientific findings become available.



What we do know!

The preventative measures that we've all learned this past year provide layers of protection for everyone so that hospitals will not get overwhelmed all at once. These preventative actions are acts of care and consideration for everyone around you.

So: keep your glitter to yourself. But never stop shining, little star.

Timeline of 577 Phased Reopening Plan

Phase One of our reopening plan launched in April:

- **Courtyard bathroom is open** Follow posted safety protocol. Mask wearing is required in the bathroom, regardless of your vaccination status.
- **Outdoor nature play areas** are open. Follow posted safety protocol. Includes Children's Garden, Solar Display, Kaleidoscope, River Walk, and Did's Dig.
- **Picnic tables, chairs, and benches** are available. We disinfect them once a day. You are welcome to clean them before and after use. Carry out any garbage you generate during your visit.

Phase Two launched in May:

- **Limited Outdoor In-Person Classes.** Classes are listed on [our registration page](#). Most classes will still be offered via Zoom, so read closely to see if the class is outdoor, online or remote.
- **Year-Round StoryWalk®.** This new year-round StoryWalk® features sturdy signposts in which we'll rotate out at least one picture book monthly so that you can enjoy something new on every visit.
- **Book Fair (+Plants +Pottery)** was held outside in the Courtyard on May 29. It was so successful that we'll repeat it again on June 26 from 9:00-1:00 p.m.

Phase Three and Four launched in June:

- **Geodesic Biodome** opened to the public June 15, 2021. Masks and social distancing will be expected inside, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Log House** opened to the public June 29, 2021. Masks and social distancing will be expected inside, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Book donations** will be accepted at our **drive thru Book Drives**. Due to quarantine requirements for donated items, book donations will not be accepted outside of these Book Drives.



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- **MetroBeet Urban Farm and Community Garden Tour** kicked off on June 11 and 12. It will continue on August 13-14.
 - **Flutter Hut** is installed so people can observe monarch butterflies on their Ohio migratory stop from Mexico to Canada and back again.

Phase Five launched in July:

- **Bee Room** will open to the public July 4, 2021. Masks and social distancing will be expected inside, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Piloting several additional Pottery offerings**
- **Continue MetroBeet Urban Farm and Community Garden Tour** across the region on Fridays, July 9 and August 13 from 5:00-8:00 p.m. and Saturdays, July 10 and August 14 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Folks wanting to learn more about how urban farms and community gardens operate can visit a variety of these places to see how it's done. At 577's tour stop, we'll have live music from the Toledo School for the Arts. [Click here](#) for a map and more details.
- **Continue Book Fair inside the Book Center** each month.
- **Continue Book Drives** each month.
- **Launch Joyful Emergence community art installation**, inviting community members to fold at least [one origami butterfly](#) in commemoration of the past year, the metamorphosis it inspired within each of us, and our opportunity to emerge back into the world. Just like butterflies experiencing their mystical transformation from caterpillar to soupy enzyme goo to butterfly, we too find ourselves as a community transitioning— from a time of uncertainty, fear, and confusion to hopeful days ahead of deeper understanding, connection, and joy. As you fold your butterfly, please do so with healing thoughts of joy, celebration, peace, and good wishes to shower down upon the visitors who see them. These butterflies – your butterflies – will be installed inside each of the buildings at The 577 Foundation. As each building reopens to the public, they will be welcomed by a joyful flutter of origami butterflies from people across the community.

