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GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE DURING THE DE- ESCALATION OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS

**Ministry of Culture and Sport
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Title:

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CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Essential aspects of the pathogen and its effect on managing cultural property	5
	Disinfection of cultural property	6
III.	General recommendations	7
IV.	Specific recommendations	10
	Immovable property	10
	Cleaning and disinfection outside buildings with heritage value	12
	Cleaning and disinfection inside buildings	13
	Movable property	13
	Recommendations for using and celebrating in places of worship	15
	Recommendations for using and visiting monuments	17
	Recommendations for using and visiting archaeological sites, caves and rock shelters	20
	Recommendations for working and visiting museum spaces, exhibition rooms and similar premises	22
	Recommendations for working and visiting archives and libraries	26
	Intangible cultural heritage	29
	The impact of COVID-19 measures on intangible cultural heritage	29
	Effects and recommendations	29
V.	CONCLUSIONS	31
VI.	APPENDICES	32
VII.	BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES	40



GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE DURING THE DE-ESCALATION OF THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS

I. Introduction

The aim of this document is to offer guidelines for actions regarding the management of cultural heritage during the de-escalation process of the health crisis generated by COVID-19. This should be done to guarantee the proper conservation of heritage as well as its use by people (owners, custodians, workers and the public) and to follow optimum health and safety conditions.

The scope of action is intended to be global, taking into account not only the very different examples of culture that make up our heritage, but also the varied and particular cases when it comes to ownership, uses, types of management, size, those in charge, etc.

This pandemic evolves fast, and because of this the various competent authorities issued guidelines regulating matters from the very beginning of the situation, with the declaration of a state of emergency¹, and the progressive phases of the Plan for the Transition to a New Normal² — also called the De-escalation Plan — that was approved this past 28 April. This regulatory framework, which attempts to minimise the transmission and spread of the disease, mainly affects the safety of people, but also indirectly, and directly in some cases, cultural heritage.

With the regulations approved by the Government and the competent ministerial bodies, various cultural institutions, including the IPCE, have drafted technical documents regarding the treatment of cultural property during this crisis. The first texts focused mainly on the disinfection of public spaces; as initial actions, driven by the need to stop the epidemic, involved disinfecting heritage property, mainly buildings, and in many cases the use of products that were incompatible with their conservation³.

The gradual return to a new normal will encompass activities in all areas, including culture. It is therefore necessary to critically think about how the work and services carried out in these spaces — as well as their own organisational characteristics — can include every action, both preventive and curative, to guarantee personal safety, as well as the proper conservation of our heritage. Bearing this in mind, a special chapter needs to be included on how to develop the many and varied examples that make up intangible heritage.

As the pandemic evolves, these regulations will be updated to make their use more flexible (we hope that this will be the general case) or more restricted. Technical recommendations will be adapted in the same way, always upholding the premise to make conservation and enjoyment compatible. The measures presented in this text may, therefore, be subject to adjustments in accordance with regulations

¹ Royal Decree 463/2020 of 14 March, declaring the state of emergency for the management of the health crisis situation brought about by COVID-19.

² Ministry of Health (28 April 2020). Plan for the transition to a new normal. Sourced from www.lamoncloa.gob.es <https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/consejodeministros/resumenes/Documents/2020/PlanTransicionNuevaNormalidad.pdf>

³ Spanish Cultural Heritage Institute (IPCE). (16 April 2020). *Recommendations on disinfection procedures for cultural property due to the COVID-19 crisis*. Sourced from ipce.culturaydeporte.gob.es: <https://ipce.culturaydeporte.gob.es/noticias/2020/2020-04-16-recomendaciones-covid-19.html>



published by the Ministry of Health during the de-escalation. We hope that they will be reduced in the short-term, as this will show that the crisis is being overcome.

Spain's great wealth of heritage and its potential as a social, cultural and economic driving force, compels us to guarantee its conservation, but also to ensure it is available to society with the certainty that any measure adopted during this progressive process puts the safety of people first. There are many uncertainties and doubts regarding how the de-escalation will unfold. It is therefore important that the different steps are taken with the utmost guarantee, from a comprehensive and respectful mindset held by all those with roles of responsibility in this matter.

II. Essential aspects of the pathogen and its effect on managing cultural property

Viruses are infectious agents made up of very simple structures of proteins, nucleic acids and lipids, which can only develop inside living organisms.

Research is currently being carried out on the SARS-CoV-2 virus but there is still much to understand about the way it behaves. The route of human-to-human transmission is considered similar to that described for other coronaviruses through secretions from infected people (mainly by direct contact with respiratory droplets larger than 5 microns, capable of transmission over distances of up to 2 metres), and hands or fomites contaminated with these secretions, followed by contact with the mucosa of the mouth, nose or eyes.

The best protection measures for people against this disease are prevention and the adoption of new patterns of behaviour. In order of priority these measures include: physical distancing, strict hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, disinfection of spaces and surfaces, and in certain contexts, the use of personal protective equipment.

To address these aspects with regard to cultural institutions, it is helpful to ask the following questions:

Are viruses a risk to cultural property?

No, viruses are not a risk to cultural heritage. *Biodeterioration* is defined as any damage caused to different materials by the activity of living beings (bacteria, fungi, insects, plants, etc.). Viruses are not included in this group as they are not active other than inside living cells (e.g. those of our respiratory system). They therefore cannot spread on the materials cultural property are made of and do not cause them any harm.

Should cultural property be treated against viruses?

The main health risk regarding the presence of the virus on cultural property, lies in the possibility of viral particles remaining on surfaces. The best prevention is thus to avoid direct contact with artworks at all times.

Cultural property should never be touched directly or even approached too closely, but this premise – in a situation such as the present one – is even more necessary. This also avoids the need to use disinfectants on cultural property and eliminates the risk of contagion from any viral particles on its surface.



What is the difference between cleaning and disinfection procedures?

The aim of the former is to eliminate dirt, while the goal of the latter is to eliminate microorganisms and other elements, such as viruses, that can cause infection. While it is true that dirt encourages an accumulation or growth of germs, disinfecting an uncleaned surface can have other negative consequences, such as uneven dirt removal. Both processes are therefore closely related.

Disinfection of cultural property

In order to define the disinfection process of non-heritage objects during the current COVID-19 pandemic, products classified by the Ministry of Health as virucides⁴ should be used.

In the case of cultural property, additionally to the use of substances with proven virucidal effect authorised by the health authorities, special consideration should be given to the damage that such products may cause to materials.

In this regard, it should be noted that from the group of products recommended by the health authorities and based on experience, we consider only solutions of 70% ethanol to be compatible with some cultural property and only when used under certain conditions, as set out in the document *Recommendations on disinfection procedures for cultural property due to the COVID-19 crisis* published by the IPCE⁵. In conditions that are even more specific and controlled, various sources also mention the use of quaternary ammonium compounds as viable⁶.

Any product applied to the surface of a cultural asset or to its immediate vicinity could generate risks if it is not done in line with the compatibility of its chemical composition; it must fundamentally respect a methodology that prevents alterations on a physical and structural level.

The risks posed to cultural property by the use of the above-mentioned virucidal products are determined by:

The chemical interaction of the products with the material the property is made of.

Due to their capacity to disinfect, most of the products whose use has been authorised during this pandemic pose a risk to the stability of the materials of which the cultural property is made and cause chemical alterations to their composition (oxidation, dissolution), or can lead to processes, such as the crystallisation of salts, etc. Cultural property should not be exposed to the most aggressive agents, such as: sodium hypochlorite, oxygen peroxide, ammonia, ozone and ultraviolet radiation, the application of which is absolutely inadvisable on heritage property. Furthermore, the use of those considered compatible should also be limited to what is strictly necessary.

⁴ Ministry of Health (13 May 2020). *Productos virucidas autorizados en España*. Sourced from www.mscbs.gob.es: https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/documentos/Listado_virucidas.pdf

⁵ <https://ipce.culturaydeporte.gob.es/noticias/2020/2020-04-16-recomendaciones-covid-19.html>

⁶ See APPENDICES I, II and III

⁷ APPENDIX I



Compatibility of application systems for disinfectants on cultural property⁸.

The application system of products considered to be compatible may also affect the conservation of the property. Misting, for example, a system preferably applied to large outdoor surfaces due to the advantages it offers in terms of area of action and product performance, must never be carried out on heritage property at more than 2 atm of pressure and, depending on the condition of the surface, this pressure should be even lower. It is crucial that qualified professionals always be present to determine aspects such as this. On the other hand, it is important to know the action time required by disinfectants to ensure their effectiveness and, on this basis, also assess their compatibility with the property.

Emission of volatile compounds⁹.

The use of products – authorised for their virucidal action – poses a risk not only because of the direct effect they have on materials, as mentioned above, but also because of the VOCs emitted that are produced during their use and until they have been totally dispersed into the atmosphere. This is a complex topic and the recommendation is to limit their use even for areas with no heritage value due to their impact on people's health and the environment. In cases when they are used, spaces must be ventilated after their application.

On the other hand, every action carried out on heritage property must be done, directed or previously agreed with conservators and restorers, and be precisely documented (description of the procedure, list of products used and methodology, pre- and post-treatment photographs). Recording these and other actions – and their subsequent monitoring – will make it possible in the future to identify the agents that may influence their state of conservation.

Ventilation, on the other hand, allows air to be replaced and flow, cleaning it and minimising the deposit and spread of microorganisms, thus improving air quality. In turn, proper ventilation helps to reduce humidity and decreases the risk of condensation, which favours microbial growth¹⁰. It also allows any possible concentration of volatile compounds from disinfectants to be eliminated, if they have been used.

At this point, it is important to stress the difficulty of achieving environments that are completely aseptic. Disinfection of elements where physical contact is unavoidable (doorknobs/door pulls, handrails, surfaces and work tools) must be done, but zero risk of infection can never be guaranteed as this task cannot be carried out constantly. It is essential that society as a whole adopts patterns of behaviour that will succeed in halting the spread of the disease.

III. General recommendations

Institutions will assess the availability of staff according to their health, safety and the resources necessary to resume activity in line with the phases set out by the Ministry of Health. Working remotely and on site should be combined when possible.

⁸ APPENDIX II

⁹ APPENDIX III

¹⁰ Article 6.3 of Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May from the Ministry of Health stipulates that facilities must be ventilated on a daily basis and for a period of five minutes at the very least.



The following general recommendations, common to all types of institutions, are also suggested:

- Health status of staff. Knowing the health status of staff is a vital requirement for the institutional planning. Before starting the on-site activity and during the de-escalation process, protocols for monitoring workers' health will be coordinated with the corresponding Occupational Risk Prevention Services. If there are suspected cases of contagion, personal isolation measures should be maintained in accordance with the recommendations of the health authorities until an appropriate assessment has been made.
- Staff safety. An assessment will be conducted of the ability of institutions to guarantee the safety and self-protection of staff, and will include: availability and access to frequent hand-hygiene measures of water and soap, or hydro-alcoholic hand sanitisers; the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to the level of risk; as well as training and supervision of the correct use of these measures.
- Personal protective measures. The characteristics of different jobs must be evaluated in order to determine the appropriate measures to protect against the risk of contagion. This must take into account whether a job involves no shared materials and physical distancing can be guaranteed, or whether there are tasks that must be carried out by several people, for example¹¹. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs provides information on the different types of masks¹²:

Attention will also be paid to uniforms and work clothes (lab coats, etc.). Article 6.2 of Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May from the Ministry of Health sets out that when uniforms or work clothes are used, they must be washed and disinfected daily, and must be machine washed in water between 60 and 90°C. Particular care must be taken from when these items of clothing are taken off to when they are washed following the above-mentioned instructions.

- Physical capacity of spaces and premises. Since physical distancing between visitors and staff must be ensured, and the venue capacity of most places will be limited according to the instructions of the Ministry of Health, the way premises and spaces are used will depend on their physical characteristics. Prior to opening to the public, narrow places and corridors (lifts included) should be identified and alternatives sought – to the extent possible – to avoid people passing through them, yet without undermining other safety prerequisites.

Special attention must be paid to the adequacy of accesses, as well as to limiting and controlling the number of people allowed into exhibition rooms, conference and audiovisual rooms, cafeterias, shops, etc., in accordance with their size and the necessary physical distancing between people.

¹¹ Order SND/422/2020 of 19 May, regulating the conditions for the obligatory use of masks during the health crisis caused by COVID-19. BOE No. 142 (2020) Articles 1, 2 and 3. The definitive version of Article 2 will be in force, for the time being, as long as the state of emergency is in place.

¹² Ministry of Health. (21 May 2020). *Information for the general public*. Sourced from www.mscbs.gob.es:https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/documents/030520_BUY_MASKS_GUIDE.pdf
<https://www.mscbs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/ciudadania.htm>



If using lifts and freight elevators is essential, their capacity will be limited to comply with physical distancing measures, except when they must be used by children or elderly people who need to be accompanied, in which case masks must be worn¹³. If the premises allow for it, automatic lift doors should be kept open when not in use to allow the ventilation of these spaces.

Strategically placed signage will help compliance with these guidelines.

Ventilation of spaces plays a fundamental role. In enclosed spaces with air conditioning it is a good idea to increase the proportion of outside air in the total air flow to be conditioned and to increase the number of air replacements per hour. Special attention should also be paid to making sure that filters are checked and changed within the recommended period.

- Cleaning and disinfection of elements where contact is possible. In order to plan a gradual resumption of activity, institutions must ensure that their organisational capacity and cleaning processes are in line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health; this includes areas or elements of possible infection, such as doors, doorknobs/door pulls, push buttons, elements in traffic areas (benches, chairs, handrails, ropes, stanchions, etc.), and public spaces, such as WCs, cafeterias, bookshops, shops, etc.
- Visitor safety. Institutions must plan for visitor safety. In accordance with the instructions set out by the Ministry of Health, and if a distance of at least two metres between people is not possible, masks are mandatory for people over the age of six on public streets, in outdoor spaces, and in any enclosed space for public use or that is open to the public¹⁴. Special attention must be paid in places where tickets are sold, where information brochures are handed out and where publications or souvenirs are sold, and whenever possible the use of online technologies for these is recommended. Plasticised information sheets must be removed, preferably replaced by text panels on the walls. Waste-paper bins, preferably with a lid and pedal, should be provided so that tissues and other disposable material can be safely thrown away. These bins should be cleaned frequently, and at least once a day¹⁵.
- Controlling contact with cultural property. As the virus does not have a direct biodeterioration effect on the materials cultural property are made of, the criteria to be followed must be as in usual situations: direct contact with the property must be prevented to avoid other major risks, such as the deposit of grease and dirt, physical abrasion or accidents. The first control measure is, also now, to maintain the “interpersonal” distance in this case between person and work. If this distance can be implemented, there will be no need for additional cleaning or disinfection measures.
- Evolution of public visits and offer of services. Before museums, archives, libraries, historical buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, etc. closed due to the COVID-19 health crisis, there were different opinions on finding a balance between the massification of visits; the disadvantage of considering an increase in the number of visitors per year as a parameter of success in the management of institutions; the difficulties of defining venue visitor capacity and capacity limits; as well as the negative influence of these factors both on the conservation of cultural property and on the experiential enjoyment of it by the public.

¹³ Order SND/422/2020 of 19 May.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May of the Ministry of Health, Article 6.7.



The current situation could be an opportunity to rethink all these issues and for institutions to work on the overall optimisation of the way heritage is accessed.

- Protocols for the regular review of cultural property and premises. As future outbreaks of this pandemic or other similar situations may be possible, there is a need to learn from this experience. Similarly to other types of emergencies (armed conflict, floods, earthquakes, etc.), all of which cause the activity of institutions to stop and cultural property to be temporarily isolated, it is necessary to include specific protocols for situations such as this present one when designing preventive conservation plans. These protocols must be based on the inspection of objects, their physical protection, controlling environmental conditions, the security of collections and the maintenance of facilities, spaces and buildings. They must also involve everyone from management level to conservators-restorers and other technical personnel, as well as cleaning, maintenance and security staff.

To ensure this supervision, the IPCE has drawn up and launched the use of checklists¹⁶ that are designed to be a risk-monitoring tool for cultural property. This model is based on weekly inspections, but the periodicity should be adjusted according to needs, means, usefulness and effectiveness.

An operational problem to be addressed is maintaining information up-to-date. To make these checklists more practical and easier to use, a network template should ideally be used (in whatever format is deemed most appropriate: pdf, MS Word, MS Excel, specific application, etc.). The professionals who conduct the inspections should also have a portable device, (such as a tablet) where they can record the information and images collected *in situ*, although the information may be edited later.

IV. Specific recommendations:

In addition to the above-mentioned general considerations, specific guidelines for the management of different cultural property or institutions are set out below. The great diversity of casuistry and typologies of cultural, material and institutional property makes it impossible to bring together all the possibilities in an exhaustive manner. However, the rational criteria of the technical and managerial staff in charge will always prevail, in line with the instructions from the health authorities at any given stage, and in which priority will be given to the implementation of preventive measures such as ensuring physical distancing and insisting on the 'do not touch' message.

Immovable property

The immovable property mentioned in this section includes a variety of categories: museums, archives, libraries, historical complexes, monuments, historical gardens, historical sites, archaeological and palaeontological areas, places of ethnographic or industrial interest, and any others defined by legislation on historical heritage as outlined by the Spanish State and Regions.

¹⁶ APPENDIX IV



Also included is immovable property that enjoys urban protection due to its cultural value, even if it has not been declared as such in any of the protected categories recognised by the Law.

According to their typology, there are a large amount of special cases including single-family or collective homes, religious, administrative, tertiary, industrial, defensive or ethnographic architecture or of any other type; public monuments and ornamental fountains; exempt decorative elements, such as arches, columns and crosses; constructions and public works, including historical paths; caves, shelters and archaeological or palaeontological sites, both indoor and outdoor; gardens and walks; cemeteries; battlefields; salt pans, etc.

These examples include a multitude of outdoor materials, such as stone for fountains, walls and sculptural decorations; metal for monumental sculptures and ironwork; timber for woodwork, eaves and under porticoes; wall paint, plasterwork, plastering or tiles on walls, etc.; and indoor materials – but not the movable property in them – such as, woodwork and wooden floors, metal railings, wall paintings, stained glass, wallpaper, etc.

Given this variety of examples and materials, it should be said that the safest measure for conservation is avoiding or at least limiting the use of cleaning products on anything that is of heritage value. Recommendations for cleaning and disinfection must be done in line with what is set out in this text. These directions must be followed with regard to private and public properties, no matter what their purpose is.

Management must take into account the rational criteria of the technical and managerial staff who must take measures at different levels to ensure the safety of people (both workers and the public), the conservation of property, and the gradual provision of services.

A prior analysis of the state of every asset – both outdoor and indoor, and in terms of formal characteristics, their constituent elements, uses and function – is essential. This analysis must be followed by a step involving the design of strategies to minimise the risk of infection between people, always trying to prioritise the implementation of preventive measures, such as ensuring physical distancing by limiting the numbers of visitors and modifying routes, adapting signage and information resources, or using personal protective equipment when necessary.

Measures regarding cleaning – and disinfection when required – must be proportional to the risk and carried out with the appropriate frequency but without overly repeating actions, and always seeking measures that have the least impact on the property.

Enhanced cleaning and disinfection must be carried out on any elements that – as they cannot be isolated, roped off or marked off to prevent infection through rubbing, pulling or depositing – are susceptible to being touched or stepped on by users or visitors, provided that their characteristics allow this treatment. When any of said elements in a building cannot be cleaned and/or disinfected without harming their cultural value, their use or visit to them must be restricted or prohibited. Elements of buildings to which access is prohibited or which are not allowed to be touched do not require disinfecting and should be marked whenever possible with dissuasive signage.



Cleaning and disinfection outside buildings with heritage value¹⁷.

- Cleaning and disinfection outside buildings should only be considered in cases where it is impossible to avoid contact with surfaces by changing the itinerary, signage or marking.
- If necessary, regular street cleaning with water and neutral soap is preferable, avoiding direct contact with the property.
- Prior cleaning ensures that disinfection will be more effective.
- To disinfect spaces close to cultural property – preferably by spraying – directly spraying objects or buildings of historical and artistic value should be avoided.
- A solution of 70% ethanol dissolved in water and sprayed at low pressure is recommended in the immediate vicinity of cultural property (less than 1 metre away, such as nearby pavements or the lower sections of buildings). As indicated by the health authorities, this disinfectant solution is effective against the virus and spraying it is less harmful than using sodium hypochlorite (bleach) on materials such as stone, brick, wood and metal. In the case of large areas, the toxicity of alcohol as well as its volatility and flammability – if temperatures are high – must be taken into account.
- Disinfection should always be avoided close to polychromed cultural property (e.g. church doorways) and roping off such areas to avoid people getting close and touching it is advisable.
- When it is absolutely necessary to treat elements of heritage, the actions must be carried out, directed or agreed upon by all the professionals in the field of conservation-restoration: areas to be treated, products used and methodology.
- It is essential to know the nature and composition of both the cleaning products and/or disinfectants to be used, as well as those of the cultural property to which they will be applied in order to assess their compatibility.
- It is also important to know the state of conservation of the property (cohesion of the materials, degree of salinity, etc.), as this may limit the use of certain theoretically compatible products or methods of application.
- If there is any doubt regarding the efficacy and consequences of the cleaning and disinfection processes, it is best not to do anything as an incorrect treatment can cause irreversible damage to a cultural asset.
- All treatments carry some level of risk. The use of solutions mixed in the wrong concentrations can be excessively aggressive; the use of soap can leave residue that has to be removed with water afterwards, etc.
- If unsuitable products have been applied, such as chlorine- or ammonia-based solutions, they should be removed with water that should be sprayed or applied with pads made of an absorbent material (cellulose, clays), until the presence of active ions has definitively been stabilised.
- All cleaning and disinfection must always be done wearing the corresponding PPE that guarantees the safety of the worker carrying out said task.

¹⁷ Spanish Cultural Heritage Institute (IPCE). (16 April 2020). *Recommendations on disinfection procedures for cultural property due to the COVID-19 crisis*. Sourced from ipce.culturaydeporte.gob.es: <https://ipce.culturaydeporte.gob.es/noticias/2020/2020-04-16-recomendaciones-covid-19.html>



Cleaning and disinfection inside buildings.

- The general fumigation or spraying of spaces, such as museum rooms, archives, libraries, churches, buildings containing period items, etc., is not recommended. As many of these institutions closed when the state of emergency was declared, the viral load in these spaces is practically non-existent.
- Surfaces, such as floors, doors and doorknobs/door pulls should be cleaned (provided they have no historical or artistic value and are located in spaces with no cultural property) with the usual disinfectants suggested by the health authorities.
- Once cleaning has been carried out, the spaces should be ventilated to ensure that there is no accumulation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) created from the evaporation of the disinfectants. This operation is carried out mainly with the safety and health of workers in mind, but also for the proper conservation of the cultural heritage given that the accumulation of VOCs in closed spaces is harmful.
- For floors with heritage value, the usual cleaning with a cloth or mop dampened with water and neutral soap, followed by rinsing and drying, should be carried out. It is important to limit the amount of water used, and the cloth or mop should be thrown away or cleaned properly after use. The frequency of this task may increase during this crisis depending on the number of visitors, users, etc. These surfaces may be disinfected occasionally if necessary, using a solution of 70% ethanol and always supervised by a professional.
- The same directions must be followed for the flooring in spaces with cultural property even if it has no heritage value.
- For period parquet, floorboards and skirting boards, the usual cleaning with a cloth or mop dampened with water and neutral soap, followed by rinsing and drying, should be carried out. It is important to limit the amount of water used, and the cloth or mop should be thrown away or cleaned properly after use. The frequency of this task may increase at this stage depending on the number of visitors, users, etc. **No** solutions containing alcohol or bleach must be used on these surfaces.
- For elements such as railings and historical doorknobs, gentle and more frequent cleaning can be alternated with disinfections which must always be done with a 70% ethanol solution. This action must be limited to these elements, trying not to splash or touch the surrounding materials (covering them if necessary).

Movable property

This section includes furnishings and period items in historical buildings and religious institutions, museum collections or similar ones, as well as the documentary and bibliographic heritage of archives and libraries.

These places contain furniture, rugs and tapestries, clothing, metalwork, easel paintings, polychromed sculptures, altarpieces, ceramic and glass items, books, documents, prints, drawings, photographs, etc.

Any cleaning or disinfection done on this type of heritage involves a high risk of altering it; it is therefore advisable to first carry out preventive actions aimed at limiting or restricting their use, separation by using barriers or signage, etc.



In the case of cultural property in use (books and documents in libraries and archives, elements of historical buildings and monuments), or in the case of necessary handling, the criterion should be to reinforce the safety conditions when accessing them, assessing whether wearing masks is appropriate.

If the objects are suspected of being contaminated and to avoid applying disinfectants, they should be isolated for several days depending on how long the virus remains on the materials they are made of. In this regard, scientific texts do not yet offer accurate data, and the periods of time mentioned vary according to the source consulted. It seems clear, however, that these estimated periods of time are largely conditioned by environmental factors, such as humidity or temperature, by the pH of the surface where the deposit is, as well as by the specific physical characteristics of that material in terms of porosity, for example. It is therefore advisable to follow the longer periods of time suggested by these sources in order to be more certain that the virus is no longer active.

Newly arrived recent acquisitions must also be preventively isolated, as must returned loans, etc. Special attention must also be paid to the packaging used to transport cultural property, discarding any that is touched directly and keeping boxes or similar items in isolation or quarantine.

If cleaning and disinfection are necessary, they must be carried out or directed by qualified professionals. The application of disinfectants, even those considered the most harmless and compatible, may cause alterations to different degrees of severity to paintings and polychromed objects, for example, varnished wood, metalwork with protective layers, etc. In any case, they must be done wearing the appropriate PPE.

The evolution of the health crisis is allowing the resumption of activity in many cases, and there are several aspects that must be addressed to ensure the conservation and safety of the public, beyond merely disinfecting these spaces. The following are the main recommendations for the most common institutions and types of property. These measures, drawn up by an IPCE working group¹⁸, are adapted to the provisions set out in the orders published to date that regulate the different de-escalation phases; the evolution of the health crisis may gradually lead to the relaxation of some of the aspects mentioned here, until it is completely over¹⁹.

As a general rule, and before summarising the specific aspects relating to each activity, it should be noted that the various orders published so far set out a series of common measures aimed at hygiene (with particular attention paid to the cleaning of commonly used areas, etc.), regardless of specific measures for particular spaces, such as heritage areas²⁰.

¹⁸ Document: Recommendations for the De-escalation Plan in the Sphere of Institutions Responsible for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage (unpublished).

¹⁹ Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May on the relaxation of certain national restrictions set out following the declaration of the state of emergency and applying to Phase 1 of the Plan for the Transition to a New Normal. BOE No.130 (2020), Order SND/414/2020 of 16 May on the relaxation of certain national restrictions set out following the declaration of the state of emergency and applying to Phase 2 of the Plan for the Transition to a New Normal. BOE No. 138 (2020) and Order SND/458/2020 of 30 May on the relaxation of certain national restrictions set out following the declaration of the state of emergency and applying to Phase 3 of the Plan for the Transition to a New Normal.

²⁰ Article 6, Order SND/399/2020, Order SND/414/2020 and Order SND/458/2020.



Recommendations for using and celebrating in places of worship

Religious spaces of worship²¹

- Religious celebrations must be held in the largest spaces available.
- Venue capacity and physical distancing limits set by the health authorities must be ensured at all times. This capacity, which will vary according to the phases of de-escalation, must be affixed in a visible place at the place of worship.
- A suitable distance should be maintained from altarpieces, walls with historical cladding or tiles, etc. If necessary, they should be marked off.
- Whenever possible and if no safety or environmental conditions or control functions are involved, doors that do not open automatically must be kept open at all times during the service to avoid contact with the doorknobs/door pulls.
- Ventilation and replacement of the inside air must also be done, in particular after each service.
- The filters of air-conditioning systems, pollution control systems, air intakes, etc. must be checked and changed within the recommended period.
- Special attention must be paid to health and hygiene measures for confessionals, fonts holding consecrated water, lighting candles, etc.
- During the De-escalation Plan, special care must be taken with rites and customs that cannot guarantee safety conditions, self-protection and physical distancing, including those that require direct contact with the surface of movable or immovable cultural property (*besapiés* or foot-kissing, embracing statues, etc.) as they could be an infection hotspot. Using a cloth dampened with disinfectant is not an option as it poses a serious risk to the conservation of cultural property.
- Fumigation poses a serious risk to cultural property and is therefore totally discouraged. Personal protection, regular cleaning of spaces, physical distancing and a reduction of contact between people and surfaces, and ventilation are the proper guidelines to follow in these cases.
- During the risk period of the pandemic temporarily replacing shared furniture of heritage value, such as tables, benches, pews, chairs, etc., with furniture that can be washed and disinfected (but avoiding all upholstery) should be considered. Where this is not possible, a quaternary ammonium compound-based disinfectant can be used on wood that is exposed to contact, following the manufacturer's instructions regarding dilution and contact time, followed by rinsing and drying with absorbent paper.
- With regard to religious metalwork, their cleanliness is sometimes governed by their own rules as they are sacred objects. At the present time, however, the use of modern liturgical objects that do not have set stones are recommended, and then to wash them with neutral soap and a soft sponge, rinse and dry them properly. Objects of historical metalwork should not be used at this time as a precaution (they are likely to have layers of protection that could come off or be altered).

²¹ For religious spaces or areas where services are not held, the guidelines in the specific 'Monuments' table of this document must be followed.



- As for clothing and fabric items (corporals, palls, altar cloths and cloths), it is recommendable to use modern ones during this period as well, and to wash them – or ‘quarantine’ them – between uses. Sharing of clothing will be avoided.
- The books used during services should also preferably be modern. They should not be cleaned or disinfected and shared use by several people should be avoided.
- For the duration of the pandemic, it is not safe to hold choral concerts – nor are they allowed – and choir stalls cannot be used for these events. They must be isolated by roping them off to prevent people from touching them. However, solo organ concerts can be offered but specific protocols must be designed on avoiding cross infection if the instrument is to be played by more than one keyboardist. An assessment of the materials the organ is made of (wood, bone) – and its coatings – must be conducted in order to carry out gentle cleaning supervised by qualified professionals. Do not use bleach or alcohol. From one concert to another, the organ must be closed and covered to avoid physical contact with other people.
- Other movable property, such as easel paintings and sculpture must not be touched under any circumstances.
- In the religious spaces where services are not held (cloisters, side chapels, apse chapels, triforiums, bell towers, etc.) the guidelines indicated in the specific ‘Monuments’ table of this document must be followed.



Recommendations for using and visiting monuments

Monuments

(defensive architecture, palaces, religious spaces where services are not held or are shared with cultural visits, among others)

Guidelines for action in public spaces and interaction with visitors:

- The general health and safety measures set out by the health authorities must be complied with.
- Whenever possible, online technology should be used to minimise or eliminate procedures that cannot guarantee physical distancing (ticket booths, information brochures being handed out, etc.). This will also make controlling visitor entrances possible, will avoid queues and allow for good control of venue capacity.
- Entrances and security controls, information and public help desks must have elements and physical barriers to protect employees.
- Signage with specific rules and recommendations for the public must be placed at all entrances to the buildings, reminding people of the need to respect the two-metre physical distancing. In addition, signage should be installed with instructions on safe distancing to prevent queues or crowding at the entrance and/or exit of buildings.
- The need for 'do not touch' signs, which are always required in these kinds of spaces, is now doubly justified as a preventive measure (preventing cross infection).
- Tactile information and didactic elements (for example, screens or Braille panels) will initially not be used: their progressive reincorporation will depend on what the health authorities set out in this regard to guarantee the necessary hygiene. In general, the necessary information for visits should be accessed or downloaded in advance onto each visitor's personal mobile device or will be made available on wall text panels.
- Whenever possible, and if no safety or environmental conditions or control functions are involved, doors that do not open automatically must be kept open at all times during the visits to avoid contact with the doorknobs/door pulls.
- Venue capacity must be respected according to the recommendations set out by the authorities at any given moment.
- Public access will not be allowed in small spaces or ones that need to be passed through via narrow corridors with two-directional traffic, and in passageways or narrow staircases, such as towers, bell towers, roofs, triforiums, crypts, etc. These areas could be possible infection hotspots due to the impossibility of ensuring the proper physical distancing measures between people as well as with walls and other elements.
- The above-mentioned enclosed spaces cannot be included in a calculation when establishing the maximum venue capacity of visits.
- The distance that visitors must keep from cultural property (movable and immovable) must be suitably defined. This must be done by marking the floor or using ropes (preferably metal or plastic so they can be properly disinfected later). This guideline will also apply to historical ironwork screens that are common in side chapels, apse chapels and choirs.



- It is advisable to mark itineraries both inside and outside, creating entrances and exits so that visitors do not cross each other, allowing for the correct number of people in each space yet without affecting fire evacuation routes.
- Benches should be removed in order to reduce possible infection from surface contact. In turn, this makes the space larger and helps physical distancing to be respected. Where possible, folding chairs should be provided for people with reduced mobility and the elderly, and these will be disinfected after each use. These guidelines should also be followed in screening rooms, etc., and entrance and exit guidelines put in place for them.
- Historical elements of special value on floors, such as graves, inscribed tombstones, etc., must not be stepped on and disinfectants should never be applied to them. Marking them off is recommended.
- Places where the safety of visitors cannot be guaranteed due to particular conditions or the impossibility of carrying out necessary disinfections cannot be visited by the public.
- Placing disinfectant mats at the entrance of these places is recommended.
- For the cleaning of spaces without cultural property, the general recommendations for spaces for public use must be followed.
- Pre-pandemic instructions for cleaning spaces with cultural property should be maintained to every possible extent: this includes the dry cleaning of floors (preferably with a vacuum cleaner to avoid dispersing the virus in the air), and controlled wet cleaning with neutral soap. The frequency of these tasks can be increased to allow for better prevention. Disinfecting these spaces can be highly harmful to the property in them, so it should be avoided whenever possible and compatible products should be used as a last resort, always under the supervision of qualified professionals.
- Conventional cleaning of movable property must be carried out without using feather dusters, which disperse particles in the air. Soft rags or cloths should be used and then discarded or washed in line with the instructions set out by the authorities.
- Once cleaning has been carried out, and disinfection if necessary, the spaces should be ventilated – either naturally or mechanically – to ensure that there is no accumulation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) created from the evaporation of the disinfectants. This operation is carried out mainly with the safety and health of workers in mind, but also for the proper conservation of the cultural heritage.
- Spaces and/or property must be vacuumed with bag vacuum cleaners fitted with HEPA filters to ensure a very high level of filtration.
- The filters of air-conditioning systems, pollution control systems, air intakes, etc. must be checked and changed within the recommended period.

Guidelines for action in restricted areas and for indoor work:

- In order to avoid the convergence of workers, researchers, residents or users of buildings where visitors use these facilities due to their cultural nature, spaces where there may be foot traffic between them must have the proper signage and, if possible, be marked to ensure that physical distancing is respected.



- At religious sites where services are held, such as churches, collegiate churches or cathedrals, or those where religious communities live, such as monasteries, abbeys or convents, it is mandatory to have separate routes and ensure that the two-metre physical distancing recommended by the health authorities is respected at all times. When it is not possible to comply with these conditions, masks must be worn or special visiting times must be established.
- In the case of residential architecture, such as palaces, collective housing or private residences, visiting times must be put in place to avoid residents and visitors crossing each other.
- In the case of historical gardens, the areas where maintenance work is done must be separated to avoid workers and visitors crossing each other. Cleaning and disinfecting elements in these spaces must avoid affecting the plants.
- The cleaning and disinfection of indoor spaces with property must be done following the same terms commented on in the previous section and use will be restricted to the necessary minimum to carry out said activities.



Recommendations for using and visiting archaeological sites, caves and rock shelters

Archaeological sites, caves and rock shelters:

Guidelines for action in public spaces and interaction with visitors:

- The general health and safety measures set out by the health authorities must be complied with.
- Whenever possible, the use of online technology should be used to minimise or eliminate procedures that cannot guarantee physical distancing (ticket booths, information brochures being handed out, etc.). This will also make controlling visitor entrances possible, will avoid queues and allow for good control of venue capacity.
- Entrances and security controls, information and public help desks must have elements and physical barriers to protect employees.
- Signage with specific rules and recommendations for the public must be placed at all entrances to the buildings, reminding people of the need to respect the two-metre physical distancing. In addition, signage with instructions on safe distancing must be installed to avoid queues or crowding at the entrance and/or exit of the buildings.
- The need for 'do not touch' signs, which are always required in these kinds of spaces, is now doubly justified as a preventive measure (preventing cross infection).
- Tactile information and didactic elements (for example, screens or Braille panels) will initially not be used: their progressive reincorporation will depend on what the health authorities set out in this regard to guarantee the necessary hygiene; . In general, the necessary information for visits should be accessed or downloaded in advance onto each visitor's personal mobile device.
- Roping off existing free-standing signage – commonly found at archaeological sites – with physical barriers, such as ropes or webbing, to prevent visitors from touching them is recommended.
- Information on paper (brochures, maps) will be stopped or its use reduced by taking the necessary hygiene measures depending on which Phase locations are in.
- Venue capacity must be respected according to the recommendations set out by the authorities at any given moment.
- Before opening, sites must have conducted a prior visitor capacity study that includes the maximum overall number of people allowed in as well as the maximum number for each section of the visit. Visitor capacity must be adapted to the permitted number in each Phase. Sites must have a visitor route with suitable signage and the route must be in only one direction. It is important to avoid 'bottlenecks' in places such as in walkways, and to calculate the time allowed for a stop at viewing points and strategic points of the tour that require one to fully understand the place that is being visited. Removing small stopping spaces along the visit is recommended, as are those that do not comply with safety requirements. These routes must be properly explained both on websites and at entrances.
- Places where the safety of visitors cannot be guaranteed due to particular conditions or the impossibility of carrying out necessary disinfections cannot be visited by the public.



- To monitor movement in the site, cave, etc., guided tours are recommended as a rule and should consist of small groups wearing PPE.
- Visits to non-museum places by groups that have not been authorised previously by the relevant body are discouraged.
- Disinfectant mats should be placed at the entrance of these sites.
- In the case of visits to rock shelters and caves, sites must provide each visitor with disposable shoe covers as well as a container for their disposal at exits.
- Due to the very particular locations where most of these kinds of cultural property are found, implementing only the preventive actions listed is recommended, thus avoiding the negative impact that general disinfection or fumigation can have not only on the cultural property but also on the natural environment in which they are located. The very nature of these spaces, as well as natural UV light, will most likely have eliminated the viral load during the lockdown.

Guidelines for action in restricted areas and for indoor work:

- In the case of sites where archaeological digs are ongoing, excavation work must be properly marked and roped off. Access to, and exit from, the site must be controlled so that visitors and people working on the excavation do not cross.
- The safety measures recommended by the health authorities must be guaranteed for all people working on the excavation, and they must all have their own PPE.
- If necessary, the number of people at the excavation should be reduced or shifts must be introduced. As a general rule, work teams should be limited to two people per pick/shovel and wheelbarrow.
- The excavation must, to the extent possible, be divided into squares of not less than 2m²; each square must be assigned to a person-team who will work on it, following the above-mentioned recommendations to ensure physical distancing. In the case of excavations in small spaces, such as caves and rock shelters, one person per square working individually during the whole work chain (excavation, cleaning, screening and floatation) is recommended.
- Common equipment (archaeological excavation and drawing tools, conservation and restoration tools, surveying equipment, etc.) will be disinfected at the end of each use
- The transfer of the cultural material – properly documented, photographed, treated and labelled– to museums and to the repositories of institutions should be done as quickly as possible to avoid it piling up at sites and site offices.
- For the cleaning of workspaces without cultural property, the general recommendations for spaces for public use must be followed.
- Pre-pandemic instructions for cleaning spaces with cultural property should be maintained to every possible extent: this includes the dry cleaning of floors and controlled wet cleaning with neutral soap. The frequency of these tasks can be increased to allow for better prevention. Disinfecting these spaces can be highly harmful to the property in them, so it should be avoided whenever possible and compatible products should be used as a last resort, always under the supervision of qualified professionals.



Recommendations for working and visiting museum spaces, exhibition rooms and similar premises

Museum spaces, exhibition rooms and similar premises²²

Guidelines for action in public spaces and interaction with visitors:

- The general health and safety measures set out by the health authorities must be complied with.
- Whenever possible, the use of online technology should be used to minimise or eliminate procedures that cannot guarantee physical distancing (ticket booths, information brochures being handed out, etc.). This will also make controlling visitor entrances possible, will avoid queues and allow for good control of venue capacity.
- Entrances and security controls, information and public help desks must have elements and physical barriers to protect employees.
- Signage with specific rules and recommendations for the public must be placed at all entrances to the buildings, reminding people of the need to respect the two-metre physical distancing. In addition, signage with instructions on safe distancing must be installed to avoid queues or crowding at the entrance and/or exit of the buildings.
- The need for 'do not touch' signs, which are always required in these kinds of spaces, is now doubly justified as a preventive measure (preventing cross infection).
- Tactile information and didactic elements (for example, screens or Braille panels) will initially not be used: their progressive reincorporation will depend on what the health authorities set out in this regard to guarantee the necessary hygiene measures. In general, the necessary information for visits should be accessed or downloaded in advance onto each visitor's personal mobile device, and should also be made available via traditional written and visual signage.
- Whenever possible, and if no safety or environmental conditions or control functions are involved, doors that do not open automatically must be kept open at all times during the visits to avoid contact with the doorknobs/door pulls.
- In lifts and other similar vertical transportation systems with completely closed cabins, the inside and outside push-button panels should be cleaned frequently and their use limited to the extent possible, limiting the number of people they carry to a minimum in line with their size.
- Venue capacity must be respected according to the recommendations set out by the authorities at any given moment.
- Public access will not be allowed in small spaces or ones that need to be accessed via narrow corridors with two-directional traffic, and in passageways or narrow staircases. These areas could become a possible infection hotspot due to the impossibility of maintaining

²² For more information on these spaces, see: *Planificación de medidas para la reapertura de los museos de titularidad y gestión estatal dependientes de la Dirección General de bellas Artes.*
<https://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/dam/jcr:6f409c61-dac0-4d66-a3f8-781ebbbcf868/planificaci-n-de-medidas-para-la-reapertura-de-los-museos-de-titularidad-y-gesti-n-estatal-dependientes-de-la-direcci-n-general-de-bellas-artes.pdf>



physical distancing measures and with respect to walls and other elements.

- The above-mentioned enclosed spaces cannot be included in a calculation when establishing the maximum venue capacity of visits.
- The distance that visitors must keep from cultural property (movable and immovable) must be suitably defined. This must be done by marking the floor or using ropes (preferably metal or plastic so they can be properly disinfected later).
- It is advisable to mark itineraries both inside and outside, creating entrances and exits so that visitors do not cross each other, allowing for the correct number of people in each space yet without affecting fire evacuation routes.
- Benches should be removed in order to reduce possible infection from surface contact. In turn, this makes the space larger and helps physical distancing to be respected. Where possible, folding chairs should be provided for people with reduced mobility and the elderly, and these will be disinfected after each use. These guidelines should also be followed in exhibition rooms where videos are shown or where video art is screened etc., and entrance and exit guidelines put in place for them.
- Historical elements of special value on floors, such as rugs, mosaics, etc. should not be stepped on and should be roped off.
- Places where the safety of visitors cannot be guaranteed due to particular conditions or the impossibility of carrying out necessary disinfections cannot be visited by the public.
- Placing disinfectant mats at the entrance of these places is recommended.
- For the cleaning of spaces without cultural property, the general recommendations for spaces for public use must be followed.
- Pre-pandemic instructions for cleaning spaces with cultural property should be maintained to every possible extent: this includes the dry cleaning of floors (preferably with a vacuum cleaner to avoid dispersing the virus in the air), and controlled wet cleaning with neutral soap. The frequency of these tasks can be increased to allow for better prevention. Disinfecting these spaces can be highly harmful to the property in them, so it should be avoided whenever possible and compatible products should be used as a last resort, always under the supervision of qualified professionals.
- Conventional cleaning of movable property must be carried out without using feather dusters, which disperse particles in the air. Soft rags or cloths should be used and then discarded or washed in line with the instructions set out by the authorities.
- Spaces and/or property must be vacuumed with bag vacuum cleaners fitted with HEPA filters to ensure a very high level of filtration.
- Cleaning procedures must also include the external surfaces of display cases that may have been touched by visitors: disinfectants, such as 70% ethanol or isopropanol can be used on them in a controlled way. This disinfection measure should already have been part of the cleaning protocols and including it permanently is recommended once things return to normal to avoid the future spread of any pathogen. It is not necessary to take any kind of measure to clean inside the display cases as they are only occasionally opened and then only by the institution's specialised staff.

Once cleaning has been carried out, and disinfection if necessary, the spaces should be ventilated – either naturally or mechanically – to ensure that there is no accumulation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) created from the evaporation of the disinfectants. This operation is carried out mainly with the safety and health of workers in mind, but also for the proper conservation of the cultural heritage.



- The filters of air-conditioning systems, pollution control systems, air intakes, etc. must be checked and changed within the recommended period.

Guidelines for spaces restricted to the institution's staff (repositories, storage rooms, restoration labs, reserve collection rooms, etc.):

- Access to the premises must be limited to the minimum necessary for the proper functioning of the institution, both in terms of frequency and the number of people. Here too, attempts will be made to rationalise the routes.
- No fumigation is required in these spaces. The preventive guidelines set out here, plus proper cleaning, ventilation, access control and use are enough.
- The internal movement of cultural property must be avoided in order to reduce contact with it. When it is necessary, it must be done for conservation purposes wearing the appropriate single-use gloves and a mask, if applicable. In these situations, cotton gloves are not recommended. In the case of having to handle an artwork without gloves (due to incompatibility, state of conservation, etc.), prior and exhaustive hand-washing with soap and water must be done, and hands must be properly dried afterwards (alcohol-based hand sanitisers can leave a residue on items).
- Artworks that need to be handled by more than one person should be limited to all extents possible. If this is unavoidable, the appropriate personal protection measures must be used.
- In order to avoid the disinfection of cultural property to the extent possible, specific places must be set aside to quarantine any items that might be contaminated (due to contact with a person who has tested positive, or with regard to a recently arrived item whether belonging to the institution or one on loan, new acquisitions, etc.), taking into account the time the virus remains on the surface that will be touched. These spaces must be correctly isolated and preferably self-ventilated to avoid cross ventilation with other areas close by. A record must be kept of the items deposited so that their isolation time is documented. Labelling them with hanging tags is recommended. If it is not possible to ensure a single space for this purpose, a shelf or something similar must be used and must not be used for any other purpose; polyethylene bags or other suitable devices can be used to isolate artworks.
- It is important to clean everything that comes into contact with the property: trolleys, trays, tools, etc.; this can be done with 70% ethanol, leaving it to evaporate completely before being used.
- The furniture in restoration workshops, photography set-ups and areas for researchers must be disinfected in the same way.
- Protecting small instruments with plastic covers (brushes, paintbrushes, etc.) is recommended.
- Workers should handle and use the tools individually.
- To avoid putting the health of staff at risk, workspaces and equipment should not be shared. Work must be planned so as to adapt the number of workers physically present to the space available in said areas.
- Equipment or machinery that is normally shared should be cleaned – at the end of each use – with paper or cloth well dampened with 70% ethanol, taking particular care to clean buttons and handles.



- Lab coats and work clothes must be washed in line with the instructions given by the health authorities and kept in a place created for that purpose.
- The loan of items and time given to researchers must be greatly limited and, depending on the nature of the property, its size, vulnerability and/or difficulty in handling, its inspection or loan may be temporarily refused.
- When assembling and dismantling exhibitions, rotating items in the permanent collection, etc., the number of workers in the same space must be kept to the necessary minimum, physical distancing must be respected and masks must be worn if applicable.
- All wrapping that has been in direct contact with the artworks and was used to pack them must be thrown away. Transport crates must be quarantined before they are reused.
- The inside of transport vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day, as must all grips and handles of all machinery, auxiliary elements and tools used: the same goes for machinery used in assembling and dismantling.
- If several companies participate in the assembling and dismantling, entrance and exit times will be designed so that they do not cross each other. The work done by each company will be carried out on different days and times to avoid, to the extent possible, that workers from the different companies coincide in the same space²³.

²³ Order SND/414/2020 of 16 May, CHAPTER VIII, Section 2, sets out the specific measures for work linked to the assembling and dismantling of temporary exhibitions, which can be extrapolated to these same activities in museum spaces or similar premises.



Recommendations for working and visiting archives and libraries

Archives and libraries

Archives and libraries are the main institutions where the bibliographic and documentary heritage is kept. These centres have the particularity of coexistence of the service to users and researchers, with the necessary handling of their funds, and programmes for their management and conservation. It is necessary to plan and design measures and then implement actions that are compatible with the safety needs of staff, the public and the artworks themselves; this must be done by providing the services that the authorities consider to be necessary at each moment of the de-escalation process.

Specific guidelines for the correct conservation of bibliographic and documentary heritage:

- Whenever possible, documents should be digitised, sent and downloaded remotely. This reduces the number of on-site visits and avoids documents being handled.
- For document consultations that must be done in person, an appointment service must be implemented that takes into account the number of people allowed in the space and at the reading tables available.
- If necessary, workers and users should wear masks.
- Special care should be taken when using alcohol-based hand sanitisers or soaps for hand-washing. Documents should only be handled wearing gloves that are completely clean and dry.
- Documents should be placed on reading tables, counters or trolleys when the disinfectants used to clean them have completely evaporated and the surfaces are dry.
- Documents and archival materials that are used in person must be quarantined for a minimum period of ten to fourteen days before being used again²⁴.
- The filters of air-conditioning systems, pollution control systems, air intakes, etc. must be checked and changed within the recommended period.

Guidelines for public spaces (mainly consultation rooms and research rooms):

- Institutions that have been closed and have not been opened in the two or three weeks prior to reopening can be considered decontaminated.
- For study and consultation rooms, the recommended distance of two metres between users and researchers must be respected.
- Computers and IT equipment available for public use must not be used by these users and researchers; they will be provided with internet access so they can use their own personal devices²⁵.
- Reprographic equipment, photocopiers, scanners, etc. must be disinfected and cleaned regularly, and should only be used by the institution's employees.
- Floors and furniture (provided they have no historical or artistic value) should be cleaned and disinfected in the usual way²⁶.

²⁴ Order SND/388/2020 of 3 May sets out the conditions for the opening to the public of certain shops and services and the opening of archives, as well as for the practice of professional and federated sport. BOE No. 123 (2020) and Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May set out measures for the opening of archives and libraries. BOE No. 130 (2020), respectively.



- Tables and chairs used for consultation must be disinfected after each use, as door handles, light switches, etc. To the extent possible, it is advisable to remove chairs with upholstery.
- Entrance areas from outside, areas of traffic where work is not being done, and toilets – provided none of these have heritage value – should be cleaned with chlorine-based products (sodium hypochlorite) or those with virucidal activity that are authorised by the Ministry of Health. Frequent and regular ventilation is recommended to avoid the accumulation of VOCs.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitiser must be provided at the entrance/exit of every room used by the public. Before leaving the premises, hands must be cleaned to minimise any possible contamination of other spaces.
- In line with the Ministry of Health's guidelines, a container should be placed at the exit of public areas in which to place waste that can then be removed.

Guidelines for spaces restricted to the institution's staff (repositories, storage rooms, restoration labs, reserve collection rooms, etc.):

- A colour-coded plan is recommended to differentiate areas according to the type of cleaning product required for them, taking into account the prior studies conducted and the materials involved.
- As repository areas – in which traffic is controlled and access is restricted – are safe areas where items are returned after being quarantined, they do not need to be cleaned more than they were before the pandemic. In this case, cleaning with a mild detergent is recommended.
- For work areas and workshops where there is little human traffic, cleaning with a mild detergent is recommended. The use of alcohol-based products on finished wood surfaces should be avoided. It is advisable to protect property to avoid any possible interaction.
- In spaces where only the staff of the institution has access, a review of the spaces and the routes used for artworks – in line with the new prevention measures – is recommended.
- The creation of a quarantine zone/room for isolating artworks is recommended²⁷. Artworks can be left in this area until the virus becomes inactive. Various reports agree that the virus becomes inactive on paper within six to nine days²⁸. The quarantine period recommended by the Ministry of Health for this type of property is fourteen days²⁹. Each institution must study which space is appropriate for the creation of an isolation area where items removed, studied and returned can be left. The isolation of items must only be done in the place created for this purpose. These spaces must be correctly isolated and preferably self-ventilated³⁰ to avoid cross ventilation with other areas close by.

²⁵ Order SND/38872020 of 3 May, Article 11.5

²⁶ The hygiene, prevention and information measures set out in Articles 24 and 25 of Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May shall apply.

²⁷ In compliance with the provisions of Order SND/388/2020 of 3 May setting out the conditions for the opening to the public of certain shops and services and the opening of archives, as well as for the practice of professional and federated sport. BOE No. 123 (2020) and Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May set out measures for the opening of archives and libraries. BOE No. 130 (2020), respectively.

²⁸ CCI COVID-19. (17 April 2020). Caring for Heritage Collections during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Sourced from www.cac-accr.ca: https://www.cac-accr.ca/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2020/04/cci_covid-19_en_2020-04-17.pdf



- To reduce or avoid cleaning and disinfection of the floor, a cloth, mat or paper well dampened or spayed with a hydro-alcoholic solution or bleach diluted in water should be placed on the floor at the entrance of these spaces so that shoes are disinfected upon leaving, once the documents have been left.
- Items must be placed in transparent polyester or polyethylene plastic bags; this reduces interaction with the object inside and minimises the risk of infection.
- The movement of items and their stability (humidity and temperature) in the room must be monitored in order to avoid any significant variation when ventilating as this could affect their values and lead to deterioration. This room must also include items from outside the institution: temporary exhibition or interlibrary loans, acquisitions, etc.
- Some libraries and archives have restoration labs in their restricted spaces. These labs, in addition to following the general recommendations for risk containment for the entire population, contain products and machinery that is shared, and thus specific recommendations must be followed.
- Each worker must frequently clean their work surface; tools should be handled and used individually.
- Lab coats and work clothes must be washed in line with the instructions given by the health authorities and kept in a place created for that purpose.
- Individual work materials should be disinfected at the end of each day. Brushes should be protected with plastic covers.
- To avoid putting the health of staff at risk, workspaces and equipment should not be shared. Work must be planned so as to adapt the number of workers physically present to the space available in said areas.
- In the case of using shared equipment or machinery, such as laminators, suction chambers, taps, drying racks, these should be cleaned by the user after each use with paper or cloth well dampened with a 70% alcohol solution, taking particular care to clean buttons and handles.

²⁹ Order SND/399/2020 of 9 May, Article 23.3.

³⁰ Order SND/399/2020 of May 9, Article 6.3 sets out that spaces must be regularly ventilated.



Intangible cultural heritage

The impact of COVID-19 measures on intangible cultural heritage

The consequences and measures that stem from COVID-19 have had a drastic impact on intangible cultural heritage, in other words, on living and intangible heritage that is experienced, providing a link from the past to the present day and whose social and symbolic value brings groups and communities together. Many of these expressions are related to festive rituals, music, sound and dance representations; the people and groups who celebrate them identify with them and feel united, and they often serve as a vehicle for the self-affirmation of a social group. Logically, most of these intangible cultural events cannot be held at present and have been cancelled due to the pandemic. Some examples of these festivities that are important in Spain are: Holy Week, the Fallas, Cruz de Mayo, May Day, pilgrimages, Corpus Christi, San Juan, as well as a multitude of festivities in honour of patron saints, and other events of cultural expression such as dances, music, songs, plays, games, traditional food-related events, etc.

Effects and recommendations:

The adoption of new ways of interpersonal contact and physical distancing has affected many of the cultural values of festive rituals as these are based on the actors meeting, coming together and celebrating collectively.

The fact that, during a specific period – such as this spring, summer, etc. – most ritual festivities cannot be held means that collectives or groups cannot enjoy these communal encounters of symbolic value that take place cyclically every year. It has not been possible for people to meet up, come together and enjoy the collective emotion offered by these expressions. However, the fact that they cannot be held for some time – as was the case with much of our intangible cultural heritage during the Spanish Civil War – creates a serious hiatus for the group or community in question, but these events can be resumed after this interruption and be held yearly once again in the same way as in the past.

The problem for this type of intangible cultural event lies in the creation of these new relations of touching and physical distancing, which can have an effect on a good part of the essential values embodied in these collective cultural expressions.

We must not forget that for a festive ritual to take place, in addition to the high point of the day of the festivity itself, a series of **pre and post cyclical ritual practices take place. All of these revolve around meetings, encounters and collective ritualised celebrations** that are unavoidable for arranging and organising the event.

The importance of actors when it comes to meeting with the authorities to make decisions concerning their intangible cultural events.

Intangible heritage has travelled a long path for it to be held, experienced and remembered today by different people and groups. It has been internalised within individuals and groups of people – their actors – via complex learning and by experiences that have passed through them over time. This heritage is made up of internal norms, rhythms, meanings and shared symbols, all of which form a whole from the perspective of that **actor community**. It is these people who have **established, and reinforced in collective frameworks agreed upon over time, its criteria, values and needs at each moment of its path.**



This intangible heritage is alive and, as such, responsive to constantly changing practices, perpetuated by the organised and continuous efforts of particular local communities, often also with the stamp of specific and prominent local people. It is thanks to the consensus of its self-regulating actors that mechanisms have been created to adapt to ever-changing and unpredictable social, economic, technological and cultural environments.

That is why it is these groups – the actors who hold the knowledge and are the possessors of these intangible cultural representations – who should decide what to do with them in the face of the pandemic. Norms should not be set by agents outside the community.

It is not advisable to change when (season or specific date) intangible cultural expressions declared as ICH – or Representatives of it – are held.

Of late, via the various communication channels available to us, we learned that many intangible cultural expressions – that should have taken place on dates in spring and summer – were cancelled as they coincided with the lockdown. Because of this, there has been talk about the possibility of changing the dates of certain rituals, such as Holy Week.

It is believed that, at least for intangible cultural expressions declared to be Intangible Cultural Heritage – or to be Representative Expressions of intangible cultural heritage – and which are characterised by fundamentally being determined by the calendar, changing their date should not be allowed. The processes, the technical aspects of most expressions, rituals of celebration, remembrance days, etc., **are governed by rhythms of time that are usually linked to the cyclical structure of the year's calendar in a very direct and inseparable way to the specific seasons or dates on which they are held.** Many of the emotions associated with ICH are rooted in **evocations derived from temporality, in other words, from the traditional date they are held.**

Temporality is therefore a basic element of these expressions of heritage value, and **changing their date, i.e. altering when they take place, should be forbidden.**

It is not advisable to change when (season or specific date) intangible cultural expressions declared as ICH – or Representatives of it – are held.

On the other hand, ICH is related to a **spatial frame of reference.** Workplaces, spaces used for preparatory work, places where events are held and processional routes are not inconsequential or irrelevant elements; on the contrary, they encapsulate many and very powerful cultural messages. Any **change in spatial frameworks or spaces used to hold these events would entail the deprivation of the expression of a fundamental element.** For example, for some liturgical events, the spaces or routes prescribed by tradition are texts in themselves, away from which what is being celebrated would not be understood. **It should therefore be forbidden to change spatial frameworks.**

Spacial frameworks refer to the collective memory and embody the emotion associated with that particular spatial context, in addition to the activities and expressions within it.



V. CONCLUSIONS

The management of cultural institutions in the face of this health crisis requires making the daily tasks carried out prior to the pandemic compatible with measures of prevention and control that guarantee the safety of people without putting heritage at risk.

Health and safety regulations can often be aggressive for both movable and immovable property; it is therefore essential and preferable to first apply the measures of prevention available to us. The premise of not touching cultural property, already internalised by all heritage professionals, is now even more justified.

In the extreme case of property needing direct action, the treatment must be proportional to the problem and carried out with the products and methods that are the gentlest on the artworks, and always under the supervision of specialised professionals. Inadequate or excessive measures can cause irreversible damage to our heritage, which is a non-renewable asset. Therefore, every action that may affect its state of conservation must be properly understood, assessed and documented.

The implementation of the measures and methods of prevention indicated in this document affects many aspects of the places or institutions responsible for heritage management, making it essential to involve all their members in order to carry out effective multidisciplinary work.

Special attention should be paid to intangible cultural expressions: it is thus advisable not to go ahead with them if the conditions of the disease do not allow it, and that any change or modification to them should be adopted only with the consensus of the actor community.

Last but not least, overcoming this crisis must lead to thinking about how heritage will be used in the near future in the new social context arising from the pandemic. In the meantime, it is the duty of all actors involved to implement protection measures for people, and to ensure that we – and future generations – enjoy our heritage.



VI. APPENDICES

I. TABLE OF VIRUCIDES APPROVED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL PROPERTY

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	MAIN REACTIONS ON HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT	COMPATIBILITY WITH CULTURAL PROPERTY ³¹
SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE	Toxic to workers when used in high concentrations.	Its use is incompatible with conservation. It emits chlorine gas; a catalyst of degradation processes and extremely harmful to certain materials . It affects organic materials: wood, paper, textiles, paint; and inorganic materials: metals, stone and lime and plaster mortars. It causes the colours of some pigments (azurite, cinnabar) to alter and degrades organic binders, for example.
AMMONIA	Toxic to workers when used in high concentrations.	Its use is incompatible with conservation because of its reactivity and strong alkaline character.
HYDROGEN PEROXIDE	It must only be applied by specialised professionals.	Its use is incompatible with conservation. It is a highly oxidising agent. Not recommended even in low concentrations. It causes severe corrosion and degradations.
QUATERNARY AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS	Less toxic.	Its use/non-use is mainly determined by the vehicles and solvents with which it is combined (usually mixtures of water and alcohols). These salts usually contain, among other substances, benzalkonium chloride which, in percentages higher than 10%, can damage stone, ceramic and terracotta surfaces. It must only be used by qualified professionals.
LACTIC ACID	Not very toxic. In food, it is classified as a disinfectant.	Not recommended for use on metals, cellulosic materials and easel paintings. Because it is applied after being mixed in water, it can only be used on other materials by specialised professionals.

³¹ Sources used: online recommendations from the Istituto Centrale di Restauro di Roma, National Park Service-National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NPS-NCPTT), North East Documentation Conservation Center (NEDCC)

[http://www.icr.beniculturali.it/documenti/allegati/Allegato%20def%20ICR%20Indicazioni%20per%20la%20sanificazione%20in%20contesti%20culturali%20\(4\).pdf](http://www.icr.beniculturali.it/documenti/allegati/Allegato%20def%20ICR%20Indicazioni%20per%20la%20sanificazione%20in%20contesti%20culturali%20(4).pdf),
<https://www.ncptt.nps.gov/blog/covid-19-conceptos-basicos-desinfectar-materiales-historicos/>
<https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/3.-emergency-management/3.5-disinfecting-books>



ETHANOL	Medium toxicity (higher in isopropanol) and evaporates quickly.	Incompatible with varnished, painted or polychromed surfaces as it can dissolve them. Also incompatible with certain inks. It must only be used by specialised professionals on: metals (without protective layers), textiles, stone and plasterwork, ceramics, terracotta and glass.
ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL		
SOAP SOLUTION	Those derived from contact with water.	Not recommended mainly due to the water used to apply it and to subsequent rinsing; must not be used on polychromed wood, easel paintings and archaeological metal artefacts, for example. It must only be used by specialised professionals on: noble metals and wood with resistant varnishes.
OZONE*	Can affect the lungs. Causes eye and respiratory tract irritation. The levels needed for it to be effective can only be achieved with professional equipment.	Incompatible with all materials. It is highly oxidising and can cause serious and irreversible alterations in fundamentally organic materials: polymers, natural and synthetic textile fibres, tempera paints, plastics, resins and metals.
ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT*	The levels needed for it to be effective can only be achieved with professional equipment.	Not recommended at all, among other reasons, because of induced photo-oxidation ³² . Unavoidable ultraviolet radiation in the outdoors can, in fact, result in the natural disinfection of very exposed property.

* Ozone and ultraviolet radiation are being used in various fields as virucidal agents, but are not included as such on the list published by the Ministry of Health³³. In the case of ozone, its use is currently being evaluated under European procedure and it cannot be registered according to the scope of national legislation. Ultraviolet light, on the other hand, is a physical medium that is excluded from the scope of the biocides legislation.

³² NEDCC.

³³ Ministry of Health. (13 May 2020). *Productos virucidas autorizados en España*. Sourced from www.mschs.gob.es: https://www.mschs.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov-China/documentos/Listado_virucidas.pdf



TYPE OF SURFACE TO BE TREATED AND POSSIBLE DISINFECTANT TO BE APPLIED³⁴

TYPE OF MATERIAL	COMPATIBLE SUBSTANCES
Coloured or varnished wood surfaces	Quaternary ammonium
Metal and metal alloy surfaces	Alcohols (ethanol, isopropanol)
Stone and plaster surfaces	Quaternary alcohol ammonium (ethanol, isopropanol)
Ceramic and terracotta surfaces	Quaternary alcohol ammonium (ethanol, isopropanol)
Glass surfaces	Quaternary ammonium Alcohols (ethanol, isopropanol)
Leather surfaces and upholstery	Quaternary ammonium
Synthetic and plastic materials	Quaternary ammonium
Textiles and assimilable fibres	Alcohols (ethanol, isopropanol)
Multiple materials	Quaternary ammonium
Scientific and musical instruments	Quaternary ammonium

II. TABLE OF COMPATIBILITIES BETWEEN CULTURAL PROPERTY AND DISINFECTION METHODOLOGIES

PROCEDURE	APPLIED TO	EFFECT ON PROPERTY
MISTING OR LOW-PRESSURE SPRAYING	Indoor environments	Not recommended for indoor environments as the affected area is difficult to control and the product is directly deposited on the property.
MISTING OR LOW-PRESSURE SPRAYING	Outdoors	It is difficult to control and can affect nearby property, but it allows less product to be applied and large areas to be treated. If pressure is too high it can cause abrasions and disintegration of the material. It must always be done by specialised professionals or under their supervision.

³⁴

[http://www.icr.beniculturali.it/documenti/allegati/Allegato%20def%20ICR%20Indicazioni%20per%20la%20sanificazione%20in%20contesti%20culturali%20\(4\).pdf](http://www.icr.beniculturali.it/documenti/allegati/Allegato%20def%20ICR%20Indicazioni%20per%20la%20sanificazione%20in%20contesti%20culturali%20(4).pdf)



DRY FLOOR MOP WITH DISPOSABLE WIPE, WET FLOOR MOP	Horizontal surfaces, floors, skirting boards and stairs with no heritage value. (never directly on cultural property)	It depends on the product applied: Never use bleach, ammonia, or products whose composition is unknown. Be careful not to create puddles. Discard the mop's disposable wipe after using.
MICROFIBRE DRY FLOOR MOP WIPE, DISPOSABLE NON-WOVEN DRY FLOOR MOP WIPE, DISPOSABLE PAPER TOWEL	Non-historical surfaces (handrails, doorknobs/door pulls, furniture), never directly on cultural property.	It depends on the product applied: Never use bleach, ammonia, or products whose composition is unknown. Care should be taken to rinse and dry when using water-based treatments. Throw away the disposable wipe/paper towel.
VACUUM CLEANERS	Surfaces (flooring, stairs), carpets and rugs.	Use vacuum cleaners with bags and HEPA filters.
FEATHER DUSTERS, MICROFIBRE DUSTERS	Surfaces (furniture)	Must not be used during the COVID-19 pandemic (moves particles in the air) Avoid movements of the air without prior quarantine

III. TABLE OF COMPATIBILITIES BETWEEN CULTURAL PROPERTY AND VOC EMISSIONS.

PRODUCT	EMISSION	AFFECTS	PRECAUTIONS
SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE (BLEACH)	Chlorine	Corrosion on metals. Affects electronic equipment. Affects health.	Use low-level solutions (it is essential to know the real concentration of the product so that the solution is in line with that established by the authorities). Rinse and dry quickly.
AMMONIA	Ammonia gas	Increases the pH of the environment. Affects health.	Minimise its use.
NEUTRAL SOAP AND WATER	Water vapour	Increases the environment's RH.	Use low-level solutions. Rinse and dry quickly.
SOAP AND WATER, DETERGENTS AND ADDITIVES	Water vapour+unknown, uncontrolled substances	Increases the environment's RH.	Avoid using products whose composition is unknown.



(PERFUMES, DISINFECTANTS, INSECT REPELLENTS, STABILISERS, CHELATING AGENTS, SILICONE, ANTISTATIC AGENTS, ETC.)		Leaves residue on surfaces.	
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IV. Weekly inspection sheets

Spaces in which cultural property is deposited and is subject to monitoring:

(1) Name of the space - (2) Location in the building

(3) Cultural property	
(4) Consignments/ Observations	

Inspections

(5) 1	(6) Date:	(7) Carried out by:
	(8) Incidents/Remarks:	
	(9) Cultural property	
	(10) Environmental conditions	
	(11) Facilities/Maintenance	
	(12) Enclosure	



Sheet information fields

- 1. Name of the space:** Room, warehouse, temporary exhibition room, restoration lab, etc.
- 2. Location of the space in the building:** first floor, south basement, etc.
- 3. Cultural property:** Specify individual objects (title, artist and Reg. No.) or by group (17th-century painting, stone sculpture, Pérez photo library, etc.) specifying materials or artistic techniques.
- 4. Consignments/Observations:** Highlight points of special interest in this field ('check that the humidifier is on', 'check windows', 'access key No. 15 with Security', 'check that humidity is below 60%', etc.) as these are essential for the cultural property held in this space, or because there have been previous related incidents.
- 5. Inspection number:** This is important for the chronological detection of problems and their solutions.
- 6. Date of inspection:** Inspection identification.
- 7. Name(s) of the person/people involved:** Inspection identification and checking of doubts regarding the incidents.
- 8. Incidents/Remarks:** Matters that are not directly pertinent to any one of the information fields, or that, conversely, are general and apply to several or all of them. They may also be very important matters that need highlighting even if they have already been explained in detail in one of the fields.
- 9. Cultural property:** Observations or incidents directly related to cultural property in the space concerned. For example: accumulation of dust or dirt; items that have been displaced or moved from their usual place; that lack adequate protection; placement may be subject to knocks or accidents; materialisation of sawdust; materialisation of stains; flaked fragments of the polychromed layer; etc. It should be remembered that in emergency situations the inspection of cultural property does not necessarily have to be carried out by a restorer who is a specialist in each object or artistic technique.
- 10. Environmental conditions:** Any incidence or anomaly in relation to the usual conservation conditions and linked to parameters such as the RH of the air, temperature, ventilation, natural and artificial lighting, accumulation of dust and dirt, draughts, detection of insects or other organisms that can cause biodeterioration, etc.
- 11. Facilities/Maintenance:** Incidents or remarks related to the facilities or maintenance of the spaces. For example: Dehumidifier stopped working; A/C alarm indicator on; lights on; one fire extinguisher missing; fire extinguishers not checked; electrical plug in bad condition; wire on the floor in the middle of the room; one easel missing; trolley taken to the sculpture workshop; blown lamp bulb; door does not close properly; entry door open (or closed); window open; floor dirty; humidifier checked and cleaned;



shutter up.

- 12. Apertures/Building:** Incidents related to the exterior apertures of the building (walls, windows, doors if applicable) and the building itself, which is generally cultural property as well: Window does not close; broken glass; not hermetic when it rains or it is very windy; leaks, stains and unrepaired damage from old leaks; damaged floor; damaged ceilings; damp stains in basement X; possible water leak from a pipe. In the last 4 fields it is enough to place a tick or write 'Ok' or 'all correct' if the spaces have been inspected and no incidence has been reported.

Visual record:

In many cases, photos are often taken during inspections to document an incident. It is a very useful resource to track the evolution of a leak, for example. It is difficult to record images on an inspection sheet, so it is best to create image folders, opening one for each monitored space (Storage room X, images). Depending on the volume of images, sub-folders or individual files may be created within that folder, but each folder or file must be linked to an inspection number and a date; this will make it easy to find when an incident needs to be monitored.



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