Revolutionary Spaces Announces Pre-Emptive Closures to Combat the Spread of COVID-19

The Old State House and Old South Meeting House museums will be closed to the public beginning Friday, March 13.

Events at both sites are canceled through mid-April.

BOSTON (March 12, 2020) – Revolutionary Spaces announced today it will close the Old State House and Old South Meeting House museums – and cancel all events – until further notice. This decision is made in support of the individual health of Revolutionary Spaces visitors, employees, and volunteers, and contributes to larger community public health goals by mitigating any possible transmission of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) through Revolutionary Spaces’ doors on the Freedom Trail. Revolutionary Spaces will monitor the situation and reevaluate its position by April 1.

“The decision to close is not made lightly,” said Nat Sheidley, president & CEO at Revolutionary Spaces. “With nearly 100 cases in Massachusetts alone, it is our civic duty now to limit access to our public spaces to help slow the transmission of Coronavirus.”

Administrative staff at Revolutionary Spaces will work remotely for the time being. Programming and museum staff will be on-site on a limited basis, completing tasks remotely as able. In addition, the team will explore innovative new ways to make the content that visitors normally access in person available through digital channels.

“Revolutionary Spaces is doing exactly the right thing now by closing its doors to the public,” said Dr. Asaf Bitton, executive director at Ariadne Labs and Revolutionary Spaces board member. “In these trying times, civic organizations must step up and proactively make hard choices to protect everyone. Closures like these can make an important contribution to the community-wide social distancing efforts that are urgently needed now to mitigate the course of this pandemic.”
There is no reason to believe anyone who has visited the Old State House or Old South Meeting House has been exposed to Coronavirus, and no staff members have been symptomatic.

Revolutionary Spaces also encourages the public to learn from past local epidemics, including the “Fever of 1721” – an outbreak of smallpox in Boston when political tensions were high. Bostonians eventually came together, and the outbreak led to the first widespread use of smallpox inoculations in the New World, birthed America’s first independent newspaper, and bolstered Boston’s ability to fight disease as a community. Learning from the past – whether the response to smallpox in 1721, or the recent insufficient Coronavirus response by some countries in 2020 – can only help us now to work together toward a better future as a vibrant community that is informed, aware, and resilient.

More than 200,000 visitors pass through the Old State House and Old South Meeting House each year, including many families and international travelers. For the most up-to-date information, please visit RevolutionarySpaces.org or follow Revolutionary Spaces on Facebook and Twitter.

FACTS

- Revolutionary Spaces’ sites – Old South Meeting House and the Old State House – will be closed to the public until further notice.
- All events scheduled to take place at Revolutionary Spaces are canceled through April 1, and ticket holders will be notified and refunded.
- Any private events scheduled will be held under the discretion of the organizers.
- No presumptive or confirmed cases of Coronavirus have currently been traced back to the Old State House or Old South Meeting House.
- No staff members have been symptomatic.

About Revolutionary Spaces

Revolutionary Spaces connects people to the history and continuing practice of democracy through the intertwined stories of two of the nation’s most iconic sites — Boston’s Old South Meeting House and Old State House. We explore history through programs and exhibitions, foster a free and open exchange of ideas, create gathering places, and preserve and steward historic buildings.
Press Contact
Diana Pisciotta
617-784-5256
dpisciotta@denterlein.com