



Tampa's Top Cultural Attractions Respond to COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tampa, FL - Based on the most current information from public health officials, and in support of community efforts to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), The Glazer Children's Museum, Tampa Museum of Art, Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), Henry B. Plant Museum and The Florida Aquarium will temporarily close to the public beginning Monday, March 16 through Sunday, March 29.

There have been no known incidents of COVID-19 at the five museums and today's collective action is voluntary.

"We recognize the importance of working together to ensure the well-being of our community remains a priority," said Michael Tomor, Penny and Jeff Vinik Executive Director of the Tampa Museum of Art.

"Our organizations are still a resource to you even while our buildings are closed. Many of us have online materials, activities, and more to keep you connected during these two weeks," said Sarah Cole, President and CEO of the Glazer Children's Museum.

"The ability to support one's community extends well beyond the exhibit path, classrooms and outreach programs," said Julian Mackenzie, President and CEO of MOSI. "Being able to work together with other venues shows us what a great community of cultural attractions we have here in Tampa."

"We recognize that our world-class organizations serve an important role by providing inspiration and inquiry, as well as providing an escape from daily challenges, however, this is an unprecedented event and the temporary closures place the health and well-being of our greater community first," said Roger Germann, President and CEO of The Florida Aquarium.

"Prior to the coronavirus, the most serious pandemic in the US took place in the late Victorian era. Given our historical focus, we believe we need to be especially sensitive to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic can have on our community," said Cynthia Gandee Zinober, Executive Director of the Henry B. Plant Museum.

"We as museum boards are taking the necessary precautions we need to keep our community safe and keep our citizens healthy. We deeply care for the families we serve, who remain our top priority as a member of the arts community," said Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandy Murman. Commissioner Murman is the current chair of the board at The Glazer Children's Museum and serves as a trustee for The Florida Aquarium and The Tampa Museum of Art.

Staff at all five cultural attractions will be paid their full compensation per their regular work schedule for the two-week period.

Joint quote from the five CEO's/Directors: "This was a very difficult decision and we understand our members, guests and supporters might be disappointed, but we believe adhering to the scientific community's recommendation to limit large social gatherings at this time is the right course of action. We look forward to welcoming our guests back and continuing to provide world-class experiences, amazing exhibits and impactful educational opportunities which makes Tampa's cultural attractions iconic and beloved."

Updated information will be shared on each organization's website and social media channels and we encourage the public to visit often to learn about reopening plans and additional announcements.

Glazer Children's Museum: www.glazermuseum.org

Tampa Museum of Art: www.tampamuseum.org

Museum of Science and Industry: www.mosi.org

Henry B. Plant Museum: www.plantmuseum.com

The Florida Aquarium: www.flaquarium.org