



Lane Management

The information provided within this document is of a general nature. These resources are not intended to be fully comprehensive, nor to provide legal guidance or opinion relative to any national, state, or local executive orders on reopening your business. Centers and their guests are encouraged to follow all Federal, State, and Local reopening and operating guidelines and seek legal advice for their specific purposes.

In these uncertain times, tighter controls need to be put in place in the bowling center in order to ensure proper distancing is taking place between groups of guests. Whether your local restrictions are based on capacity or by actual lane usage, you can expect to deploy guests across fewer lanes than usual. The center should establish a plan of action regarding which lanes will be available and unavailable on certain days. This will help ensure safety of the guests while also spreading out usage of the lanes across the center.

Front Desk & Customer Check-in

- **Using Workshop Mode to Designate Unavailable Lanes**

The Workshop Mode function in Conqueror is a great tool to take advantage of to assist in specifying which lanes are available for guest use and which lanes are out of service. Once the center has a plan of action in place for which lanes will be used each day, the lanes that will be unavailable should be placed into Workshop Mode. A best practice would be for the opening manager to take care of placing unavailable lanes into Workshop Mode at the beginning of the day. Managers generally have access to the Workshop Mode function in Conqueror, making them the logical choice for handling this duty, which is very easy to accomplish.

Another best practice is to restrict access to Workshop Mode to only those staff members who are responsible for marking lanes as available and unavailable for the day.

The Quick Reference Sheet regarding placing lanes in Workshop Mode can be accessed [here](#).

- **Using Reservations to Designate Unavailable Lanes**

The Reservations module in Conqueror is another easy way to control lane usage in the bowling center. One of the best benefits to using the Reservations system is daily lane usage can be determined and set up in advance rather than having to do so each business day.

The “Non-Bookable” reservation type will be used to mark lanes as unavailable in the Reservations module. A plan needs to be established to know which lanes will be unavailable each day prior to using the Reservations module to set unavailable lanes up in advance. A manager or designated staff member should be responsible for setting up the module.

For centers with the Advanced Reservations module, the recurring reservations function makes it easier to set the same restrictions for multiple days.

The Quick Reference Sheet regarding using the Reservations module for non-bookable lanes and creation of recurring reservations can be accessed [here](#).

- **Unavailable Lane Visibility**

It should be apparent in the bowling center which lanes are available for use by guests and which lanes are unavailable that day. This will help alleviate guest concerns regarding safe distancing from other guests and will also show proactivity on the center's part in answering questions from guests ahead of time.

Physical signage can be displayed on unavailable lanes, along with seating and tables associated with said lanes. Advertising images can be displayed on the scoring monitors for unavailable lanes, along with scrolling messages on the bottom of the monitors.

The more communication the center has with its guests regarding safety and distancing will be of great benefit in helping guests feel safe and secure—which will only lead to a more enjoyable time and an appreciation that the center is going out of its way to maintain a safe environment.

The Leveraging the Reopening Marketing Kit pdf can be accessed [here](#).

Social Distancing on Lanes

While social distancing guidelines differ at local, county, and state levels, there are general best practices that can be adhered to in the bowling center regarding management of lanes. Following these practices will help create a sense of order in the center while being able to help ensure guest satisfaction and safety. The following are some basic guidelines that can help establish a plan for lane management that will conform to standard social distancing requirements.

- **Establishing Guest Limits on the Lanes**

Industry standard generally suggests a maximum of five to six guests per lane. This should be an acceptable amount of guests per lane during these times as well, but local considerations should be taken into account before establishing any guidelines. Once a maximum number of guests per lane is determined, restrict Conqueror to only that number. From the Conqueror home screen, click on Setup, General, Center Setup (Conqueror Pro menu path is Setup, Center Setup). Click on the "Lane Control" tab. On the upper right is the setting for maximum number of players per lane. Change the default setting (which is normally 12) to the center's established maximum of guests per lane. This will make it impossible to put more than that number of guests on a lane, either on the part of the operator or the guest. In general, only the "General Manager" User Profile has access to Center Setup so a manager with that User Profile will need to make the change.

When considering the number of guests on a lane, be aware that if the adjacent lane of the pair is vacant—which it will most likely be as centers move to an every other lane operation—the guests will want to "spread out" in the bowlers area. This means they will want to use the seating, tables, etc. associated with the vacant lane. Proper verbal communication, along with visual aids and signs, need to be established to make certain guests do not migrate from their assigned area. Any migration would put the guests in closer contact with the next pair of lanes. It is extremely important for the staff to be vigilant to make certain guests understand this arrangement.

- **Options for Social Distancing on the Lanes**

With the reduced capacity and the need for proper distancing, many centers are considering moving towards an every other lane or every other pair of lanes scenario. Determining a plan for this is of paramount importance, not only for proper distancing of guests but also to spread out equipment usage daily.

One scenario to consider would be every other day rotating of the lanes and/or pair of lanes. For example, on Mondays only odd lanes would be used, while on Tuesdays only even lanes would be used, then switching back to odd on Wednesday. This plan ensures scoring and pinspotters are kept "fresh" and do not sit unused for several days, which helps identify any potential issues with the equipment as well. Whatever plan the bowling center comes up with for proper lane usage must be adhered to to ensure social distancing is being followed.

- **Cleaning Mode After Lane Closure**

Conqueror has a great tool to help communicate when guests have completed their bowling session, during which the lanes will need to be attended to prior to the next guests. Cleaning mode is a function which effectively locks down the ability to check the lane back in for the next group. While Cleaning Mode can be manually activated, Conqueror (from version 11) supports the ability to make the lanes automatically go into Cleaning Mode at the conclusion of a bowling session.

Automatic Cleaning Mode is set in Lane Options and is best used as a default function.

After the next issued bowling session is completed, when the lanes are checked out they will automatically go into Cleaning Mode (a caution sign will appear on that lane on the All Lanes Screen). Once the bowling desk attendant sees a lane in Cleaning Mode, it will be time to start the cleaning/disinfecting/preparation process on that lane to get it ready for the next guests. Centers will still need to heavily rely on open communication when the lanes go into Cleaning Mode—both on the part of informing the staff member responsible for cleaning and also on that staff member telling the bowling desk attendant that the lanes are prepared.

Proper procedures and behavior can greatly speed up the process of turning the lanes over for the next guest and eliminate lane downtime, especially when bowling centers have fewer lanes available for guests. Automatic Cleaning Mode is a great tool to help make those procedures more streamlined.

The Quick Reference Sheet regarding enabling Cleaning Mode after lane closure can be accessed [here](#).

Handling of House Balls and Rental Shoes on Lanes

- Recommend that customers do not share balls between guests. Post signage near bowling settee areas, on lane monitors and on lower monitor/consoles to remind guests of rules.
- Consider removing all self-service areas including bowling ball areas, bowling shoe counters, etc. and have team members deliver these items directly to the customer at the lane.
- Utilize Courtesy Card to collect information about guests regarding shoe size and ball weight and size to have balls and shoes ready for delivery to lane or, if collected in advance, waiting at lane for guests when they arrive.
- Deliver Balls and Shoes to guests directly on lanes. Consider utilizing a ball cart and a basket to deliver balls and shoes to the lane. Leave the basket at the ball return and ask guests to leave the shoes in the basket at the end of their bowling period. This will not only help with providing an enhanced experience for your guests, it will make it easier to deliver and gather for cleaning after the guests have left.
- As an alternative, place several different ball weights and sizes on ball return and ask guest to exchange for different size or weight if they would like to.
- Advise Bowlers to leave their shoes and house balls in the bowler area when they are finished bowling for Staff collection and cleaning.
- Designate an area where balls and shoes can be dropped off by guests directly, or by team members after they have been collected from vacated lanes.