

**BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES SERIES OF COST  
CONTAINMENT MEASURES  
ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION DUE TO FINANCIAL LOSSES OVER  
CONCERT  
AND EVENT CANCELLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH COVID-19**

April 17, 2020

In response to the public health crisis over COVID-19, the Boston Symphony Orchestra has recently made a series of announcements about the cancellation of more than 130 events between March 12-mid-June, including the last seven weeks of its 2019-20 BSO season and, most recently, the cancellation of the 2020 Boston Pops season. The BSO estimates \$6.2 million in lost revenue from these concert cancellations alone and more than \$4 million in lost revenue from venue rentals, tour concert cancellations, and other earned income relevant to this same period of time.

To mitigate the financial impact this global health crisis has had on these activities and help ensure the future of its 139-year legacy, the BSO is implementing a series of cost containment measures throughout the organization, developed by the BSO's board of trustees and management leadership team. Among the steps that are being taken are musician and staff salary reductions and temporary staffing furloughs. In addition, the BSO Board of Trustees is in the process of implementing plans for immediately increased fundraising that will play a critical role in addressing this financial challenge. Though greatly significant, these measures, described in further detail below, only address a fraction of the losses resulting from these concert and event cancellations.

**BSO Musicians**

In what is a historically significant and impactful decision in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 health crisis, the members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra have unanimously agreed to take a reduction in their salaries through the end of August which represents on average an aggregate reduction in salary of approximately 25% over this time period. The musicians have also agreed to restructure their vacation time allotment over the next two years which will result in

significant savings for the organization. The BSO is grateful to its musicians for enhancing the existing media rights agreement to allow expanded use of archival material, along with new material, to be shared digitally during the live performance hiatus.

### BSO Staff

Staff actions include temporary furloughs of 70 full-time employees starting April 20. In addition to retaining healthcare coverage these furloughed staff members will be eligible to apply for unemployment insurance and supplemental income under the terms of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Employees who are enrolled in health, dental, life, Long Term Disability (LTD), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), Health Savings Accounts (HAS), will maintain these benefits during the period of their furloughs. The decision-making process to determine which BSO employees would be furloughed was based on a careful assessment of the current needs of the organization during the period of canceled performances. The organization has also implemented a 5%-15% sliding scale salary reduction policy for a significant portion of the staff; depending on salary level, some employees will not experience any reduction in their compensation. In all, 80% of the BSO's full-time employees will be impacted by the furloughs and salary reductions. Throughout the organization, there have been more than 400 part-time personnel who were previously furloughed in connection with the concert cancellations.

### BSO Artistic and Management Leadership

Mark Volpe, BSO President and CEO, will take a 50% reduction in his base salary. BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons will not receive compensation for all canceled performances. Boston Pops Conductor Keith Lockhart will also take a substantial cut in his compensation.

### Quote from Mark Volpe, BSO President and CEO

"It is deeply heartening to see so many members of the BSO Family—musicians, staff, and artistic and board leadership—express such deep concern and desire to help with the programmatic and financial challenges we are facing as a result of the concert cancellations due to COVID-19.

“I am forever grateful to everyone here at the BSO who has expressed such grace and understanding regarding the difficult measures we’ve needed to take, though I don’t underestimate in the least the hardship and challenges these cutbacks will create for many of my colleagues. I want to assure everyone that we are doing everything in our power to evaluate strategically the impact of the pandemic and develop the solutions needed to get the orchestra on track after this crisis has passed.

“Though these are very difficult times, we are determined to continue to nurture what is at the heart of the orchestra’s core mission—to present live concerts of great works of music and bring tremendous joy and inspiration to our wonderful audiences.

“To everyone affected by COVID-19, we extend our most sincere wish that this period of health crisis passes soon. We look towards a brighter future and returning to our cherished experiences of music’s power to unite us again as the BSO community.”

Quote from Susan Paine, Chair of the BSO Board of Trustees

“All of us on the Board of Trustees of the BSO, along with our extraordinary musicians, management, and staff are confronting this unprecedented challenge with great determination and strength. We are fully united in our goal to navigate this once-in-a-generation crisis head-on and to returning the BSO to equilibrium as soon as reasonably possible.

“With each day that passes the BSO’s collective strength is demonstrated by the tough but necessary strategic choices we are making including cost reductions and, at the same time, sharing new creative forms of programming with our audiences through digital platforms – this shared commitment to preserving our core capabilities reflects our love for the BSO. Together, we will get through this extraordinary crisis and will move forward and continue to share the special gift of musical performance at the highest level.

“We are incredibly grateful to all of our deeply devoted patrons, so many of whom have donated the value of their unused tickets back to the BSO. It is this kind of exceptional generosity which inspires us and

that will help make a difference as we emerge from this crisis. It is our intention that through our actions now, we will be better positioned to create a vibrant future for our orchestra and its audiences. We look forward to once again sharing with the world the brilliant music-making of our Boston Symphony Orchestra.”

#### BSO at Home and Boston Pops at Home

**BSO at Home**—a wide variety of audio and video offerings—has been made available to the Boston Symphony’s music community at [www.bso.org/athome](http://www.bso.org/athome) during the orchestra’s recently announced performance/event hiatus (click [here](#) to view March concert cancellation announcement). A **Boston Pops at Home** online initiative will be modeled in part on *BSO at Home* and is scheduled to be released in early May (the announcement about the 2020 Boston Pops season cancellation is available [here](#)).

#### Relevant Links for Further Information

- [Link to April 8, 2020 press announcement about 2020 Boston Pops season cancellation](#) (with information about 2020 Tanglewood season and 2020 Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular)
- [Link to April 2, 2020 press announcement about BSO at Home online digital offerings during performance hiatus](#)
- [Link to March 18, 2020 press announcements about 2019-20 BSO concert cancellations](#)