Maricopa County Public Health
WeArePublicHealth.org

COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses

Revised 07 December 2020

Plan, Prepare and Respond to COVID-19

Businesses and employers play an important role in slowing the spread of COVID-19:

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and lower the impact in their workplace. This may include activities in one or more of the following areas:

1. Plan to maintain healthy business operations

2. Maintain a healthy work environment

3. If possible, limit contact in the workplace and provide adequate spacing between employees to encourage social distancing.

4. Implement additional risk mitigation practices, including wearing of cloth face coverings in all shared and public spaces, frequent hand washing/sanitizing, and cleaning/disinfecting workstations

5. Establish flexible leave policies specific to COVID-19 and be prepared for extended employee absences.

6. Encourage employees to report any known exposures to COVID-19.

7. Implement symptom screening practices and require ill employees to go home and stay home.

In addition to the information provided in this local guidance document, see also:

- OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19
- CDC Resuming Business Toolkit for COVID-19

1. Plan to maintain healthy business operations

Businesses should review their Continuity of Operations Plan or Business Continuity Plan:

A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) or Business Continuity Plan (BCP) outlines the job or service functions that are essential to keeping the business operational. Essential functions are often tied to public safety and health, job functions tied to laws or administrative codes and those functions that keep the business open. A healthy COOP or BCP plan will include:

- Details of the essential functions
- Key staff who perform the essential functions
- List of essential records, contracts and important information needed to keep the functions running
- Cross-trained personnel who can perform essential functions

For more information on Business Continuity, visit https://www.ready.gov/business

2.   Maintain a healthy work environment

Perform frequent environmental cleaning:

- Frequently clean all high touch surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the disinfectant cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.

- Provide disposable disinfectant wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, etc.) can be wiped down by employees before and after each use.

For more information, see CDC Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility

Some employees coming back to work might have experienced stressors while staying at home:

- Stressors may include loss of a loved one, reduction in pay, being sick with COVID-19 or taking care of a loved one with COVID-19. Create a plan to help employees connect with social and mental health services.

More information can be found at 211arizona.org

3.   If possible, limit contact in the workplace and avoid non-essential travel

Reduce face-to-face interactions:

- **Encourage teleworking** and use video conferencing for meetings, if applicable. For employees who cannot telework, ensure physical distancing is in place. Stagger employees in cubicles and other workspaces to keep them 6 feet apart.

- **Allow vulnerable employees to telework** or reassign them to duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees. People at higher risk for severe illness include adults 65 or older and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions. See CDC Guidance for Employers with Workers Who are High Risk.

Advise employees to limit non-essential business and personal travel. If traveling is essential, employees should take the following steps:

- Check the CDC's Traveler's Health Notices for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which you will travel.

- Advise employees to check themselves for symptoms consistent with COVID-19.* Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

- Ensure employees who develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19* while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice, if needed. Sick employees should follow the MCDPH Quarantine Guidance.

- If outside the United States, sick employees should follow your company's policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country. A U.S. consular officer can help locate healthcare services. However, U.S. embassies, consulates, and military facilities do not have the legal authority, capability, and resources to evacuate or give medicines, vaccines, or medical care to private U.S. citizens overseas.

4. Practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing, hand sanitizing and disinfecting work stations

If a business operates in person, emphasize physical distancing, wearing a cloth face covering at all times unless eating or drinking, respiratory etiquette, and hand hygiene by all employees:

- Place posters that encourage [physical distancing](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), [hand hygiene](#) , and [staying home when sick](#) at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.

- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizer in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand sanitizer in multiple, accessible locations to encourage hand hygiene.

- Instruct employees to clean their hands frequently with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

- **Per [county regulations](#), staff working in public spaces (such as public transit, restaurants or stores) must wear face masks**, but all employees should be encouraged to wear cloth face coverings whenever social distancing cannot be maintained in any workplace. Be sure to comply with any additional local requirements authorized by the Governor's [Executive Order 2020-40](#), *Containing the Spread of COVID-19, Continuing Arizona Mitigation Efforts*.

- Train all employees on health and safety protocols and provide disinfectant cleaning agents and train all employees on how to clean and disinfect their workstations.

5. Establish flexible leave policies specific to COVID-19 and be prepared for extended employee absences.

Business should consider developing policies specific to COVID-19:

- **Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance** and that employees are aware of these policies.

- **Employers should maintain flexible policies that:**

  o **Permit employees exposed to someone with COVID-19 to stay home to complete the recommended quarantine period.** Telework arrangements can allow quarantined employees to be productive even while staying at home. See the MCDPH [Quarantine Guidance for Household and Close Contacts](#).

  o **Permit employees with symptoms or who have tested positive for COVID-19 to stay home to complete the recommended home isolation period.** The duration of home isolation ranges from 10 to 20 days, depending on several factors, and can be even longer if fever symptoms persist. See the MCDPH [Home Isolation Guidance](#).

  o **Permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member in home isolation.** Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

- Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.

6.   Encourage employees to report any known exposures to COVID-19

Ask employees to report known COVID-19 exposures to the designated personnel (e.g., supervisor, HR, or occupational health). Public Health *will **not*** contact every business to notify them of employees who are positive for COVID-19.

If an employee has a known exposure to someone with COVID-19, **the employee should:**

- Follow the MCDPH Quarantine Guidance for Household and Close Contacts and stay at home for the full recommended quarantine period, except to get essential medical care, prescriptions, and food. Employees with a known exposure should NOT attend work unless:
    - Exposed, essential employees **without symptoms** may continue to work during the quarantine period, so long as they remain asymptomatic, wear a face mask when within 6 feet of others, and self-monitor for any symptoms for 14 days.
    - Essential employees who are exposed and develop symptoms of COVID-19 during the quarantine period should:
        - **Cease** work activities, put on a face mask, and avoid others as much as possible.
        - **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.
        - **C**onsult with their healthcare provider about their illness and possible testing for COVID-19 and follow the MCDPH Home Isolation Guidance.

The employer should:

- Instruct non-essential employees without symptoms to stay home for the full recommended quarantine period and telework, if possible.

- Instruct employees to self-monitor for symptoms consistent with COVID-19.*

- Instruct employees that, if they develop symptoms, they should:

    - **Cease** work activities, put on a face mask if not already wearing one, and avoid others as much as possible.

    - **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services, then go home.

    - **Consult** with their healthcare provider about their illness and possible testing for COVID-19.

    - **Follow** the MCDPH Home Isolation Guidelines. **Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.**

7. Implement symptom screening practices and require ill employees to go and stay home.

On May 12, 2020, Governor Ducey issued Executive Order 2020-36 *Stay Healthy, Return Smarter, Return Stronger*, outlining re-opening guidance for the State of Arizona. This section provides recommendations for businesses based on provisions outlined in E.O. 2020-36 as well as Executive Order 2020-12 *Prohibiting the Closure of Essential Services*.

Employers should:

1. Develop a system to **regularly monitor all employees for symptoms** that could be consistent with COVID-19 or an acute respiratory illness (e.g., employees could be expected to monitor their temperature and any symptoms twice a day or before working a shift). Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.

2. **If an employee <u>develops any symptoms</u> consistent with COVID-19*…**

   The employee should:

   - **Cease** work activities, put on a face mask if not already wearing one, and avoid others as much as possible.

   - **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services, then go home.

   - **Consult** with their healthcare provider about their illness and PCR or antigen (swab) testing for COVID-19.

   - **Follow** the MCDPH Home Isolation Guidelines. **Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.**

   The employer should:

   - **Separate sick employees.** Employees who appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should be asked to don a face mask, if not already wearing one, and immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors, and sent home.

   - **Have a procedure in place for the safe transport of an employee who becomes sick** while at work. The employee may need to be taken home or to a healthcare provider.

   - **Conduct cleaning and disinfection procedures with special attention to high-touch areas.** If it has been less than 7 days since the sick employee has been in the facility, close off any areas used for prolonged periods of time by the sick person. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting to minimize potential for other employees being exposed to respiratory droplets. If waiting 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. During this waiting period, open outside doors and windows in these areas to increase air circulation. Follow the CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Facilities.

   - **Confidentially inform employees identified as close contacts of their possible exposure to COVID-19** in the workplace while maintaining confidentiality of the infected employee as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Employees who were in close contact of the sick individual should be directed to follow the MCDPH Quarantine Guidance for Household and Close Contacts.

     o A close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the sick person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period or any physical contact starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection).

- **Reinforce that employees should not report to work when ill.**

  - **Sick employees should *not* be required to provide a doctor's letter or positive COVID-19 test to document their illness to qualify for leave so they may stay home and away from work.**

    o Employees with symptoms consistent of COVID-19* should be encouraged to get a PCR or antigen (PCR) test from their healthcare provider or public testing site.

    o Employees with symptoms or who have tested positive for COVID-19 should not be permitted to return to work until they have completed the recommended home isolation period.

  - **Employees who have completed home isolation and recovered from their illness should *not* be required to provide a doctor's letter or negative COVID-19 test to document their recovery or be permitted to return to work.**

Additional resources for employers on implementing procedures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace can be found at Maricopa.gov/CovidBusiness.

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*As of 10/07/2020, symptoms consistent with COVID-19 include:

- fever (>100.4°F) or chills
- cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- fatigue
- muscle or body aches
- headache
- new loss of taste or smell. sore throat,
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

Please check the CDC website frequently to determine if this list has been updated. **Chronic conditions like allergies or asthma are not considered an acute respiratory illness** and do not require exclusion from work