

COVID-19 Guidance for Businesses | Updated 6/29/2020

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
4. Practice good hygiene, including frequent hand washing, hand sanitizing and disinfecting work stations
5. Implement and monitor symptoms of employees that provide essential services
6. Require use of face masks by staff working in public spaces (such as public transit, restaurants or stores) per [county regulations](#). Employers should also consult with cities and towns for local regulations regarding face coverings.

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](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly evolving in our county and state. For up-to-date information and additional local guidance, please visit Maricopa.gov/Coronavirus or follow us at [Twitter.com/maricopahealth](https://twitter.com/maricopahealth) or [Facebook.com/MCDPH](https://facebook.com/MCDPH).

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>

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 permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. 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.

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 cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, etc.) can be wiped down by employees before 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:

- Use video conferencing for meetings.
- **Encourage teleworking.** For employees who cannot telework, ensure physical distancing is in place. Stagger employees in cubes 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 person 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 of [acute respiratory illness](#). Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19:
 - Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (>100.4°F), chills, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or new loss of taste or smell.
 - Chronic conditions like allergies or asthma are **not** symptoms of COVID-19.
- Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice, if needed.
- 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, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees:

- Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and [hand hygiene](#) 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.
- Instruct employees to clean their hands often 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.
- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- Encourage employees to wear cloth face coverings, if appropriate. Per [county regulations](#), staff working in public spaces (such as public transit, restaurants or stores) must wear masks. 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, including how to clean and disinfect their workstations.

5. Implement symptom monitoring practices for all employees

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*.

1. **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.
2. **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. **People with these symptoms or a combination of symptoms may have COVID-19:**
 - Cough and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - fever (>100.4°F), chills
 - muscle pain, fatigue
 - headache, sore throat
 - congestion or runny nose,
 - nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or
 - new loss of taste or smell.

Chronic conditions like allergies or asthma are not considered an acute respiratory illness.

CDC has a [symptom self-checker](#) chatbot called Clara that employers and employees may find helpful. It has a series of questions and recommends what level of medical care, if any, the user should seek. It is not intended to provide diagnosis or treatment.

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

If an employee has a known exposure to COVID-19,

The employee should:

1. Follow the MCDPH [Quarantine Guidance for Household and Close Contacts](#).
2. Stay at home for 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19, except to get essential medical care, prescriptions, and food. Employees with a known exposure should NOT attend work unless:
 - a. They work in an Essential Service* **AND** do not have any symptoms associated with COVID-19.
 - b. Employees who work in an Essential Service* **AND** do not have any symptoms associated with COVID-19 who must attend work during the 14 days after their last contact with the person with COVID-19, **must wear a cloth face mask when within 6 feet of other people.**

The employer should:

1. Instruct non-essential employees without symptoms to stay home as much as possible and telework (if possible) for 14 days after the known exposure.
2. Instruct employees to self-monitor for symptoms including fever (**>100.4°F**), cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or new loss of taste or smell. If they develop symptoms, they should notify their supervisor and stay home.
3. Consider conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks (e.g., symptom and/or temperature screening) of employees before they enter the facility.
4. Be familiar with the [Quarantine Guidance for Household and Close Contacts](#)

* See the Governor's [Executive Order 2020-12 Prohibiting the Closure of Essential Services for listing of Essential Service industries](#).

If an employee **develops any symptoms consistent with COVID-19** like fever (>100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or new loss of taste or smell that are **not known** to be a part of a chronic condition (e.g., asthma, allergies):

The employee should:

1. **Cease** work activities.
2. **Notify** their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.
3. **Be advised** to consult with their healthcare provider about their illness and possible testing for COVID-19.
 - a. **If the employee tests positive for COVID-19**, they will be asked to follow [Public Health Guidance for Home Isolation](#).
 - b. **Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.**
4. **If the employee has symptoms and tests negative for COVID-19**, **Stay home and away from others until 3 days (72 hours) have passed since fever has gone away without the use of fever-reducing medications AND respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, and loss of taste/smell) have improved.**

The employer should:

1. **Separate sick employees.** Employees who appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors, and sent home.
2. **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.
3. **Conduct cleaning and disinfection procedures.** 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. Follow the [CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Facilities](#).
4. **Inform employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19** in the workplace but maintain 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 confidentially notified of their exposure and [provided this guidance](#). Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the sick person for more than 10 minutes, including 48 hours prior to symptom onset.



Employers should NOT require a COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, to qualify for sick leave, or 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](https://www.maricopa.gov/CovidBusiness).