



Returning to Work in a COVID-19 World

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[Please refer to the CDC website for its recommendations regarding COVID - 19](#)

In preparing to return to work during the COVID outbreak, business owners will be faced with many questions regarding steps they will take to protect their employees and their business. Valent Group recommends each business owner use data and information from federal, local and state experts to evaluate community spread, in their decision to reopen and potentially expose front line employees to COVID-19.

This information is general and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to provide legal advice. You should not act on this information without consulting legal counsel or other knowledgeable advisors.

Management Checklist

This guide is intended for management teams as you prepare your workplace after working from home during a pandemic. The following is a high-level overview of key areas to consider today. More information on each section is provided throughout the document.

- Provide training and information to employees - if possible, through email:**
 - + training information or links to training (use CDC resources linked throughout this guide)
 - + information explaining how the workplace will reopen and what is expected of employees (see below).
- Identify a department or a key person/s to answer employee questions.**
- Identify and purchase cleaning and disinfecting supplies for everyday, employee use on the equipment and office.**
- Purchase Personal Protective Equipment for employee cleaning use.**
- Identify an outside contractor who can provide clean-up services, if needed.**
 - + Ask for details of how the contractor will clean and how they will protect your employees ([See the Cleaning section on page 17](#)).
 - + Ask for a Certificate of Insurance and ask your insurance broker to review the COI. ([See the Cleaning section on page 17](#)).
- Consider staggering report-to-work times if this will reduce employee gathering.**
- Consider increasing the frequency of cleaning cycles in high touch work areas** (touch screens, computers, doorknobs, bathrooms, breakrooms, vending machines, etc.).
- Update employee contact information:** phone numbers, email addresses, next of kin, etc.
- Check your list of suppliers and emergency response contractors and their contact information for accuracy.**
- Remind staff to perform checks of equipment** (electrical connections, cords, oil level, etc.) **before starting.**
- How and what will you communicate to your clients?**

New!
Download the Bulletin:

[Screening Employee Temperatures Upon Return to Work](#)

After a COVID-19 Case

- Determine if employee retraining is needed. Conduct retraining.**
- Prevent discrimination based on race or country of origin and maintain confidentiality of the people with confirmed coronavirus infection.**
- Communicate to employees how the affected areas were cleaned.**
- Remind employees about proper social distancing, and not to gather closer than six feet from each other.**
- Remind employees of the best practices related to COVID-19.**

CDC Recommendations

To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, use the guidance described below to determine risk of COVID-19 infection. Do not make determinations of risk based on race or country of origin and be sure to maintain confidentiality of people with confirmed coronavirus infection. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features of COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing. Updates are available on [CDC's web page](#).



Local conditions will influence the decisions that public health officials make regarding community-level strategies.

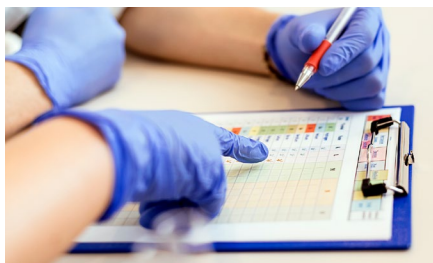
CDC has [guidance for mitigation strategies](#) according to the level of community transmission or impact of COVID-19.

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and lower the impact in their workplace and their community.

Assess your essential functions and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products.

- Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations** (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize existing customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).
- Identify alternate supply chains for critical goods and services.** Some goods and services may be in higher demand or unavailable.
- 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 COVID-19 operating policies and procedures and non-punitive leave policies.**
- Talk with business partners in your service and supply chain about your response plans.** Share best practices with other businesses in your communities (especially those in your supply chain), chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.

Policies and Procedures



Identify a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the workplace.

Temporary pandemic flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices.

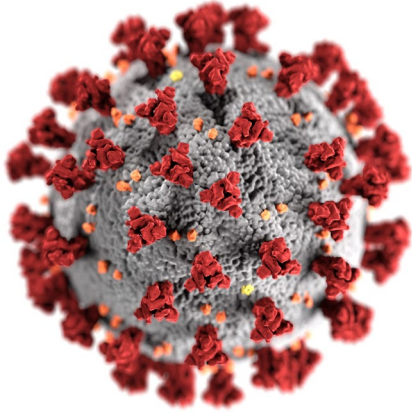
- During the pandemic, ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of and understand these policies.
- Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school and childcare closures. Additional flexibilities might include giving advances on future sick leave and allowing employees to donate sick leave to each other.
- Employers that do not currently offer sick leave to some or all of their employees may want to draft non-punitive "emergency sick leave" policies.
- Review human resources policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws (for more information on employer responsibilities, visit the [Department of Labor's](#) and the [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's](#) websites).
- Connect employees to employee assistance program (EAP) resources (if available) and community resources as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services, for example, to cope with the death of a loved one.
- If PPE is required, in order to meet OSHA standards, a PPE program will need to be written, including a Hazard Assessment for the affected work environment. Following is a link to a [sample written PPE program](#) you can use to guide your company.
- As local conditions and health department requirements change, review and adapt your policies to keep employees, students and customers safe.

Training

COVID-19 Awareness Training

Some people can carry the virus without having symptoms, and they can spread it without knowing they are contagious. Also, in certain conditions, the virus can live on surfaces for days. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we are to understand facts about the virus and take action to prevent its spread.

Get the CDC Fact Sheet at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>



The virus can spread from any occupied area and from any surface touched by an infected person or where respiratory droplets from an infected person land.

The virus enters a person's body through the nose, mouth or eyes. It cannot be seen or measured to know if it is present or not.

Some persons who carry the virus are not aware they are carriers, because they have no symptoms.

Get Related CDC Fact Sheets at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts-h.pdf>

How the Virus Spreads

- + From an infected person who is in close contact with another person (within about 6 feet).
- + Studies suggest that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.
- + Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes.
 - + These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
 - + Droplets may land on surfaces and remain transmittable for days.
 - + Unprotected coughs and sneezes
- + Poor hand hygiene
- + Touching your face
- + Inadequate housekeeping and cleaning of surfaces
- + Not wearing proper personal protective equipment (PPE) including face coverings

Best Practices that employees can take to reduce exposure to COVID-19

- Distance yourself from others by at least 6 feet.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or inside your elbow. Immediately dispose of the tissue and wash your hands. If you cannot wash, sanitize your hands.



- Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds especially after being in a public place or blowing your nose or coughing or sneezing.
- If you cannot wash your hands, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Avoid close contact with others.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when around others. The face covering is meant to protect others in case you are infected. **The face covering is not a substitute for distancing.**
- If you notice you have a fever, a cough, difficulty catching your breath, fatigue, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea, keep your distance from others and notify your supervisor immediately. These are symptoms of the virus.
- Don (put on) a new face covering if yours has a hole or is soiled.
- When storing your used face covering, store it in a plastic bag or a breathable container such as a paper bag.
- If your face covering is damaged or wet, dispose of it properly and replace it.
- Clean and sanitize or disinfect your work area frequently and before anyone else will use the same space.
- Properly dispose of used disposable gloves and disposable face coverings.
- Launder your handmade cloth face coverings daily. You may need to bring more than one handmade covering to work so that it can be replaced when necessary.

Read Related CDC Fact Sheets at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention-H.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/wash-your-hands-poster-english-508.pdf>

Preparing to Return to Work

Employee Self-Check

- If an employee has been exposed to a confirmed case or become ill with COVID-19, they are not to return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, and if necessary, in consultation with healthcare providers.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow [CDC recommended precautions](#).
- Employees are to check their temperature before leaving home to travel to work. If their temperature is elevated to 100.4 degrees or above, do not report to work. Notify your supervisor immediately and stay home. You may need to contact your doctor and treat your symptoms.
- If an employee feels symptoms of COVID-19 such as a fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat or new loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, they are to notify their supervisor immediately and be prepared to stay home. They may need to contact their doctor and follow instructions to treat their symptoms. Another symptom reported by some is body aches. The CDC website has information for treating the symptoms. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>

Cloth Face Coverings

Mandatory face covering use will require a Personal Protective Equipment program, hazard assessment and documented training.

Option A: Voluntary Use (select or remove)

Employees may voluntarily wear disposable respirators to work, as they become available in ways that do not stress the healthcare industry. If the employee does this, the employer is required to provide a copy of [Appendix D](#) of the Respiratory Protection Standard to the employee.

In the meantime, in addition to implementing best practices for preventing the spread of COVID-19 and until employees can be vaccinated against COVID-19, employees may voluntarily wear cloth face coverings. This will, according to CDC, help minimize transmission and possibly exposure to the coronavirus. This, along with the listed measures and our employee's commitment to use of these best practices, will help prevent the spread of the virus and allow employees to return to work safely.

- + Most PPE is manufactured commercially, but due to the shortage of face covering caused by the sudden and immediate need in healthcare, the CDC has advised the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus but do not know it, from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Read more from the CDC at :

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

- + If an employee has a health condition that prevents them from wearing a face covering, they are to talk to their manager before reporting to work, to determine what accommodations can be made to work with the employee.

Option B: Required Use (select or remove)

If face coverings will be required, the company must implement a written PPE program which includes a hazard assessment, PPE training, training regarding the hazard and preventing the hazard and documentation of training.

At this time and until further notice, employees are required to wear a cloth face covering that covers their mouth and nose, before entering the workplace and while on company property.

Cloth face coverings are NOT:

- + An FDA-cleared "N95" respirator
- + Approved to protect against any infection, virus or disease, specifically including COVID-19
- + An approved medical device
- + For use in a setting where significant exposure to liquid bodily or other hazardous fluids is expected.

- + No warranties, promises, or representations of any kind, express or implied, are given as to the effectiveness of the face coverings.

According to the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), non-medical masks may be used "as a last resort" with other protective measures in "settings where [FDA-cleared] face masks are not available." The CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus, and do not know it, from transmitting it to others. For more information about COVID-19, please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



Use of Cloth Face Coverings

1. Before touching the cloth face covering, check that it is clean and properly laundered/steam ironed to destroy microorganisms.
<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/sterilization/steam.html>
2. Before touching the cloth face covering, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
3. Take the cloth face covering and inspect it for tears or holes.
4. Ensure the proper side of the cloth face covering is facing outwards.
5. Place the cloth face covering to your face. Pull down the cloth face coverings' bottom so that it covers your mouth and your chin.
6. Avoid touching the cloth face covering while using it; if you do, clean your hands with an appropriate hand sanitizer or by washing with soap and water afterwards.
7. Do not pull any part of the face covering down below your chin.
8. Replace the cloth face covering with a new one as soon as it becomes damp or soiled, including if you cough/sneeze while wearing it.

Maintenance, Storage and Care of Cloth Face Coverings

Please make sure the coverings are used properly and kept in good condition or promptly changed when dirty or damaged.

Removal and Disposal

- Before touching the face covering, wash or sanitize your hands.
- After use, take off the cloth face covering, keeping it away from your face and clothes, and avoid touching the surfaces of the covering.
- To remove the cloth face covering, be sure to remove it from behind (do not touch the front of the covering).
- Perform hand hygiene immediately after touching or discarding the cloth face covering by using an appropriate hand sanitizer or washing your hands with soap and water. Each facility should have a specific can(s) with a cover for disposable cloth face coverings. It is recommended that these cans have a foot pedal and a lifting lid to prevent multiple employees from handling the lid.
- Each facility will provide a stock of small plastic bags so that the used coverings can be placed in the bag, and then the bag can be placed in the can. These garbage cans should be located outside, away from the entrance door, or in a remote area of the building. When employees are changing cloth face coverings or disposing of a cloth face covering, it should be done in the open air.

Storage

Reusable cloth face coverings can be stored in employee vehicles and placed into a clean container, such as a plastic bag, to protect them from dirt. The storage container is to be cleaned daily. A plastic bag is to be sealed and discarded after each use.

Accommodations for Health Conditions

If an employee has a health condition that does not allow for restricted air flow, the employee should promptly notify management and refer to the interactive accommodation process outlined in the Reasonable Accommodations for Disabilities policy.

Daily Cleaning and Sanitization

In accordance with CDC guidelines, frequently touched objects and surfaces at each facility, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs should be cleaned and disinfected. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection.

To disinfect, use [products that meet EPA's criteria](#) for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface.



How Can Employees reduce the spread of COVID-19:

Consider emailing or mailing the following information to employees before they return to the workplace.

- Employees can [take steps to protect themselves](#) at work and at home. Older people and people with serious chronic medical conditions are at [higher risk for complications](#).
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn [what to do if you are sick](#).
- Inform your supervisor if you have a sick family member at home with COVID-19. Learn what to do [if someone in your house is sick](#).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Learn more about [coughing and sneezing](#) etiquette on the CDC website.
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use [products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2](#), the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.
- Practice social distancing by avoiding [large gatherings](#) and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.
- Conduct meetings by telephone or video conference call. If an in-person meeting must take place, physical distancing is required.
- If you are meeting with a client, communicate ahead of time how the meeting will be conducted. Remember, video conferencing is preferred. Physical distancing is required.

Lifespan of the virus on surfaces

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, under certain conditions, the virus can live on the following surfaces for the amount of time shown.

<u>Surface Type</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Surface Type</u>	<u>Days</u>
Paper and tissue paper	3	Stainless Steel	2-3 Days
Copper	4	Polypropylene	3 Days
Cardboard	24	Glass	4 Days
Wood	48	Paper Money	4 Days
Cloth	48	Outside of surgical mask	7 Days

Employee responsibility for cleaning & sanitizing

Employees are to clean and disinfect their work areas, tools, equipment and common areas they use, frequently throughout the day to prevent the spread of the virus throughout the company.

Upon Return to Work

Management will need to decide if an employee may voluntarily wear a cloth face covering, or if cloth face coverings are mandatory while on company property. Select or remove voluntary or mandatory language outlined on pages 9 and 10, based on your decision.

Separately, the following are points to be considered in communicating to employees for internal purposes.

These procedures will be adopted immediately until further notice.

- + If an employee has been ill with COVID-19, they are not to return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, and in consultation with healthcare providers.
- + Employees are to check their temperature before leaving home to travel to work. If your temperature is elevated to 100 degrees or above, do not report to work. Notify your supervisor immediately and stay home. You may need to contact your doctor and treat your symptoms.
- + Upon arriving to work, employees are to put on a handmade cloth face covering or surgical face covering that cover their mouth and nose before leaving their car to walk to the workplace.
- + As provided by the EEOC (Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace 3/21/2020, III, B, 7) and CDC guidelines and suggestions, the employer may take teammates temperature as they report to work. (100.4 degrees or higher) With the CDC's acknowledgement of community spread of coronavirus, it also cautions "employers may measure employee's body temperature. However, employers should be aware that some people with COVID-19 do not have a fever and some people with a fever do not have COVID-19". Experts also know that we may carry the coronavirus even if we do not have other symptoms. If the employer keeps a log of employee's temperatures, the information must be kept confidential and cannot be kept with personnel files.

[Read: Screening Employee Temperatures Upon Return to Work](#)

- + Remind teammates about proper social distancing, and not to gather closer than six feet from each other.



(Select one of the following 2 options)

- + Visitors are not allowed until further notice or,
- + Visitors are to be asked about possible exposure to COVID-19. They will also be asked to wear a cloth face covering before entering the building or talking with employees.

- + Only one employee at a time in an elevator.
- + Employees are encouraged to use stairwells; they are however to remember to use the handrail and wash their hands immediately after ascending or descending the stairs.
- + Separate teammates who work near others or move them to other areas of the workplace.
- + No employees may gather closer than 6 feet to one another and face coverings are to be worn whenever employees are in an open area or near other persons. Physical distancing is always required.
- + Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- + Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

- + Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze. Throw tissues in the trash immediately and wash or sanitize your hands.
- + Use hand towels to hold or open community used cabinets, doors, items, equipment
- + Wipe/sanitize door handles, copier keyboards, cabinet handles, coffee urn handles, including items in your personal work area.
- + Avoid using other teammate's phones, desks, etc.
- + When visitors are allowed, meetings can be held with clients if physical distancing is practiced and face coverings are worn when the meeting will be longer than 15 minutes. Otherwise, use conference calls or video conferencing.

Meetings outside the office

- + Meetings should be held using Microsoft Teams, Skype, Zoom or another video conferencing software.
- + Use gloves, tissues or paper towels to open doors if you do go to the office.
- + As recommended by the CDC and health professionals, practice physical distancing, wear a face covering, use hand sanitizer and encourage other attendees to do the same.
- + Do not shake hands or be closer than 6 feet
- + Remember, the virus can live on paper and business cards from 3 to 24 hours.



- + If employees must meet face-to-face, they will physically distance 6 feet or more from one another.
- + Employees will be designated to receive and ship. These employees are to always protect themselves with proper PPE and monitor delivery drivers carefully, not allowing them onto the loading dock or into the building. Physical distancing from others is extremely important.
- + Deliveries drivers are not to be allowed on the loading dock. Delivery drivers are to wear face coverings and gloves. If they do not have a face covering or gloves, personal protective equipment (PPE) will be given to them if necessary.
- + Employees are to clean and disinfect their workspaces each day before they leave work using cleaning supplies provided.

If an Employee Becomes Ill While at Work

If an employee becomes ill or notices symptoms of COVID-19, such as, a fever, a cough shortness of breath, or fatigue, headache, sore throat, muscle aches, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea, while at work, they are to keep their distance from others, notify their supervisor immediately and proceed to a safe area away from others.

- + The employee should be wearing their face covering.
- + The face covering and glove wearing supervisor, keeping distance from the employee, can escort the employee to the previously identified area, preferably outside the building.
- + The supervisor is to notify their HR representative and the safety coordinator.
- + The HR representative is to ask the affected employee questions regarding their workday and their travel on premises, who did they interact with and where did they go during the day. This questioning could be done via phone; however, a manager or supervisor is to physically distance themselves and be present with the ill employee until they leave the property.
- + According to EEOC and CDC guidelines during the COVID-19 outbreak, management may take the employee's temperature.
- + Travel home to call a doctor for guidance.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/10Things.pdf>

Procedures for Managers and Supervisors if an Employee Becomes Ill While at Work

If an employee becomes ill or notices symptoms of COVID-19, such as a fever, a cough shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat or new loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea while at work, they are to keep their distance from others, immediately notify their supervisor and proceed to the safe area.

- + The employee should be wearing their face covering.
- + The face covering and glove wearing supervisor, keeping distance from all employees, can escort the employee to the previously identified safe area, preferably outside the building.
- + The supervisor will notify the HR representative and safety coordinator immediately.
- + The GM will be notified immediately.
- + If management can safely take the employee's temperature, do so.
- + Determine who of the remaining employees need to leave the workplace.
- + Can the employee manage leaving under their own power or do they need to call family or friends for assistance? They should be reminded to call a doctor before going to the doctor.

Questions can be asked by the HR representative using a phone; however, a supervisor or manager is to be present with the employee, keeping a physical distance of at least 6 feet.

Ask the affected employee details about their workday:

- + With whom they have been in contact?
- + Where they have been?
- + What equipment or tools have they used?
- + Have they been wearing a face covering while at work?
- + Did they practice physical distancing, frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes?
- + Have they been coughing or sneezing? If so, do they remember their location at the time?

Steps for Cordoning an Area Affected by a Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Case

After determining what areas of the facility and with whom the ill employee made contact, management and the safety committee is to decide on whether to close and cordon off any area and begin cleanup or contact a third party to clean the space. To prevent further spread of the virus, if an area can be closed and cordoned to keep others away for any length of time, it should be done.

Identify a Safe Room or Safe Area

Management is to identify an outdoor area, that if needed, can be used to question an ill employee regarding their contact with others and the areas they occupied during the day. An indoor room is to also be identified and used when weather does not permit an outdoor meeting. The room is to be kept secure and sanitized. The room should be well lit and ventilated as needed to be comfortable.

Have a secure supply of bottled water, tissues, wipes and sanitizer near the entrance of the room.

Response Team

Pre-planning will prepare the response team with information regarding how they will respond and with what resources (such as taping off or barricading the area). After determining the affected areas, the response team will meet to discuss how the team will secure the areas.

The following PPE will be worn to secure the area:

- + Disposable shoe covers or chemical resistant boots
- + Disposable apron
- + Goggles
- + Disposable gloves
- + Disposable face covering

Contact Your Insurance Broker

Inform your insurance broker if an employee is suspected of having COVID-19. Ask them if they have any guidance for filing a claim or what next steps they can recommend.

COVID Diagnosis

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The employer should instruct fellow employees about how to proceed based on the CDC [Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure](#).

Cleaning

Cleaning Cordoned Areas

If the affected area can be sealed from anyone entering and can be undisturbed for 7 days, the area will not need to be cleaned or disinfected to remove the virus. The virus cannot live longer than 7 days on surfaces. The more time that can elapse before entering the area, the less cleaning may be required.

If the area must be cleaned and disinfected right away, determine whether an outside company will be called to clean or if employees can wear PPE to protect themselves and clean the area with very low risk of being infected.



Outside Cleaning Service

The company is to contact and vet outside cleaning companies to determine who they can call to respond if needed. Ask for:

- + The company's documentation explaining how they will clean and disinfect the areas.
- + An explanation and documentation of how they will protect your employees and the existing clean space, to prevent the spread of the virus.
- + A certificate of insurance. Contact your insurance broker once the certificate is received to assist with determining coverage before the project begins.
- + A contract. This should explain warranties and guarantees of their service.
- + Are cleaning supplies provided by your company or does the outside cleaning service provide the supplies for their employees to clean the workplace? Ask for Safety Data Sheets of the cleaning products. Notify your employees of the chemicals used, to prevent an allergic reaction.
- + Has the cleaning service provided their updated cleaning procedures that they will use to protect their employees and company employees, e.g., EPA approved chemicals, disposable face coverings, gloves, aprons, changing PPE, washing hands frequently etc.

Company Maintenance and Cleaning Employees

- + Employees will not work in close groups. Each staff member will have a specific location to work.
- + Make note of employees who are present and what areas they will be assigned to clean.
- + Review chemical safety information with employees who will use the chemicals.
- + Review how first aid will be handled.
- + Review proper PPE use.
- + Remind employees who are cleaning to keep separated by at least 6 feet. Identify small areas to be cleaned and assign one staff member to clean the area.

Gather:

- + Needed cleaning supplies. The EPA website has a list of chemicals approved to clean and disinfect COVID-19.
- + Disposable towels, wipes, paper towels
- + Face coverings or surgical coverings or respirators
- + PPE - disposable gloves, disposable aprons, goggles, face coverings to protect from splashes and shoe coverings. PPE should be compatible with chemicals used.
- + First aid kit

The risk of exposure to the cleaning staff is inherently low. Employees who are cleaning should wear disposable gloves, disposable shoe coverings, cloth face covering, goggles and disposable plastic aprons for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.

(Employees are to be aware of the cleaning products they will use and any reaction the chemical may cause)



- + Train employees how to safely put-on (don) and take-off (doff) PPE
- + Persons treating/cleaning the area are to put on protective equipment.
- + Close off areas visited by the ill persons. If possible, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical through 7 days, before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- + Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Employee cleaning crews are to use the EPA approved chemicals for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Cleaning and maintenance employees will follow recommended procedures for donning, doffing and wearing appropriate PPE:

- + Cloth face covering or surgical face covering (or respirator) will be worn. Extended and reuse practices of face coverings will be implemented.
- + Safety goggles or safety glasses and a face shield will be worn to protect from chemical splashes and sprays.
- + Disposable aprons will be worn and disposed of after cleaning each department to prevent transfer of the virus.
- + Disposable gloves will be worn and disposed of after cleaning each department. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
- + Disposable shoe covers that can be thrown away or rubber boots that will stay at the facility and be disinfected, will be worn.
- + Cleaning supplies are to be kept on hand for potential cleaning needs and for regular employee cleaning of their own personal space.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Cleaning

If PPE is required, a PPE Program and Hazard Assessment is necessary.

- + PPE should be compatible with the cleaning products used.
- + Additional PPE might be required depending on the products being used.
- + Gloves, face coverings, shoe covers, and aprons should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearers and the surrounding area. Be sure to wash hands after removing PPE.
- + Gloves, shoe covers, and aprons should be removed and disposed of in a safe receptacle after cleaning an area occupied by ill persons. Wash hands, wrists and exposed skin immediately after removing gloves.
- + Staff should report breaches in PPE, such as a tear in their gloves or chemical exposure, to their supervisor.

How to Clean and Disinfect

Hard (non-porous) Surfaces

- + If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- + For disinfection, most EPA registered household disinfectants should be effective. See the list.
- + Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application. Allow proper ventilation. Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners.
 - + Bleach solution: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - + 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water



Soft (porous) surfaces

For surfaces such as carpet, rugs and drapes, remove visible contamination and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for the surfaces. After cleaning:

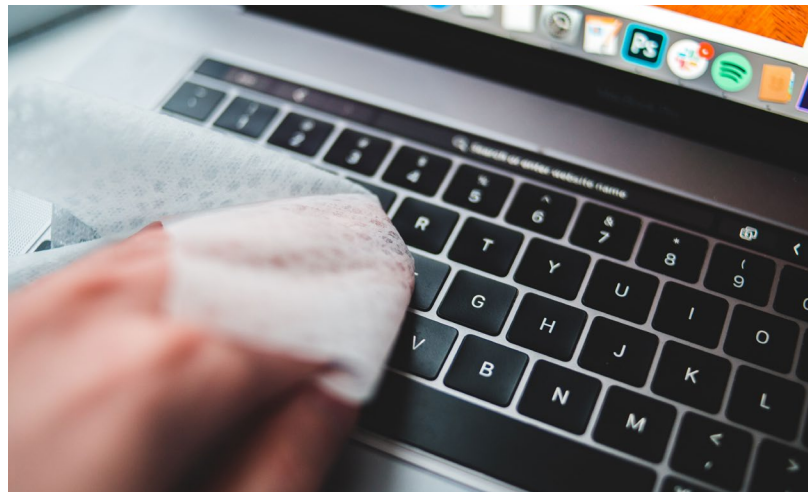
- + Launder the items according to the manufacturer's instructions, using the warmest water temperature and then dry the item.

Electronics

Remove visible contamination.

- + Follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection
- + If no manufacturer guidance is available, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

Consider changing or having a technician change the air filters for the HVAC system.



Appendix D to Sec. 1910.134

(Mandatory) Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirator's limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

About Valent Group:

Valent Group provides risk consulting for businesses, employer benefit groups and individuals across the Southeast. Valent Group is an independently owned risk consulting and insurance firm headquartered in Birmingham, Ala., with offices in Huntsville, Mobile, Decatur and Bay Minette. We are a subsidiary of EBSCO Industries. For more information, visit www.valentgroup.com

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