

COVID19 – Preparing for a Return to “Normalcy” and Navigating Risk on the Way Back to Business

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Agenda

- Intro
 - What has happened so far? What is to come?
- Conducting a Risk Assessment
- Re-hiring/Re-Activating Employees
- Bringing Remote Workers Back
- Maintaining Workplace Safety
- Q&A

COVID-19: Navigating Risk on the Way Back to Business

- **Conducting a Risk Assessment**
 - Identifying the Hazards
 - Who is at Risk?
 - Assessing Risks
 - How likely is it to occur?
 - What is the impact?
 - Controlling Risks
 - Risk Avoidance
 - Risk Control
 - Risk Transfer
 - Monitoring the Results

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- **Maintaining Workplace Safety Using OSHA & CDC Guidance**
 - **Implement Administrative Controls**
 - **Obtain/Utilize PPE**
 - **Consider Engineering Controls**
 - **Encourage/Mandate Social Distancing**
 - **Separate Sick Employees**
 - **Support Respiratory Etiquette and Hand Hygiene**
 - **Perform Routine Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection**

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Rehiring/Reactivating Employees

- [General Letter for All Staff](#)
- **Re-activating Furloughed Employees**
 - [Sample Letter](#)
 - **Things to consider:**
 - **Benefits – are we collecting accrued benefit costs in arrears?**
 - **Should we require new Direct Deposit info to be submitted?**
 - **Rehiring Laid Off Employees**
 - **Should follow normal hiring process**
 - [Return to Work Checklist](#)

COVID-19: FAQs

Can employees refuse to travel to areas considered safe?

- You can require employees to travel as long as you meet your general duty under OSHA to provide a workplace (including any travel location) that is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.
- Perhaps more important than whether you can force an employee to travel is whether you should. Requiring a fearful employee to travel will erode trust and confidence and likely cause them significant anxiety. Consider video calls or videoconferencing as an (inexpensive!) alternative to traveling for the next few weeks or months.

COVID-19: FAQs

- **Can we send employees home if they are symptomatic?**
- Yes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has [advised employers](#) that employees who appear to have symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) should be separated from other employees and sent home immediately. If the employee feels well enough to work, consider whether they can effectively telecommute.
- Note: Non-exempt employees may be entitled to a few extra hours of pay if you're in a state with reporting time pay, but this cost will be well worth it to maintain the safety of the workplace.

COVID-19: FAQs

What if my employee discloses that their family member or roommate has COVID-19?

- Our recommendation is to follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Employers should ask employees who live with someone confirmed to have COVID-19 to notify a designated HR representative or their supervisor as soon as possible. The employer and employee should then refer to CDC guidance to assess risk and determine next steps—see Tables 1 and 2 in the CDC’s [Interim US Guidance](#) for Risk Assessment and Public Health Management.

COVID-19: FAQs

If an employee is out of the office due to sickness, can we ask them about their symptoms?

- Yes, but there's a right way to do it and a wrong way to do it. In most circumstances, employers shouldn't ask about an employee's symptoms, as that could be construed as a disability-related inquiry. Under the circumstances, however—and in line with an employer's responsibility to provide a safe workplace—we recommend asking specifically about the symptoms of COVID-19 and making it clear that this is the extent of the information you're looking for.
- Here's a suggested communication: "Thank you for staying home while sick. In the interest of keeping all employees as safe as possible, we'd like to know if you are having any of the symptoms of COVID-19. Are you experiencing a fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath?"

COVID-19: FAQs

What if I have a fearful employee who refuses to come to work?

- Generally, employees do not have a right to refuse to work based only on a generalized fear of becoming ill. If their fear is not based on objective evidence of possible exposure, you can enforce your attendance policies.
- You should be prepared for employees who express anxiety about coming to work and evaluate any request on a case-by-case basis. Consider alternative arrangements such as telecommuting if possible. Employees who are immunocompromised or have other relevant disabilities may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation, such as working from home or taking a leave if working from home is not possible.
- If the nature of the employee's position does not allow telecommuting, and there is no legitimate threat, reiterate the steps they can take to keep themselves safe from contracting the virus and explain the proactive steps you are taking to keep infection risk low in the workplace.



COVID-19: FAQs

Can we require or allow certain groups of employees, but not others, to work from home?

- Yes. Employers may offer different benefits or terms of employment to different groups of employees as long as the distinction is based on non-discriminatory criteria. For instance, a telecommuting option or requirement can be based on the type of work performed, employee classification (exempt v. non-exempt), or location of the office or the employee. Employers should be able to support the business justification for allowing or requiring certain groups to telecommute.

COVID-19: FAQs

How do I make a telecommuting policy?

- Although some employers will be comfortable sending everyone home with their laptop and saying, go forth and be productive, most will want to be a little more specific. A good telecommuting policy will generally address productivity standards, hours of work, how and when employees should be in contact with their manager or subordinates, and office expenses.
- For instance, your policy might require that employees are available by phone and messaging app during their regular in-office hours, that they meet all deadlines and maintain client contacts per usual, and that they check in with their manager at the close of each workday to report what they have accomplished. Be sure to let employees know whom to contact if they run into technical difficulties at home.

COVID-19: FAQs

How do I make a telecommuting policy?

- You'll also want to specify how expenses related to working from home will be dealt with. If you don't expect there to be any additional expenses involved, communicate this. You don't want employees thinking this is their chance to purchase a standing desk and fancy ergonomic chair on your dime. That said, you should consider whether employees will incur reasonable and necessary expenses while working from home. Some states mandate reimbursement for these kinds of expenses, but it's a good practice to cover such costs even if it's not required by law.

Coronavirus Awareness & Prevention Posters

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness.

STEPS TO PREVENT ILLNESS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Symptoms* can include:

FEVER

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.



COUGH

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH



Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after traveling by air, train, or bus.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they dry.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Germs can enter through the nose or mouth or be inhaled into the lungs.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SICK

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

Follow the steps below: If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

STAY HOME



- Stay home. People who are sick with COVID-19 are able to breathe or sneeze through their nose. This means that germs can be spread from people who are sick to people who are not sick.
- Avoid public areas. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid public transportation. Avoid going to public places such as shopping, dining, or work.

COVER WHEN YOU COUGH



- 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.

WEAR A FACEMASK



- Wear a cloth face mask when you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. This will help keep germs from spreading to people who are not sick.

WASH HANDS



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in public places or after traveling by air, train, or bus.

CALL AHEAD



- Make a mental appointment with the healthcare provider and call ahead to let them know you have COVID-19. This will help them prepare to take care of you and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

MONITOR SYMPTOMS



- Seek medical attention. Seek prompt medical attention if you develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19. This will help them prepare to take care of you and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- Clean 100 disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, desks, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them first. Disinfect or soap and water prior to disinfecting.

To disinfect:

- Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work. Use disinfectants appropriate for the surface.

Options include:

- Blotting paper household bleach.
 - To make a bleach solution, mix:
 - 5 Tablespoons (1/2nd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR
 - 1 teaspoon bleach per quart of water.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronavirus when properly diluted.
- Alcohol solutions.
 - Disinfect solution has at least 70% alcohol.
- Other common EPA-registered household disinfectants.
 - Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for hantaviruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

The information on this page is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult your healthcare provider for more information.

STEPS TO TAKE AT WORK

You can help stop the spread of Coronavirus with these simple steps

Follow the steps below: Responsible action by employees can help prevent the spread of germs. Follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your place of work.



WASH HANDS OFTEN

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they dry.



DISINFECT YOUR WORKSTATION

Before you sit at your desk, use an EPA-approved product to disinfect your desk, keyboard, computer mouse, work phone and other items on your desk which you or your co-workers touch a lot.

SANITIZE WHEN SOAP ISN'T AVAILABLE

Not as effective as soap, hand sanitizer gets make a good backup. If you're stuck in a meeting and can't leave, try a few pumps of sanitizer.

USE SANITIZER



NO HANDSHAKES

AVOID SHAKING HANDS

It's not bad manners, it's a prudent step in preventing the spread of coronavirus. Try a friendly thumbs up or peace sign. They'll get the message and appreciate the consideration.



KEEP YOUR SMARTPHONE CLEAN

Your phone can be a hive of germs. Safely use a soapy microfiber cloth and clean the screen and back of your smartphone. Just avoid getting water in any of the ports!

For Order On Additional Required Postings Or For More Information, Please Call...

For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19-symptoms



To Order Any Additional Required Postings Or For More Information, Please Call...



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- Resources

- Sample [“Communication to Employees \(COVID-19 in the Workplace\)”](#)
- Checkmate’s COVID-19 Resource Page: <http://in.checkmatepayroll.com/covid-19-employer-general-reference>
- Checkmate’s OSHA Storefront: <https://checkmate.theoshastore.com/>
 - Checkmate clients receive 50% off all purchases by using code COV50



Questions?



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