



COVID-19: Manufacturing reopening guidelines and best practices

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many companies to temporarily shut down, downsize or alter their operations. The potential for employee exposure to the coronavirus may still exist upon re-opening and/or continue towards normal operations and precautions should be taken. It is imperative to continue to maintain good housekeeping and sanitation practices as well as employee awareness training on personal protective equipment (PPE), social distancing, and planning for future potential pandemics. Proper engineering and administrative controls will proactively ensure that companies can re-open or continue towards normal operations safely and to ensure business continuity into the future.

The following summary provides general tips and best practices on protecting employees from exposure to the coronavirus:

- Monitor local, state and federal public health communications and ensure compliance with industry- and location-specific requirements.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are symptomatic or are sick. Refer to CDC guidance on symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>
- Develop a screening process or health assessment for employees, when feasible (verbal screen, temperature readings, testing, PPE checks, etc.).
- Train workers on social distancing practices, including 6' distance from co-workers.
- Establish flexible work hours, including staggered shifts and break times to limit employee exposure.
- Encourage office or management personnel to continue to work from home, if feasible.
- Redesign, realign, or reposition work stations to ensure social distancing. If not feasible, install Plexiglas shields, dividers or similar physical barriers between work stations.
- Consult with third-party professionals to ensure adequate ventilation systems and maintenance.
- Add additional clock-in/clock-out stations to minimize potential crowding in one area.
- Provide visual cues and signs to remind workers of proper hygiene, social distancing, PPE use, etc.
- Train workers on proper use (putting on and taking off), maintaining and storage of N95 filtering face-piece respirators. For more guidance, refer to <https://www.osha.gov/memos/2020-03-14/temporary-enforcement-guidance-healthcare-respiratory-protection-annual-fit>
- Train employees on proper respiratory etiquette (coughing, sneezing, etc.).
- Discourage and monitor employee sharing of tools, equipment, etc.
- Train employees on proper hand hygiene practices and ensure appropriate hand washing stations and sanitizers are available throughout the plant. For more guidance, refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/hand-hygiene.html>

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- Develop a written housekeeping and sanitation policy to ensure proper and thorough cleaning schedules are implemented. Be sure to use an EPA approved disinfectant approved for use against coronavirus, for more information refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Develop additional procedures to ensure common areas such as lobbies, office areas, conference rooms, kitchens, break areas, restrooms, and other frequently touched items such as door handles, telephones, etc. are disinfected before each shift.
- Encourage workers to immediately report symptoms, illness or other health and safety concerns.
- Develop a pandemic response team (or designate safety committee responsibility) to ensure a framework is in place to create and implement policies, procedures, business continuity planning, and training to ensure employee safety.
- Keep in-house meetings as short as possible, limit the number of attendees, and practice social distancing protocol. When feasible, conduct online meetings or webinars.
- Regarding OSHA recordability questions, refer to <https://www.osha.gov/memos/2020-04-10/enforcement-guidance-recording-cases-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OSHA COVID-19 Overview, news & updates, hazard recognition, standards, medical information, and control and prevention.

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19:

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

CDC Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

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