

Ways To Open Your Office Safely



Engineering controls

Create a COVID-19 workplace health and safety plan. Start by reviewing the [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#).

- Evaluate the building and its mechanical and life safety systems to determine if the building is ready for occupancy. Check for hazards associated with prolonged facility shutdown such as [mold growth](#) or [issues with stagnant water systems](#), and take appropriate remedial actions.
- [Modify or adjust seats, furniture and workstations](#) to maintain social distancing of feet between employees, where possible.
 - Install transparent shields or other physical barriers where possible to separate employees and visitors where social distancing is not an option.
 - Arrange chairs in reception or other communal seating areas by turning, draping (covering chair with tape or fabric so seats cannot be used), spacing or removing chairs to maintain social distancing.
- Use methods to physically separate employees in all areas of the building, including work areas and other areas such as meeting rooms, break rooms, parking lots, entrance and exit areas and locker rooms.
 - Use signs, tape marks or other visual cues such as decals or colored tape on the floor, placed 6 feet apart, to show where to stand when physical barriers are not possible.
 - Replace high-touch communal items, such as coffee pots and bulk snacks, with alternatives such as pre-packaged, single-serving items. Encourage staff to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains or consider installing no-touch activation methods for water fountains.
- Consider taking steps to improve ventilation in the building, in consultation with an HVAC professional, based on local environmental conditions (temperature/humidity) and ongoing community transmission in the area:
 - Increase the percentage of outdoor air.
 - Increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces, if possible.
 - Disable demand-control ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on temperature or occupancy.
 - Consider using natural ventilation to increase outdoor air dilution of indoor air when environmental conditions and building requirements allow.

- Consider using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to help [enhance air cleaning](#) (especially in higher-risk areas).
- Ensure exhaust fans in restroom facilities are functional and operating at full capacity when the building is occupied.
- Consider using [ultraviolet germicidal irradiation \(UVGI\)](#) as a supplemental technique to inactivate potential airborne virus in the [upper-room](#) air of common occupied spaces, in accordance with industry guidelines.

Administrative controls:

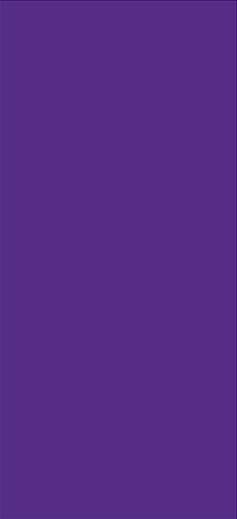
- Encourage employees who have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 to notify their supervisor and stay home.
 - Sick employees should follow [CDC-recommended steps](#). Employees should not return to work until they meet the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#), in consultation with their healthcare provider.
- Consider conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks (e.g., symptoms and/or temperature screening) of employees before they enter the work site.
 - See [CDC's COVID-19 General Business FAQs](#) for guidance on how to safely conduct employee screening.
- Stagger shifts, start times and break times as feasible to reduce the number of employees in common areas such as screening areas, break rooms and locker rooms.
- Consider posting signs in parking areas and entrances that ask guests and visitors to phone from their cars to inform the administration or security when they reach the facility.
- [Clean and disinfect](#) high-touch surfaces.
- [Read more about office safety during COVID-19.](#)

Safety Precautions for Stores

All employees and staff should always be wearing masks. Workers should avoid touching their faces, including their eyes, noses and mouths.

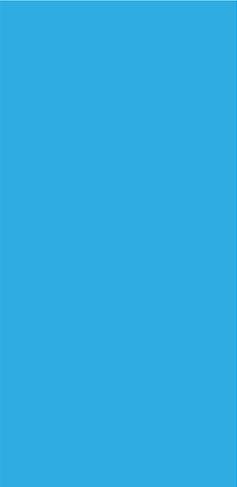
Engineering Controls

- As appropriate, such as at customer service windows and, if feasible, cash register lanes, use physical barriers to separate retail workers from members of the public.
- Use rope-and-stanchion systems to keep customers from queuing or congregating near work areas. For example, provide a waiting area for customers that is separated by at least 6 feet from a cash register workstation. Signage that instructs individuals waiting in line to remain 6 feet back from work areas may bolster the effectiveness of this engineering control.



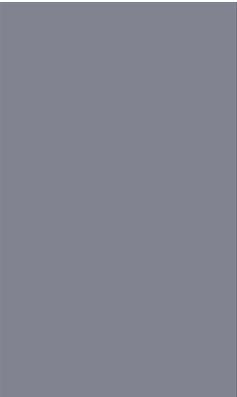
Administrative Controls

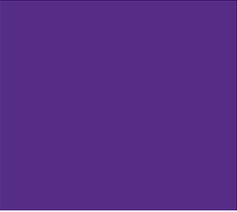
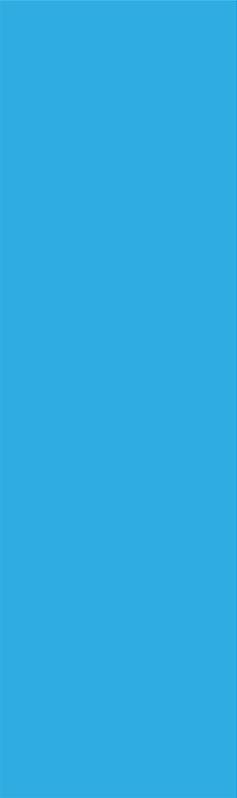
- Whenever possible, direct customers to self-checkout kiosks to minimize worker interaction with customers.
- Establish protocols and provide supplies to **disinfect** all frequently-touched surfaces in workspaces and public-facing areas, such as points of sale.
- Take steps to discourage customers from queueing at customer service lanes, cash register lanes or other areas within the retail environment.
- Consider restricting the number of customers allowed inside the facility at any point in time. Some stores have implemented this by specifying hours dedicated to vulnerable populations (elderly people, people with underlying health conditions, etc.).
- Employers may be able to reduce crowding in retail environments by extending store hours, particularly in critical retail environments like grocery stores and pharmacies, but should consider overall additional exposures to employees who must work extra shifts and take steps to mitigate that increased exposure risk.
 - When developing staff schedules, consider options for additional short breaks to increase the frequency with which staff can wash hands with soap and water. Alternatively, consider providing alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol so that workers can frequently sanitize their hands.
 - Employers should consider options for increasing in-store pickup or delivery to minimize the number of customers shopping in store facilities.
- [Click here to read more about store safety during COVID-19.](#)



Safety Precautions for Restaurants

Continue to follow established food safety protocols and best practices for retail food establishments and important COVID-19 recommendations, including the following:

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- Wash, rinse and sanitize food contact surfaces dishware, utensils, food preparation surfaces and beverage equipment after use.
 - Frequently disinfect surfaces repeatedly touched by employees or customers such as doorknobs, equipment handles, check-out counters and grocery cart handles, etc.
 - Frequently clean and disinfect floors, counters and other facility access areas using [EPA-registered disinfectants](#).
 - When changing your normal food preparation procedures, service, delivery functions or making staffing changes, apply procedures that ensure:
 - Cooked foods reach the proper internal temperatures prior to service or cooling.
 - Hot foods are cooled rapidly for later use – check temperatures of foods being cooled in refrigerators or by rapid cooling techniques such as ice baths and cooling wands.
 - The time foods being stored, displayed or delivered are held in the danger zone (between 41°F and 135°F) is minimized.
 - Proper training for food employees with new or altered duties and that they apply the training according to established procedures.
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- Help customers maintain good infection control and social distancing by:
 - a. Discontinuing operations, such as salad bars, buffets and beverage service stations that require customers to use common utensils or dispensers.
 - Finding ways to encourage spacing between customers while in line for service or check out in accordance with the applicable state or local requirements.
 - Discourage customers from bringing pets — except service animals — into stores or waiting areas.
 - Continue to use sanitizers and disinfectants for their designed purposes.
 - Verify that your ware-washing machines are operating at the required wash and rinse temperatures and with the appropriate detergents and sanitizers.
 - Remember that hot water can be used in place of chemicals to sanitize equipment and utensils in manual ware-washing machines.

Managing Food Pick-Up and Delivery

- Observe established food safety practices for time/temp control, preventing cross contamination, cleaning hands, no sick workers and storage of food, etc.
- Wash hands thoroughly and often.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces such as counter tops and touch pads and within the vehicle, by wiping down surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Establish designated pick-up zones for customers to help maintain social distancing.
- Practice social distancing when delivering food, e.g., offering “no touch” deliveries and sending text alerts or calling when deliveries have arrived.
- Conduct an evaluation of your facility to identify and apply operational changes to maintain social distancing if offering take-out/carry-out option by maintaining a 6-foot distance from others, when possible.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold by storing in appropriate transport vessels.
- Keep foods separated to avoid cross contamination, e.g., keeping raw foods separated from cooked and ready-to-eat foods, proper packaging.
- Routinely clean and sanitize coolers and insulated bags used to deliver foods.
- [Click here to read more about restaurant safety during COVID-19](#)