**Department of
Public Health**
C I T Y   O F   P H I L A D E L P H I A

Guidance for Essential Businesses and Organizations During COVID-19

In the current COVID-19 outbreak, businesses and organizations must protect employees' health and safety and limit the economic impact of the outbreak.

Social distancing (staying at home when sick, keeping people 6 feet apart and minimizing the number of people you interact with) and hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol hand gel, and regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces are essential.

Please note that at this stage, given the current situation in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health is still recommending that essential workers quarantine at home for 14 days following exposure to someone with COVID-19.

Although the CDC has issued guidance that would allow essential workers to return to work immediately after an exposure with masking, temperature checks, and other precautions, we do not feel it is time to move to adopting this guidance at this time in Philadelphia. Please continue to quarantine contacts of cases. This will help to avoid further spread of infection among essential workers, particularly low-income workers who are least likely to be able to follow social distancing recommendations.

Additions per the 4/15/2020 order by PA Secretary of Health Rachel Levine include:

- Additional cleaning protocols required upon discovery that the business has been exposed to a probable or confirmed case of COVID19.
- Employees who were in close contact with the case from the period 48 hours before symptom onset to the time at which the patient isolated must be informed.
- Ensure employees can maintain space of 6 feet from each other during their workday.
- Provide masks for employees and require employees and customers to mask while onsite, with an exception for meals.
- Limit occupancy to 50% of usual maximum.
- Install shields or other barriers at registers and check-out areas to physically separate cashiers and customers or take other measures to ensure social distancing.
- Schedule handwashing breaks for employees every hour.

This guidance document will assist essential businesses and organizations in understanding best practices in the current environment to keep you and your staff safe. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will provide up-to-date, reliable information on COVID-19 as the situation unfolds.

What to do if an employee has possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection

- Any employee with cough, fever, or shortness of breath should not come to work. If symptoms occur while at work, the employee should be isolated and then sent home immediately. They should be advised to seek medical care if symptoms are severe.

Visit www.phila.gov/COVID for more information • Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone
Call (800) 722-7112 to speak to a health care professional on the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline

- Employees may return to work when they meet BOTH of the following criteria:
  - at least 3 days after resolution of fever (off fever reducing medications like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen) **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms **and**
  - at least 7 days have passed since the symptoms started
- Employees who are household contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case and do not become ill must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days after isolation has been discontinued for the ill household member.
- Employees who have had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in a non-household setting must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days after their last contact with the case even if they do not develop symptoms. Close contact is defined as:
  - Being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes or longer)
  - having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on)
- Employees who were in the same indoor environment with a COVID-19 case, but not meeting criteria for a close contact (i.e., being in a room more than 6ft away from the case) should self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after their last contact with the case and isolate if symptoms develop.
- Employees who have had contact with someone who has been exposed to a case or possible case are not required to isolate unless that person develops symptoms or is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- People with mild illness due to suspected COVID-19 infection should stay home and do not require testing. **Please do not require proof of COVID-19 testing either to qualify for sick leave or to return to work.** Testing supplies are not adequate to test people with mild illness and a negative test may give false reassurance if it is done too soon after exposure.
- Follow cleaning protocol below if applicable if the employee with COVID-19 has been present in the workplace while sick or within 48 hours prior to developing symptoms.
- Note that PDPH approval is not required for re-opening after closures for cleaning.

<u>Other Recommendations</u>

Develop or review a Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan

- Ensure that all employees are made aware of required procedures by communicating them, either orally or in writing in their native or preferred language, as well as in English or by a methodology that allows them to understand.
- Identify and cross-train employees to perform essential roles in the case of severe staffing shortages. Ensure that the facility has a enough employees to perform all work duties effectivity and in a manner that ensures the safety of the public and employees.

Visit www.phila.gov/COVID for more information • Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone
Call (800) 722-7112 to speak to a health care professional on the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline

2

- Ensure that the facility has a enough personnel to control access, maintain order and enforce social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Plan how to communicate and coordinate with employees, customers/clients, and suppliers if sudden changes are necessary (change in hours, etc.).
- Consider how you would address the need to:
    - Reduce operations to core activities with a reduced staff
    - Temporarily reduce services
    - Shorten hours of operation
- Alter hours of business as necessary so that there is enough time to clean to clean or restock or both
- Consider on-site housing arrangements for employees performing critical roles, if this were to become necessary.
- Ensure plans allow for social distancing (6 feet distance among people).

Identify strategies for social distancing, both between employees and with the public.

- Ask employees who are able to work remotely to do so.
- Substitute telephone or internet-based meetings for in-person staff meetings. If a meeting is held in person, limit the meeting to the fewest number of employees possible but not to exceed 10 employees at one time and maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Consider offering online ordering and delivery and curbside pick-up options to your customers, taking care to keep customers spaced 6 feet apart if possible
- Post signage:
    - Asking people who are sick to not enter.
    - Encouraging people to cover coughs or sneezes.
    - Mandating social distancing of 6 feet for both customers and employees.
    - Mandating that all customers wear masks**.**
    - Downloadable signage available here
- Place and secure tissues and hand sanitizer so that customers can access but not steal them.
- Provide employees access to regular handwashing with soap, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes and ensure that common areas are cleaned on a regular basis, including between shifts.
- Provide masks for employees to wear during their time at work and make it a mandatory requirement to wear masks while at work except as necessary for the employee to eat or drink during break times. Employers may approve masks obtained or made by employees in accordance with State Department of Health guidance.
- Require all customers to wear masks while on the premises and deny entry to individuals who are not wearing masks unless the business is providing medication, medical supplies or food. These types of businesses must provide alternative methods for pick-up or delivery of these goods. However, individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition (including

Visit www.phila.gov/COVID for more information • Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone
Call (800) 722-7112 to speak to a health care professional on the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline

3

children under the age of 2 years per CDC guidance) may enter the premises and are not required to provide documentation of a medical condition.

- Install sneeze guards or plastic barriers between staff and the public at registers and check-out areas or take other measures to ensure social distancing of customers to employees.
- In businesses with multiple check-out lines, only use every other register, or fewer. Every hour, rotate customers and employees to the previously closed registers. Clean the previously open registers and the surrounding area, including credit card machines, following each rotation.
- Where carts and handbaskets are available for customers' use, assign an employee to wipe down carts and handbaskets before they become available to each customer entering the premises.
- Place produce and other non-packaged food behind barriers and have staff handling these wear gloves
- Where feasible, conduct business with the public by appointment only. When not feasible, limit occupancy to no greater than 50% of the number stated on the certificate of occupancy at any given time to reduce crowding. Social distancing of 6 feet at check-out and counter lines must be maintained.
- Designate specific hours for seniors or other high-risk persons to use the business or other strategies to protect those who are most vulnerable.
- Prohibit non-essential visitors from entering the business premises.
- Stagger work start and stop times for employees when possible to prevent gatherings of large groups entering or leaving the premises at the same time. Stagger employee break times to reduce the number of employees on break at any given period of time to maintain social distancing.
- Provide enough space for employees to have breaks and meals so that social distancing can be maintained with a distance of at least 6 feet between employees. Arrange seating to have employees facing forward and not across from each other in eating and break settings.
- Limit the number of persons in employee common areas such as locker rooms, break rooms, dining facilities, training and conference rooms so that employees can maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet between employees.

Implement Cleaning Protocols

- Maintain pre-existing cleaning protocols established by the business
- In addition to maintaining pre-existing cleaning protocols, businesses should clean and disinfect high-touch areas routinely in accordance with CDC guidelines in spaces that are accessible by customers, tenants, or other individuals.
- Establish protocols to manage exposure to a person with probable or confirmed COVID-19, including:

Visit www.phila.gov/COVID for more information • Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone
Call (800) 722-7112 to speak to a health care professional on the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline

4

- o Close off areas visited by the person with probable or confirmed COVID-19. Open outside doors and windows and use fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait a minimum of 24 hours before beginning cleaning or disinfection. Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas and items used by the ill person (i.e. offices, bathrooms, electronic equipment, etc.), focusing on frequently touched areas.
- o Identify employees that were in close contact (within 6 feet for about 10 minutes) with the person with probable or confirmed COVID-19 including any employee who had contact with the case up to 48 hours prior to their symptom onset.
  - Promptly notify employees who were close contacts of any known exposure to COVID-19 at the business while respecting the confidentiality of the case.
  - Send all employees who were close contacts of known cases home to quarantine for 14 days. If they remain asymptomatic, they may return after 14 days. If they develop symptoms, they should inform their supervisor and follow return to work instructions as above.
  - Ensure that the business has enough employees to perform the above protocols effectively and in a timely manner.

Ensure that employees stay home when sick.

- Employees who have symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Sick employees should follow PDPH return to work guidelines as discussed above.
- Develop flexible policies for employees to stay home when they or their family members are sick, particularly:
  - o Policies regarding unscheduled absences
  - o Policies regarding use of sick time
  - o Return to work policies
  - o Paid sick time
- Suspend policies requiring physicians' notes for extended sick leave.
- Educate employees about the availability of leave under the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) (FMLA).
- Consider mandatory sick leave for employees with fever or respiratory symptoms.
- Consider reassigning employees who are at an increased risk for severe complications associated with COVID-19, or who have household members at high risk away from direct contact with customers and clients. If reassignment is possible, ask employees to notify you if they or their household members fall in a high-risk category:
  - o People over age 50
  - o People with chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, and lung conditions

Visit www.phila.gov/COVID for more information • Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone
Call (800) 722-7112 to speak to a health care professional on the Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Helpline

5

Department of Public Health
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Educate employees on COVID-19 spread and preparedness.

- Provide employees with links to COVID-19 information from the [Philadelphia Department of Public Health](#) and the [CDC.](#)
- Provide information to employees regarding your continuity of operations plan.
- Circulate information on [respiratory etiquette](#) and [environmental cleaning procedures](#).
  - Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, doorknobs, elevator buttons, stairwell railings, refrigerator handles, and water fountains/coolers. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
- Provide disposable wipes so that frequently touched surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.
- Encourage employees to create personal or household emergency preparedness plans.
  - Include alternative childcare arrangements, where applicable.
  - Share [PDPH information on COVID-19 preparation.](#)

Ensure availability of essential hygiene products, technology and supplies.

- Identify supply needs for 2-5-week periods.
- Make sure you have handwashing products (soap, towels, hand sanitizers), and tissues.
- If applicable, work with IT to support continued communications (e.g., email, remote access, conference calls, webinars, etc.).

Limit non-essential travel.

- Cancel business trips.
- Limit non-essential personal travel.