

Office Workers

The following is intended as a plain language summary of rules for reopening in the Green Phase and does not replace the need to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

See also:

Order of the Secretary of Health providing for building safety measures, issued April 5, 2020.

Order of the Secretary of Health providing for business safety measures (to keep employees and customers safe), issued April 15, 2020.

Protections Needed

Masks

- Provide masks for employees.
- Require employees and visitors to mask while on site except only:
 - As necessary for the employee to eat or drink during break times. The employee should be seated at least 6 feet from others when taking off mask.
 - When seated alone in a private office or in a cubicle whose sides extend above the head of the employee.

Barriers

- If the office remains open to the public, install plastic barriers between staff and the public.
- For workers in low cubicles and those who work in open office designs, install additional barriers if needed to extend cubicle walls above workers' heads and to separate those working in spaces with open designs.

Isolate

- Screen every employee for symptoms before every shift and prevent them from remaining on site if they have cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell.
- It is not necessary to conduct on-site temperature measurement for staff or visitors. If you measure temperatures, use a no-touch thermometer, and do not allow anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or higher to remain on-site.

- Have sick leave policies in place so that employees excluded from the workplace do not lose earnings.
- If an employee develops COVID-19 infection or has a positive test, businesses and other organizations must take additional precautions to stop the virus from spreading further, as described in [Guidance for Essential Businesses and Organizations During COVID-19](#). Required precautions include calling PDPH at 215-685-5488 to report positive cases.

Distance

- Adjust work assignments to ensure employees can stay 6 feet from each other throughout their shifts except while seated in cubicles whose sides extend above the head of the employee.
- If the office remains open to the public, use floor decals or other visual cues to encourage distancing.
- Use non-contact payment methods if possible.

Reduce crowds

- Remote work must continue where feasible.
- Stagger shifts when possible.
 - During the Green Phase, for offices in which individual employee's work spaces are not separated by barriers that extend above their heads, limit entry to a maximum of 10 total persons for every 1,000 square feet of space in the facility, even with masks and maintaining safe distancing.
 - Post this temporary occupancy limit publicly.
- Offices in which staff work either in individual offices or in cubicles whose sides extend above the head of the employee do not need to decrease occupancy.
- Stagger employee break times.
- Substitute telephone or internet-based meetings for in-person staff meetings.
- Prohibit non-essential visitors.

Handwashing

- Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizer at entry and outside communal bathrooms for all staff and visitors with prominent signage promoting use.
- Give staff hourly handwashing breaks.

Clean

- Wipe down high-touch surfaces with disinfectant at least once every 4 hours. See [CDC guidance](#) for details.



Ventilation

- If possible, increase ventilation in the building by either:
 - Opening windows and/or doors on opposite sides of the building and using fans to blow outside air through the building OR
 - Optimizing ventilation provided by the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system by:
 - Having the HVAC system checked to assure that it is working properly. If it can be adjusted, the system should be set to provide at least 6 air exchanges per hour.
 - Maximizing the amount of outside air circulated by the system.
 - Installing filters with minimum efficiency reporting values (MERV) of 13, or the highest compatible with the filter rack. It is not necessary to use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters or ultraviolet light irradiation systems.
 - Checking that the external air inlet duct is not blocked and that it is at least 15 feet from people.



Communicate

- Educate staff about symptoms and prevention of COVID-19.
- Post prominent signs at entrances and in employee break rooms:
 - Asking people who are sick or who have had contact with someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days not to enter.
 - Encouraging people to cover coughs or sneezes.
 - Mandating physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
 - Mandating that all staff and visitors wear masks.