

Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas

Libraries | Places of Worship | Community Centers



Conduct Risk Assessment

Establish critical protective guidelines. Consider the following questions:

- Are there locations where employees routinely congregate?
- Are tools and equipment frequently shared by multiple employees?
- Does customer flow allow for social distancing measures?
- Where are areas in your business that would not allow customers and staff to properly distance?
- Who are your high risk employees?
- Is your business actively engaged in activities that promote disease transmission?
- Does your business have existing cleaning and disinfecting procedures?
- How quickly can you communicate with employees?
- Are communication resources needed in multiple languages?



Physical Distancing

Establish policies and procedures for social distancing. Consider the following:

- Implement flexible worksites (e.g., telework), work hours (staggered shifts), and meeting and travel options (e.g. use video-/tele-conferencing for meetings, postpone non-essential meetings or events; travel separately).
- Staff should be included in facility risk assessments, especially in decision about how they do their own work.
- Facilities should participate in community conversation and coordinate with the local public health department to ensure their plans and procedures reflect the best practices adopted in the community.
- Deliver services remotely (e.g., phone, video, web) when possible.
- Deliver products through curbside pick-up or delivery when possible.
- Limit the number of people in elevators, bathroom, meeting spaces, and other common spaces; consider reconfiguring office spaces, large gathering spaces, and environment.
- Consider canceling, adjusting, or postponing large meetings or gathering that can only occur in-person.
- When video-/tele-conferencing is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces where distancing is possible.
- Increase physical space – especially in waiting rooms, large gathering halls, and meeting rooms.
 - Libraries
 - Most employees who can do so should continue to work from home.
 - Libraries should continue to emphasize digital media and virtual experiences.
 - Limited access to physical objects like books and tools could be handled through a no-touch curbside service.
 - Staff work spaces must be assessed and reconfigured so staff in the building can socially distance.
 - Allowing access to actual library space will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirement per Governor's orders.



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Physical Distancing (continued)

Establish policies and procedures for social distancing. Consider the following:

- Places of Worship
 - Allowing access to in-person services and gatherings will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirements (group gathering requirements) per Governor's orders.
 - High risk populations should not attend in-person services during early re-entry phase. These populations can receive pastoral care from persons trained in COVID-19 safety.
- Community Centers
 - Allowing access to centers will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirements (group gathering requirements) per Governor's orders.
 - Non-essential activities such as in-person classes and games should be cancelled; continue to expand virtual opportunities.
 - Essential activities, such as nutrition programs, can be offered in a safe manner in partnership with public health.
 - Once restrictions are lifted, prioritize essential programming and offer in small group settings.



Engineering & Environmental Controls

Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.

Consider the following:

- Increase ventilation rates and percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene for employees and visitors:
 - Provide tissues, no-touch disposal receptacles, and soap and water in the center (if not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol). Ensure adequate supplies are maintained and place hand sanitizers in multiple locations.
 - Place posters that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread of COVID-19 at the entrance of your building and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
 - Discourage handshaking – encourage the use of other non-contact methods of greeting.
 - Direct employees to visit CDC website for information on coughing and sneezing etiquette and handwashing.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection.
 - Routinely disinfect all frequently touched surfaces at least daily. Provide disinfectant wipes to wipe down keyboards, electronics, remote controls, etc.
 - For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Discourage workers from using co-workers' phones, desks, offices, or other office tools and equipment, when possible. If they must use, provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (including doorknobs, remote controls, etc.) can be wiped down by between each use.



Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas

(continued)



Engineering & Environmental Controls (continued)

Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.

Consider the following:

- Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after suspected cases of COVID-19 have been in the center. Close off areas used by the sick person, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation, and wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning to allow for respiratory droplets settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- If curbside services are selected, patrons should remain in the vehicles and staff should remove and place materials in their trunk/back seat.
 - Libraries
 - If physical objects are being checked-out through curbside services, consideration should be given to the kinds of material and whether any could harbor COVID-19. If physical objects are being checked out within the facility, install physical barriers (plexiglass or plastic window) in locations where exchanges may occur with customers.
 - Decontamination procedures or timeframes should be developed with assistance through CDC website.
 - Disable public WiFi to curb patrons gathering outside building.
 - Places of Worship
 - Designate a flow of traffic so worshippers can move about with minimal contact.
 - Avoid practices which could spread COVID-19 such as 'passing the plate'.
 - Alter rituals that formerly required contact so they can be practiced with social distancing.
 - Community Centers
 - Designate a flow of traffic so people can move about with minimal contact.
 - Avoid practices which risk spreading COVID such as games that require touching objects (e.g., balls).



Administrative Controls

Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.

Consider the following:

- Identify a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the workplace.
 - Implement daily health and temperature screenings for employees upon arriving to work.
 - Provide education and training on new processes, COVID-19, and the use of PPE while in the building.
- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with both public health recommendations and existing state and federal workplace laws.
 - Implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices.
 - Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and provide employee training on new policies. If sick leave is not a benefit, it is recommended that employers draft a non-punitive emergency sick leave policy.
 - Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school/daycare closures.



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Administrative Controls (continued)

Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.

Consider the following:

- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws (continued).
 - Employers should not require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work.
 - Connect employees to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources and community resources as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services for mental health support.
 - Consider temporarily assigning employees at high risk for COVID-19 to duties that do not involve close contact with the public.
- Assess essential functions and the reliance that the community has on your services/products.
 - Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children. Plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism in the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions. Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.
- Messaging should be coordinated with the facility's National and State associations to ensure uniformity and accuracy, and should also reflect the most current State and CDC public health guidance.
- Employees who work with small groups within facilities that begin to reopen should be trained in practicing social distancing.
- Establish a procedures for identifying people who are symptomatic; if they are identified, they should be masked and isolated until they can leave the facility.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Require the appropriate type of PPE for employees and customers.

Consider the following:

- Cloth face coverings should be worn; rather than wearing gloves, hands should be washed frequently.
- Consider requiring patrons to wear cloth face coverings upon entry. Keep in mind some customers may not be able to wear face coverings due to medical conditions. For this reason, be mindful of discriminatory behavior from staff or customers.