

UNIVERSAL GUIDELINES

GOVERNOR'S ECONOMIC REOPENING TASK FORCE

The State of New Hampshire provides this document to all businesses and organizations for their use in enabling all consumers and employees to engage in business and commerce safely in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as we seek to provide for economic recovery.

These guidelines apply to businesses and organizations that are deemed essential or otherwise authorized to be in operation by the State. They are intended to provide a foundation upon which we encourage the business community to be creative in assisting government efforts to reduce exposure and transmission of COVID-19.

Businesses should review and follow the following, as applicable:

- CDC guidance for businesses and employers
- CDC employer information for office buildings
- CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection
- OSHA guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19
- NH DHHS guidance on employee travel and screening
- NH DHHS guidance on the use of cloth coverings

Businesses should be aware of any sector-specific guidance that must also be consulted. Those can be found at <https://www.nheconomy.com/reopeningtaskforce>. Businesses and their employees should also monitor and follow guidance issued by the CDC, as well as any applicable federal or state regulatory requirements to reduce transmission among employees and customers in order to maintain healthy business operations and work environments.

Employers must comply with the following guidelines:

Prohibit all employees who are sick or not feeling well from the workplace.

When exposed to COVID-19 or if diagnosed with COVID-19, employees must stay home. Exceptions can be made for asymptomatic exposed employees who are NOT diagnosed with COVID-19 if these individuals could return to work only with approval from public health officials and their employer after certain protections have been put in place.

If an employee develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the day (see below) or comes into close contact to a person with COVID-19, they should notify their supervisor, be sent home immediately, and be instructed to seek medical advice (see employee guidance below). Surfaces in their workspace should be cleaned and disinfected. Per EEOC and other pertinent guidelines, employers must maintain the confidentiality of employee health information.

Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC, either due to age or underlying health conditions are encouraged to consider their individual risk and whether they are safer to work from home.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- *Fever*
- *Respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath*
- *Flu-like symptoms such as muscle aches, chills, and severe fatigue*
- *Changes in a person's sense of taste or smell*

Develop a process for screening all employees reporting for work for COVID-19 related symptoms as follows:

1. Identify a location and assign a person who will screen each employee every day before they enter the workplace. Such plans should be clearly communicated with employees.

The screener should ask the following questions:

- *Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?*
- *Have you had a fever or felt feverish in the last 72 hours?*
- *Are you experiencing any respiratory symptoms that include a runny nose, sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath?*
- *Are you experiencing any new muscle aches or chills?*
Have you experienced any new change in your sense of taste or smell?

2. Document the temperature of all employees daily before their shift:
 - a. Employers should take the temperatures of their employees on-site with a non-touch thermometer each day upon the employee's arrival at work.
 - b. If this is not possible, temperatures can be taken before arriving as long as it can sufficiently be authenticated by the employee.
 - c. Normal temperature should not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.

Develop and implement a plan to mitigate employee and customer exposure that includes the following:
Social Distancing must be maintained whenever possible and be a minimum of 6 feet between individuals.

Face Coverings should be used (in some circumstances defined in sector-specific guidance they must be used) and encouraged for everyone. Medical grade masks should be reserved for medical and first-responder personnel.

Cleaning process must reflect the need to keep surfaces regularly touched by employees or customers clean and sanitized. Employers must develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all staff prior to assigning cleaning tasks. Cleaning practices must follow CDC guidelines with regular sanitation of high-moderate touch surfaces at least every two hours.

Group sizes must be limited to a maximum of 10 in all circumstances. In outdoor situations or where otherwise allowed under sector-specific guidance, multiple groups of 10 are allowed following social distance guidelines between groups.

Work location should be encouraged to be remote (offsite) whenever possible, using telephone or video services to conduct meetings.

Reduce virus spread potential by promoting etiquette for coughing, sneezing and frequent hand hygiene and provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer and implement workplace cleaning and disinfection practices, including but not limited to:

- a. Monitor employee hand washing or use of hand sanitizer and encourage frequent hand hygiene.
- b. If possible, provide employees and the public with tissues, no-touch trash cans, soap and water, and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- c. Limit self-servicer options. For example, customer samples, communal packaging, food/beverages (e.g. candy dishes, common creamers at coffee stations).
- d. Discourage workers from using other workers' tools and equipment, when possible.

Employers SHOULD comply with the following guidelines:

Develop a plan for potential COVID-19 cases

- Consult available state and federal guidance documents to implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.
- Employers should work with state and local officials when needed to monitor and investigate cases of COVID-19. In all cases, employers must work in a manner to ensure privacy rights.

Remind covered employers and employees of the provisions of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- This law allows for paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons, such as for self-quarantining or seeking a medical diagnosis for COVID-19 symptoms.

Update employee illness policy

- Employers should review their policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws.
- Employers should amend or update their internal policies to include symptoms of COVID-19 or create a COVID-19 specific policy. Employers should maintain flexible, non-punitive policies that permit employees to stay home if ill or to care for a sick family member. These policies should incorporate any sector specific recommendations by the state of New Hampshire. All staff should sign the policy, and the policy should be posted for confirmation.

Communicate frequently with both employees and customers about steps being taken to prevent spread of COVID-19 in the workplace:

- Employers should communicate expectations to employees with recommendations on steps everybody can take steps to prevent spread of COVID-19.
- Post extensive signage on health policies, including the following documents in the workplace to help educate building occupants on COVID-19 best practices.
- Communicate with customers about steps being taken to protect them from COVID-19 exposure in the workplace

Multiple Sector Guidance

Many businesses experience similar operations or facilities. In addition to the Universal Guidance, the following guidances should be followed if applicable to your business and should be considered to supersede any guidance issued prior to June 15, 2020:

1. Pools
2. Company vehicles