

# Universal Best Practices for New Hampshire Employers and Employees

Effective May 7, 2021, this document replaces all existing “Stay at Home 2.0” business operations guidance in place since March, 2020.

These Universal Best Practices are recommendations for all businesses, organizations, and individual business operators to consider for the operation of their business.

Nothing in this document or other guidance precludes any business, organization, or individual business operator from taking additional precautions for the health and safety of its employees and consumers.

In addition to the best practices outlined here, businesses, organizations, and individual business operators should consider reviewing, monitoring, and following [other applicable guidance](#) issued by the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#).

Businesses, organizations, and individual business operators should also consider providing their employees and volunteers with training on the Universal Guidelines, industry-specific guidance, and any applicable guidance identified above. Consider identifying a staff or volunteer member who is tasked with monitoring and improving Universal Best Practices.

## 1. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Develop safety protocols and procedures for your business, organization, or entity that recognize the science and data from state and federal sources and best fit your business.
- b. Everyone should wear masks when they cannot maintain a consistent distance of six feet or more from others, particularly in enclosed spaces.
- c. Encourage employees to get vaccinated against COVID-19.
- d. Identify a staff or volunteer member who is tasked with monitoring various state/federal and industry COVID-19 safety guidances and recommendations.
- e. Develop a communication plan about COVID-19 health and safety practices at the place of business, including what the customers need to be aware of when they arrive (i.e., on your company website or Facebook page).
- f. Travelers should consult the latest guidance.

## 2. Employee Health and Wellness:

- a. Employers and organizations should encourage the following employees or volunteers to stay home:
  - i. Anyone with new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19
  - ii. Those who report close contact (within 6 feet for 10 minutes or more) with a person known or suspected to have COVID-19 (see exceptions below)
  - iii. Those who are diagnosed with COVID-19
  - iv. Those with international or cruise ship travel risk exposure
- b. Employees or volunteers who develop new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 while at work:
  - i. Should notify their supervisor and be sent home immediately. Surfaces in that employee’s or volunteer’s workspace or activity area must be cleaned and disinfected.

- c. Employees or volunteers with any new or unexplained COVID-19 symptoms should be instructed to contact their healthcare providers to be tested for COVID-19 and self-isolate at home unless/until one of the following criteria are met:
  - i. The person tests negative for COVID-19 with an appropriate test to detect active infection. Such persons can be allowed back to work when they are fever-free for at least 24 hours off fever-reducing medication with other symptoms improving.
  - ii. The person has immunity/protection against COVID-19 from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e., person is 14 days or more beyond completion of COVID-19 vaccine) or from recently being diagnosed with COVID-19 in the prior 90 days, and their healthcare provider has assessed their symptoms and determined they do not require testing for COVID-19 because of being low-risk for COVID-19 (based on symptoms and assessment of potential COVID-19 exposures). Such persons can be allowed back to work when they are they are fever-free for at least 24 hours off fever-reducing medication and other symptoms are improving. OR
  - iii. The person has met CDC criteria for [discontinuation of isolation](#) (which applies to people who test positive for COVID-19, or for symptomatic people who are not tested but don't have immunity/protection from vaccination or prior infection, as described above).
- d. Employees or volunteers reporting close contact with someone suspected or confirmed with COVID-19 or report international or cruise ship travel should self-quarantine for 10 days from their last exposure (or return from international travel).
  - i. The following people do NOT need to quarantine after close contact to a person with COVID-19 or after international or cruise ship travel:
    - 1. Persons who are 14 days or more beyond completion of COVID-19 vaccination – this means a person must be at least 14 days beyond receipt of the second dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or at least 14 days beyond receipt of the single-dose Janssen (Jonson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccine.
    - 2. Persons who are within 90 days of a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection that was diagnosed by PCR or antigen testing (if a person had a previous infection that was more than 90 days prior, then they are still subject to quarantine).
- e. Employees/volunteers who report international or cruise ship travel-related risk factor should self-quarantine for 10 days from their return from travel but do not need COVID-19 testing unless they develop symptoms. They can shorten their international or cruise ship travel-related quarantine by getting a test on day 6-7 of their quarantine to test for active SARS-CoV-2 infection (SARS-CoV-2 is the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19); this test should be a molecular test (e.g., PCR-based test). If the test is obtained on day 6-7 of quarantine, the person is asymptomatic, and the test is negative, then the person can end their quarantine early.

### 3. Cleaning and Disinfection

- a. Employers should provide training to all employees about cleaning and disinfection prior to assigning cleaning tasks, and employers should consider creating a checklist to guide cleaning and disinfection procedures.

- b. Use disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- c. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies should be made readily available by the business
- d. Use an [EPA-approved disinfectant](#) effective against the novel coronavirus.
- e. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces once a day, or more frequently if certain conditions apply including but not limited to spaces occupied by young children or occupied by persons with suspected case of COVID.
- f. Shared tools or equipment should be cleaned and disinfected between use by employees and/or customers/clients.
- g. Maintain other routine facility cleaning and disinfection procedures.

#### 4. **Work Process Modification**

- a. Modify employee and volunteer schedules to reduce the frequency and duration of physical interactions, including staggering shifts, breaks, and meals (maintain compliance with wage and hour laws and other requirements).
- b. Arrange employee and volunteer work-space layout to allow for 6 feet of social distancing when possible.
- c. Stagger any customer/client appointments to limit customer interaction to allow sufficient time for any needed cleaning and disinfection between appointments when possible.
- d. Consider limiting small waiting areas to avoid congregating and for larger waiting rooms, consider having seating for clients spaced more than 6 feet apart, while encouraging customers/clients to wear a cloth face covering while in the waiting room.
- e. Avoid waiting lines when possible and provide demarcated spacing for people to stand/wait 6 feet or more apart.
- f. Consider the number of people on a single elevator.
- g. When possible, develop check-in and check-out processes that involve electronic or other non-touch options, including with financial transactions. Consider installing physical barriers between customers/clients and employees such as partitions or plastic barriers. Businesses and organizations can also take steps to limit self-servicer options. For example, consumer samples, communal packaging, food/beverages (e.g. candy dishes, common creamers at coffee stations).

#### 5. **Spread Reducing Actions:**

- a. Consider making alcohol-based hand sanitizer readily available to employees, volunteers, and customers/clients. Consider providing individual bottles of hand sanitizer to each employee.
- b. Promote frequent hand hygiene for employees, volunteers, and customers.
- c. If not possible, establish procedures for cleaning and disinfecting shared tools and equipment between use.
- d. To the greatest extent possible, all employees and volunteers should work to maintain safe social distancing, which means keeping a distance of at least 6 or more feet between one another at all times.
- e. Should they choose to, businesses, organizations and event organizers are able to require all employees and patrons to wear masks upon entering their facility or venue as a best practice. Consider asking customers to wear face coverings when entering and exiting a facility or business, waiting in lines, buying tickets or food/drink, transiting through a facility/event, and in general when physical distancing is difficult to maintain. Face coverings should not be required for any employee or volunteer who has a medical condition or disability that would make it unsafe to wear a face covering.
- f. Employees and volunteers who are directly providing service to consumers or

individuals can wear face coverings/masks while providing such service and unable to maintain social distancing for 10 minutes or longer. Consider placing physical barriers (e.g., plastic or acrylic shields or barriers) between staff and customers at check-in/out, ticketing and other service counters.

- g. Consider limiting capacity to the number of people where physical distancing is maintained between individuals or groups of related household contacts while seated and during transit through a facility or workplace..

6. **Air Movement:** Evaluate ventilation systems to increase room, auditorium and overall building ventilation, increase the number of air exchanges, increase outdoor air ventilation, limit internal air circulation, improve central air filtration or other upgrades to HVAC systems. CDC guidance on [ventilation in buildings](#) should be reviewed and used in evaluating building ventilation.
7. **Communications.** Share information frequently with employees, volunteers, and consumers about steps they can take to help prevent spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
  - a. Develop a communication plan to educate employees, visitors, and customers about the health and safety practices at the venue and what the customers need to be aware of when they arrive. Such communication plans shall include, but not be limited to, online methods (e.g., website, social media sites), email, other electronic communication, such as reservations or confirmations, and print mailings to the customers.
  - b. Inform customers about the symptoms of COVID-19 and customers should be instructed to:
    - i. Remain home if experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (list common symptoms of COVID-19); and
    - ii. Keep a safe distance from other people visiting the facility at all times; and
    - iii. Practice frequent hand hygiene/washing; and
    - iv. Wear a well-fitted face mask over their mouths and nose to protect others when in public locations and physical distancing is difficult to maintain.