



Public Health

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Jackson County Health Department

INTERIM HEALTH GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS: “CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN JACKSON COUNTY IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19”

This Interim Guidance is provided to assist businesses as they prepare to re-open, in accordance with the “Restore Illinois” plan. This document is designed to help with the implementation of best practices. This interim guidance is intended for non-healthcare facilities. Some types of facilities may have differing/more stringent requirements than the general guidance presented.

Note: The [Restore Illinois](#) plan repeatedly references “IDPH approved safety guidance”. This guidance is not available yet. Once available, that guidance would supersede any guidance below which might conflict.

Employee illness: Strongly (and repeatedly) instruct employees to stay home when they have any of the symptoms of COVID-19 (including mild symptoms, which are often overlooked or rationalized). Make it clear, from the top down, that symptoms = stay home. Consider implementing paid time off policies which will encourage staff to stay home when ill. Discontinue use of policies which penalize staff for calling in or leaving work sick.

Wellness checks: Have employees take their temperature upon arrival at work and mid-shift. Any temp above 100.4° F means that employee goes home immediately. Have a supervisor or another staff member involved to encourage honest reporting. Use a no-contact thermometer and a temp/symptom log. Inform employees what is on the current [CDC list of symptoms](#) and require they disclose any such symptoms before working.

Social distancing: Place signs and floor markings to remind people to practice [social distancing](#). Consider removal or discontinue use of alternating seats, tables, cash registers, etc. to allow for social distancing. Think about places customers congregate once they reach the exterior of your property all the way through their visit. Think about places your employees congregate (entrance, time clock, breakroom, water fountain, bathroom, locker room, etc.) and ways to stagger usage.

Face masks / coverings: Develop your internal policy and “enforcement” system to ensure employees and clients/customers comply with applicable [face mask/covering](#) guidance. Procure face masks or face coverings for your employees. Supply chains are currently struggling to meet demand, so ordering early is crucial. If your business brings clients into close contact with employees (such as a hair salon), consider providing face masks or coverings to clients who show up without them.

Hand hygiene: Provide adequate facilities and supplies for employees/customers to [wash hands](#) frequently. Consider placement of hand sanitizer to supplement hand washing, or when it is unavailable.

Cleaning / disinfection: Implement frequent cleaning, especially on commonly touched surfaces. Use [disinfectants](#) approved by EPA to kill coronavirus. Consider products which have shorter contact times, as employees are less likely to follow instructions on products with longer contact times.

Barriers / Engineering Controls: Placing Plexiglass barriers or similar structures in between people who cannot properly social distance can reduce potential transmission of the virus. Employers might consider such applications at cash registers, service counters and assembly lines where people are in close contact.

Internal policies / procedures: Require employees to inform you when they get tested for COVID-19, and to stay home while they await test results. Pull that person's recent work schedule, know which employees they have worked closely with, and have those staff closely monitor themselves for symptoms. If co-workers become symptomatic require them to stay home from work and consult their medical provider about getting tested. Be prepared to work with public health officials on determining who close contacts are, so they can be placed on home quarantine. Also, empower your employees to report situations they feel are unsafe, and encourage their innovative ideas to address them.

Internal communication / Training for employees: All of the employers efforts are wasted if the employees don't get the message. Frequent and repeated messaging and training for staff is needed to ensure they know how important their link in the safety chain is to the organization. Traditional ways of communication (such as a poster in the breakroom) may not be as effective when you have employees social distancing.

External communications: Let your customers/clients know you are taking COVID-19 precautions and what your expectations are when visiting your business. Request customers who are ill to delay their visit until well. Utilize social media or website for such communication. Consider offering home delivery and/or curbside pickup options, if feasible. Your customers will be thankful for the information and may feel more inclined to visit knowing you are concerned about their health.

Working remotely: Consider ways to enable and encourage staff to work remotely, if possible.

Consider risk to employees: Employees that are elderly or have certain health conditions may be more susceptible to the disease, and may have worse health outcomes from the disease. Consider placement of employees of [advanced risk](#) in jobs where they can maintain social distance, when feasible.

Limit capacity: Determine your normal building capacity, as a limit on capacity might be included in re-opening criteria. If your business takes appointments, consider ways to adjust the schedule to achieve limited capacity and social distancing.

Ventilation: Bringing in more fresh air may reduce the load of airborne viral particles inside your establishment. Consider opening windows when feasible. Talk with your HVAC contractor about more advanced ways to incorporate [fresh air intake](#).

Employers with questions related to safely re-opening may call

Jackson County Health Department at 618/684-3143.

Visit www.jchdonline.org for more guidance & updated information.