

Pandemic Response Plan FAQs

COVID-19 infection rates are beginning to stabilize, and government authorities are allowing business to reopen. During the reopening and recovery phase of the pandemic there are several processes that must occur. These processes are covered extensively in our *Pandemic Recovery Plan*. However, there are some questions that reoccur across all businesses. The following frequently asked questions and responses will help you navigate some of the more difficult to manage processes of recovery.

Recovery Planning

Will recovery planning resources be made available by Henderson Brothers?

- The Henderson Brothers Pandemic Recovery Guide can be found at this [link](#), a construction industry guide is available at this [link](#).

What can be done if recovery supplies (cleaners, soap, masks, etc.) are not available?

- Acquiring supplies for maintaining a safe work environment should start before the facility is opened. During the recovery phase of a pandemic supplies become more readily available as most manufacturers have increased demand. However, businesses may need to look to alternative suppliers and supply chains to access all the materials necessary. The Recovery Phases section of our guide provides information on determining the necessary supplies and process for reopening. The Pandemic Recovery Team should cast a wide net on looking for the supplies.

Cleaning & Sanitization:

When should deep cleaning occur, should idled buildings be cleaned?

- According to the CDC's Reopening America Guidance, if a building or area has been unoccupied within the last 7 days, the building will need only routine cleaning.

What frequency of cleaning is necessary?

- The Cleaning and Sanitizing section of our guide starts on page 8. This section of our guide explains the difference between cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. These two activities although separate methods need to be done together. Cleaning should be done daily to remove larger dirt particles. Disinfecting surfaces involves using chemicals which kill germs after a predetermined exposure time (typically 1-5 minutes). Cleaning and disinfecting should be completed at least once daily, high touch surfaces (door handles, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected at more frequent intervals.

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What cleaning should take place if an employee tests positive for COVID-19?

- The Cleaning and Sanitizing section of the Pandemic Recovery Plan, starting on page 8, covers the sanitization steps needed after an individual with a suspected or confirmed infection was in the facility within the previous 7 days. Potentially contaminated areas should be isolated for at least 24 hours and where possible fresh air ventilation should be applied. Following the isolation and ventilation of an area, deep cleaning and sanitization activities should be implemented. Continue to screen and monitor employee health as necessary to limit potential future contamination.

Employee Concerns

What practices should be used for a work force that moves between owned and unowned client facilities?

- The Pandemic Recovery Plan has a section that addresses Visitor and Client Meetings on page 22. This section will provide your upper management guidance on deciding the corporate philosophy on when external travel to visit clients will resume. This activity will be a joint effort between your company and the client. Both should be aware of each other's requirement for social distancing and personal protective equipment.

Should we extend work from home indefinitely for some workers?

- Work from home and remote work are great tools for facilitating social distancing and reducing workplace occupancy loads in support of other pandemic control efforts. If possible, remote work opportunities should be considered and utilized where appropriate. When transitioning to a more permanent remote work situation take care to provide the same level of health and safety to remote workers as you would for non-remote workers.

How do we make employee decisions where high risk category employees are a concern?

- Employee management and work arrangement decisions should be managed by a human resource professional knowledgeable in employment practices and regulations. As a best practice, HR professionals should stay abreast of the changes to programs and regulations because of COVID-19, some of these changes are short term while others may be permanent. It may be necessary, in certain situations, to work with legal counsel when making major or long-lasting workforce changes and accommodations.

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Facility & Work Area Considerations

Should high risk areas in buildings be identified?

- Recovery Phases for returning to your building are discussed on page 6 of our Pandemic Recovery Plan. An assessment of your building is needed to identify high risk areas. Generally common areas in the workplace and frequently visited areas are of a higher risk for contamination. These areas require need for more frequent cleaning and sanitization attention. Your recovery team should work to identify high traffic and high-risk areas prior to the return to normal operations.

What policies should be in place for public buildings and facilities?

- When developing policies for your pandemic recovery to protect your employees, the same precautions should be used to protect the public. Essentially all the sections of the pandemic recovery guide should be applied. The local and state governmental reopening phase orders should be followed to determine the level of access the public should have to your facility.

How can shared areas like conference rooms, break rooms, and kitchens be managed?

- All shared spaces should be arranged to accommodate social distancing, if possible; work shifts should be re-organized to minimize the number of staff occupying any one area at a time. Conference rooms, kitchens, and break rooms should have their capacities reduced, i.e. a conference room with eight chairs should have only four chairs. Information on workspaces can be found on pages 13-15 of the Pandemic Recovery Guide

How should elevators and similar small spaces be managed?

- Small spaces should be managed to all other public and private spaces. These spaces should be managed to emphasize social distancing practices and PPE requirements. Small spaces can have occupancy caps relative to the square footage and in some cases, it may be appropriate to monitor and limit access.

How should reception areas be configured?

- Reception areas should be arranged to facilitate social distancing and protect the employees in the reception area from contact with potentially infectious individuals. All reception employees should be provided with PPE, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing surface wipes. Where possible install physical barriers such as windows or shields to minimize contact with visitors. Consider moving sign-in or registration books away from the reception area personnel. When possible use electronic registration processes.

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Should restrooms and locker rooms be managed differently?

- Restrooms and locker rooms should be managed to facilitate social distancing. Locker room access should be staggered and if necessary, showering facilities temporarily closed. All shared toiletries and similar items should be removed from the locker room. In a restroom, stall walls and dividers may provide enough of a physical barrier and may also provide reasonable physical distance. In smaller restrooms it may be necessary to close fixtures to limit the number of users at any one time. Information on workspaces can be found on pages 13-15 of the Pandemic Recovery Guide.

Personal Protective Equipment

What PPE must an employer provide?

- The employer is required to protect their employee from recognized hazards according to Occupational Safety Health Act of 1970. This requirement applies to employee PPE. The level of personal protective equipment has been determined from the CDC regarding face masks. The Pandemic Recovery Plan on page 19 specifically addresses personal protective equipment. The staff that is tasked with cleaning and disinfecting surfaces need to be protected as recommended by the manufacturer of the cleaning and disinfecting products. Personal protective equipment is usually disposable so the plan suggests a rolling 30-day supply should be maintained for the staff. Before personal protective equipment is issued, staff should be trained on the use and limitation of the equipment.

When is PPE required?

- PPE should be worn during cleaning and disinfecting processes, when social distancing cannot be maintained, and when an employee is taking temperatures of staff or visitors.

What are the different kinds of masks and PPE, how do they work?

- Currently, the CDC recommends the use of masks for high risk occupations such as healthcare and face coverings for all others and the public. The state of Pennsylvania requires all persons to utilize some form of face covering outside of the home. Healthcare workers and other high risk of infection employment sectors are relying on respirators such as the N95. Respirators filter breathing air and remove substantial amounts of airborne contamination. Lower risk employment sectors and the general public should utilize cloth or similar face coverings to prevent the spread of germs. A cloth face covering prevents people from dispersing respiratory droplets over a large area, potentially spreading germs. Controlling the spread of germs by the public is one of the best ways to reduce overall community disease transmission. More detailed information can be found in the recovery guide on page 19.

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Can PPE be re-used?

- Personal Protective Equipment should be used according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Generally single use devices should be disposed of after use and washable devices cleaned at the end of each day. The CDC has release guidance on reuse and decontamination of PPE for certain pieces of equipment. This guidance was released in response to widespread equipment shortage of equipment for essential workers. If there is a situation that a shortage is being experienced, then the CDC guidance should be referenced further.

Health & Temperature Screenings

Should visitors be screened similar to employees?

- Screening visitors is a best practice that may be feasible for some operations. Businesses which have many client interactions and significant foot traffic (such as restaurants, retailers, etc.) may not be able to screen clients; smaller operations may find this feasible. Operations which rely on appointment bookings and scheduled visits can easily integrate client or guest screenings. Where screening is feasible and not considered a client burden, a questionnaire should be utilized prior to appointments and access to business areas could include temperature scans. It is important that the screening process be carefully and thoughtfully explained to clients. Consider making the screening part of the re-entry process where PPE and hand sanitizer is also distributed for use.

What screening process are employers required to do?

- The screening requirements differ from state to state; currently, the best practice for employee screening suggests a brief questionnaire for employees to self-screen before leaving the house, and a temperature check before entering the building. A sign in sheet to record employee's temperature along with questions we suggest be used for employees and visitors can be found in the appendix. Additional information can be found on page 16 of the Pandemic Recovery Guide.

When should an employer do screenings (daily, after leaving and returning, etc.)?

- As a best practice all employers should complete screenings daily prior to the start of the work shift. Similarly, employers should screen all employees before reopening their businesses to the public. If an employee has a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, health screenings for all employees daily are mandatory. Health screenings are part of a balanced employee safety approach which simply confirms sick employees are not coming into the workplace. Health screening regulations vary by state and jurisdiction, additional information can be found in the Pandemic Response Guide on pages 16-18.

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How should health screening information be stored?

- Health screening data should be maintained in a confidential file with your human resources department; the information in this file should not be shared with employees for any reason. This information is used to confirm compliance with state and local orders and to aid in contact tracing should a workplace exposure occur. Health officials may request this information for research and disease control purposes.

Where should health screenings take place?

- Health screenings should take place outside of main workspaces. Screening areas should prevent individuals from entering the workplace to prevent potential contamination of common areas. Screening areas should be laid out to facilitate social distancing, all persons at screening areas should utilize PPE. Hand sanitizer and similar hygiene facilities should be provided at the entrances and exits of screening areas. Screening areas should be sanitized frequently and after all peak periods of use.

How do you protect the person doing health screenings?

- The best practice would include all aspects of the CDC's recommended practices. Start with a prescreen process before staff leave their homes. This will prevent staff from coming to the workplace if they are presenting symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has. Next, require all staff coming to the office to maintain social distancing until it is their turn to be screened and their temperature taken. All staff should be required to wear personal protective equipment and the employee taking temperatures should be provided with additional protection such as a sneeze shield, gloves, mask and a covering for their cloths. No touch temperature readers can also reduce contact with the employees as well.

Vehicle & Travel Considerations

How does social distancing work in vehicles?

- Social distancing in passenger vehicles is performed by limiting vehicle occupancy to 50% or less and by alternating seats and or rows where possible. In some cases, social distancing requirements may necessitate the use of multiple vehicles and reducing the use of ride sharing. All passengers and the driver should utilize face masks and best practices for hygiene. Additional information can be found in the Pandemic Recovery Plan on pages 13-15.

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How can social distancing and sanitizing work for high occupancy vehicles like buses?

- Best practices may be limit seating to one person per every other seat, and/or the installation of preventative barriers, such as plexiglass. While this seems gratuitous, the need for preventing the spread of any infectious materials is paramount to reducing the spread of the current strain of virus. Vehicles should be sanitized frequently to limit potential contamination and transmission of germs. Vehicles should be sanitized before and after each use. A deep clean should be scheduled at routine intervals.

For additional information and support with best practices contact your Risk Control representative or email riskcontrol@hendersonbrothers.com.