

COVID-19 Best Practices Guide for Businesses

Businesses should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from coronavirus while ensuring continuity of operations. Please visit the CDC's [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) for more on best practices and recommended strategies.

1) Implement [Recommended Strategies](#) for Employee Health and Safety

Any sick employees should stay home and away from the workplace, [respiratory etiquette](#) and [hand washing](#) should be encouraged, and routine cleaning of commonly touched surfaces should be performed regularly.

2) Establish a Cross-Functional Team to Manage Preparation and Response

When faced with an event that has potential to significantly impact your business and its people, forming a team to manage your assessment, preparation, communication, and response is an important best practice. The earlier this team is in place, the better organized your response will be to limit impact on the business and your people.

3) Risk Assessment and Possible Scenarios

Use your team to [conduct a risk assessment](#) and implement measures that balance the health and safety of employees with business continuity. Have your team brainstorm solutions to possible scenarios and considerations:

- What if schools are closed in your community? Will you provide childcare? Are all your employees equipped to do their job remotely?
- What is your business continuity plan and have you tested it? Can your business continue to operate efficiently if all your employees had to work remotely?
- What are guidelines for assessing the threat level to your business? What steps will you take as the threat increases? This team will prepare and have response plans in place should the threat level increase.
- How does this impact your supply chain? While your community may not be impacted, have you mapped your supply chain to determine sourcing of ingredients, parts or equipment to assess potential risk and how that will impact productivity of the business?
- Do you need to implement travel restrictions and who is monitoring the changing state of play there?
- What FAQs do your employees need to be equipped to answer? For example, if you make a product in China, are your employees able to confidently answer when a customer asks if it has been exposed and if they are in danger of getting sick upon receipt of the product?
- What is your response when employees ask if your major corporate meeting is still on for May? What if they ask about limiting domestic travel?
- Are you legally allowed to take an employee's temperature?

4) Assign Team Members to Implement Strategy

Determine the strategies that best support your business and assign team members to implement them. Possible actions include:

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- Establish an ongoing process to communicate [health and safety measures](#) to all employees, through email and other digital media, staff meetings, [hanging posters](#), water-cooler conversations, etc.
- Communicate and continue to communicate with customers, vendors, business partners, etc. know what measures you are taking to address coronavirus.
- Assess the [risk of business travel](#) and [follow recommendations for safe business travel](#).
- Assess your essential functions and determine what is needed to maintain critical operations.
- Explore flexible and/or remote work if needed.

5) Revisit or Create Planning and Response Documents

Use the current coronavirus situation as an opportunity to develop or revisit existing plans and procedures, including your:

- [Business Continuity Plan](#)
- [Emergency Response Plan](#)
- Outbreak Response / Pandemic Plan
- Event Cancellation Policy
- Sick Leave, Business Travel, and [Remote Work Policies and Procedures](#)

6) Stay Engaged, Up-To-Date, and Flexible

- Continue to monitor news provided by official channels, including the [CDC](#), [WHO](#), local and state governments and health departments.
- Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- Maintain regular communication with employees and business partners as the situation changes and develops.
- Continue to use your cross-functional team to adjust to the changing needs of your business to maintain successful operations.
- Share best practices with other businesses in the community (especially those within the supply chain), chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.