

Employer Resources from April 29, 2020 webinar *Leading Through COVID-19*



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Big picture considerations for employers as they re-open their workplaces.

1. **Review and update employment policies.** Before returning to work, employers should review their employment policies with respect to sick leave, family and medical leave, employee leaves of absences, teleworking, vacation, and paid time off to ensure both compliance with applicable law and practicability in the post-COVID-19 workplace.
 - a. *Create a Pandemic Policy Resource.* Employers may consider creating a COVID-19-specific addendum to their employee handbook for use during the pendency of the crisis. Policies to consider include requiring employees to report illness, workforce contact tracing, and special accommodations for vulnerable employees (even if not otherwise disabled).
 - i. Below is a sample remote work policy and remote work agreement.
 - ii. [The Chamber of Commerce](#) resource can be useful as well.
 - b. *Review Employee Leave Requests and Tracking Procedures.* Employers should also ensure that their employee leave policies clearly state the process by which employees may request time off so that any grants or denials of such requests are made in accordance with applicable law and that any time off is tracked. Tracking time off is particularly important with respect to time off taken under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), for which employers may seek refundable tax credits from the Internal Revenue Service.
 - c. *Make sure employees know how to file complaints, report concerns, and request reasonable accommodations.* Employers should consider choosing a specific individual to receive COVID-19-related inquiries and complaints, in addition to making sure the new policies contain clear reporting instructions.
2. **Conduct a Risk Assessment.** The Occupational Safety and Health Act (the “OSH Act”) requires employers to provide employees with a workplace free from “recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.” Employers should consider conducting a COVID-19-specific risk assessment of their physical work environments under [OSHA’s Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#). When conducting the risk assessment, employers should classify the exposure risk level of the various roles in the workplace in accordance with the OSHA Guidance and take appropriate steps to protect workers with medium, high, and very high exposure risk jobs.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

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- a. *Workplace Assessment.* The initial assessment should focus on whether and to what extent there is the possibility of frequent or close contact with other people. This will vary greatly from business to business.
 - i. Can you limit in-person interactions and physical contact?
 - ii. Can you close or modify common rooms and break rooms/cafeterias?
 - iii. Will you require personal protective equipment?
 - iv. The risk analysis and its related mitigation strategies should also include a cost-benefit analysis. It is possible that prudent risk mitigation strategies make the costs of reopening the business at a point in time greater than the benefits.
 - b. *Review your insurance policy.* It's likely that future interruptions to businesses will occur, so it'd be smart for an employer to be familiar with whether their policies expressly exclude coverage for losses due to a virus or pandemic.
 - c. *Review your contracts.* Business owners should likewise consider whether their written contracts adequately address the consequences of a pandemic like COVID-19. As businesses reopen, many will negotiate new contracts or look for reasons to terminate existing contracts or excuse a lack of performance. A review of existing and future contracts will help evaluate the level of protection they provide.
3. **Decide whether you'll conduct testing.** Employers should consider whether to conduct COVID-19 tests and if so, what type of test to conduct (i.e., blood, saliva, or nasal swab). What type of test will you run? Who will conduct the tests? How will these personnel be trained?
- a. *Establish clear and uniform standards.* If an employer chooses to monitor employee body temperatures, it should clearly communicate to employees in writing the temperature check procedure and screening threshold—and the consequences of failing a temperature check—in advance of implementing the policy. Employers should similarly be prepared to perform such checks and screening of vendors and other visitors to their workplaces.
 - b. Determine how you're going to respond if an employee refuses to be tested. If an employee refuses to undergo a temperature check or other COVID-related test, the employer may bar the employee from the workplace. However, employers should ask about the reasons for the refusal in the event that there is a health-related or religious reason for the refusal or if more information or reassurances concerning confidentiality would be helpful.
4. **How will you handle employee morale and fear, and mental health?** Expect that for a wide variety of reasons, employees may request to continue teleworking even as their workplace reopens. An employer needs to consider the impacts on management, communication, and staffing as certain operations are on site while other employees continue to telework.
- a. *Be Mindful of Employee Anxiety.* Employers should also be mindful of the health, safety, and security issues that employees and employees' family members may be experiencing, and consider exercising flexibility to accommodate these issues. To manage these types of intangible issues, employers may want to assess whether a work-from-home arrangement is feasible for a particular employee even after the workplace reopens and, if not, whether a leave of absence would be more appropriate. Of course, these may not be the only available options, and employers should consider exercising creativity in determining reasonable and appropriate solutions.
 - b. Employers who offer an Employee Assistance Program should remind employees that this resource is available to them. And employers who haven't historically offered an EAP may want to consider adding this to their employee benefits package, at least during these trying times.

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APPENDIX A

COVID-19 Temporary Remote Work Policy Overview

As a part of **THE COMPANY'S** continued response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, **THE COMPANY** may allow employees to temporarily telework (work remotely or work from home) during the time period between _____, 2020 and _____, 2020. Under the temporary remote work policy, employees will perform essentially the same work that they would on-site in accordance with performance expectations and other terms determined by their supervisors.

THE COMPANY may support remote work arrangements for staff in some situations based on the individual's request and **THE COMPANY'S/DEPARTMENT'S** ability to accommodate the request in accordance with a specific contingency plan. Remote work arrangements may not be feasible in all cases and requests should not compromise continuity of operations for members of **THE COMPANY** and the performance of essential functions of each office and department.

Remote Work Agreement: The temporary remote work request form is accessible via []. Once submitted, **your direct supervisor** may contact you for additional information and/or ask you to further explain (1) how you plan to fulfill work expectations remotely and (2) how you plan to communicate regularly with co-workers, supervisors, and members of **THE COMPANY** during regular work hours. If approved by [supervisor], a remote work agreement must be executed by the appropriate parties prior to beginning remote work.

Work performed remotely or from home is considered official **COMPANY** business; therefore, [DEPARTMENTS/GROUPS] may establish specific conditions that apply to employees engaged in remote work.

Termination of the Temporary Remote Work Agreement: **THE COMPANY** reserves the right to modify the temporary remote work arrangement at any time. Employees may be required to return to the central workplace if deemed as having performance or work conduct problems, or if **THE COMPANY** feels it is in the best interest of **THE COMPANY** and/or the employee to modify or suspend the arrangement, either permanently or temporarily.

Hours of Work: The amount of time and work hours that the employee is expected to work will not change due to participation in a temporary remote work agreement. Hours of work should remain the same unless specified in the agreement. The employee agrees to apply themselves to work and be available to communicate with their co-workers, supervisor(s), and members of **THE COMPANY** during work hours. Normal procedures will be followed for the approval of overtime and use of leave. Nonexempt employees are responsible for reporting all hours worked each week. Failure to report time, like failure to obtain approval for overtime, can result in the termination of the temporary remote work arrangement or other disciplinary action.

Compliance with **COMPANY** Policies: Employees must agree to comply with **COMPANY** rules, policies, handbooks, practices, and instructions and understand that violation of such may result in the termination of the temporary remote work arrangement and/or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Security of Information and Records: Employees must use secure remote access procedures and are responsible for the security of all documents and records in their possession while remote working and must adhere to **THE COMPANY'S IT** and other security procedures to ensure confidentiality and security of data.

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Employees working remotely agree not to share individual log-in passwords with anyone outside of **THE COMPANY**. Any use of restricted-access information or materials at an alternate work location must be approved and described in the remote work agreement, along with procedures for removing and returning those materials. Employees approved to telework agree that their access and connection to **THE COMPANY'S** network(s) may be monitored to record dates, times, and duration of access. If any unauthorized access or disclosure occurs, the employee must inform the direct supervisor immediately.

Equipment and Materials: Employees approved to telework must agree to use equipment provided by **THE COMPANY** and supplies for business purposes only and to notify the supervisor immediately of equipment malfunction in order to schedule repair or replacement. Please work with the **[] at 555-555-5555** to address any of these issues. Any damage or theft of the equipment should immediately be reported to the supervisor. **COMPANY**-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment will be maintained and repaired by the **COMPANY**. Employees approved to telework must return all **COMPANY**-owned property when the remote work arrangement ends. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the department will not assume responsibility for costs of repairs, maintenance, or service.

Other Costs: Under this temporary policy, **THE COMPANY** is not responsible for operating costs (such as electric bills, internet, etc.), home maintenance, or other costs incurred by employees in the use of their homes as alternate work locations.

Liability: **THE COMPANY** assumes no responsibility for injuries occurring in the employee's alternate work location outside the agreed-upon work hours, or for liability damages to employee's real or personal property resulting from participation in the telework program. Workers' compensation coverage is limited to designated work areas in employees' homes or alternate work locations. Workers' compensation does not apply to injuries of any third parties or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises. Employees agree to practice the same safety habits they would use in the workplace and maintain safe conditions in their alternate work locations. Employees must follow normal procedures for reporting illness or injury. Please contact **Human Resources** if you have any questions regarding this policy or if you have questions about teleworking that are not addressed in this policy.

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APPENDIX B

COVID-19 Temporary Remote Work Request Form

Complete this form to request a temporary remote work arrangement from _____, 2020 to _____, 2020, and obtain approval from your supervisor. Department operations and office coverage will be considered before requests are approved. Send the signed copy as an attachment to Human Resources at _____.

Temporary Remote Work Option - Employee Completes

Name: _____

(company name) E-mail Address: _____

Job Title: _____

Department: _____

Begin Date: _____

End Date: _____

Provide details about how you will complete your work effectively under this requested arrangement:

Detailed plan to fulfill work expectations:

Detailed plan how communications with co-workers, supervisors, and community members will occur during your regular work hours.

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I understand that (Employer's name) may modify or suspend the temporary remote work arrangement at any time.

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: ____

Adjusted Work Arrangement - Supervisor Completes

Approved _____

Approved with Adjusted Date(s) _____

Begin Date: _____

End Date: _____

Not Approved _____

Comments:

For security purposes, all remote work must be performed using a (company name)-issued device connecting through a (company name) VPN. (Company name) office phones may be forwarded to (company name) mobile phones. Remote workers must always adhere to (company name) IT best practices and our Information Security Policy published online at:

Approval Signatures

Supervisor

Date

Department Head

Date

Human Resources

Date

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Uniting for Recovery:

RETURN TO WORK *Guide*



MISSOURI2030
An Agenda to Lead

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Reduce the risk of transmission	4
Social distancing at work	6
Working with vendors	7
Customer service	8
Travel considerations / Workplace signage . .	9
Employee health.	10
Ongoing communication.	11
Contact	12



MISSOURI CHAMBER
FOUNDATION

Introduction

Missouri businesses have played a critical role in the effort to stop the spread of COVID-19. As local and statewide restrictions were put into place, many employers drastically altered their operations with some closing their doors completely. As the response continues, many employers across the state are working to develop strategies to enable them to reopen when the threat subsides.

Based on the best practices, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry is providing the following guidelines and suggestions to assist businesses in their efforts to create safe workplaces for their employees and customers.

We also strongly encourage employers to closely follow the recommendations published by Gov. Mike Parson, the State of Missouri and local health officials as they seek to reopen.

As businesses establish their procedures for re-opening, we strongly recommend employers start by reviewing the comprehensive guidance available from the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf> 

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html> 

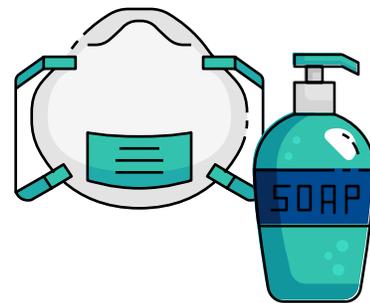
Reduce the risk of transmission



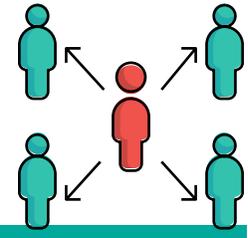
- **Create training to review new safe-at-work requirements and guidelines for all employees.**
 - If returning to work, training and orientations should be done on day one.
 - Make information available to employees about Personal Protective Equipment, disinfection measures, social distancing protocol, on-site health screening, signs and symptoms of COVID-19, self-quarantining and return-to-work policies, visitors and contractors screening, signage, time-off options and all other COVID-19-related safe workplace changes.
 - Train employees on frequent handwashing, properly covering coughs and sneezes and refraining from touching the face.
- **Promote personal hygiene.**
 - If workers do not have access to soap and water for handwashing, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
 - Provide disinfectants and disposable towels workers can use to clean work surfaces.
- **Clean and sanitize surfaces frequently.**
 - Make wipes, sanitizer and cleaning products widely accessible throughout workplaces. Alcohol-based cleaning products should have 70% alcohol content or higher for effectiveness.
 - Clean break rooms and common touch areas (doorknobs, light switches, phones, fridge handles, etc.) after each shift.

continued

- Thorough cleaning of ALL shared surfaces throughout the facility at least once every 24 hours. This includes common spaces like bathrooms, conference rooms, lunchrooms, etc.
- Shut down production in the area where a COVID-19 affected employee worked (i.e. department, line, station) to conduct cleaning, as well as shut down and clean common spaces like bathrooms, conference rooms and lunchrooms once notification of potential COVID-19 spread is suspected.
- Provide masks, shields, gloves, shoe coverings, coveralls, etc. if appropriate and available.
- **Provide touch-free solutions.**
 - Touch-free time clocks.
 - Individual water containers for workers instead of large water coolers. 🌐

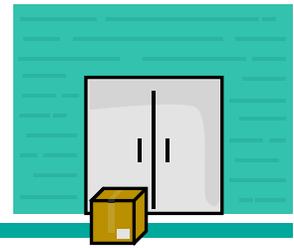


Social distancing at work

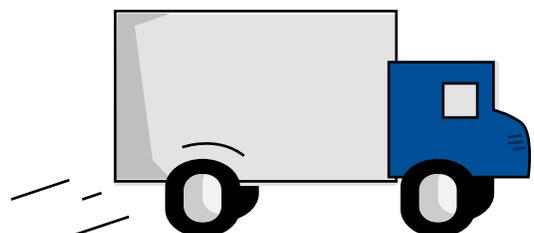


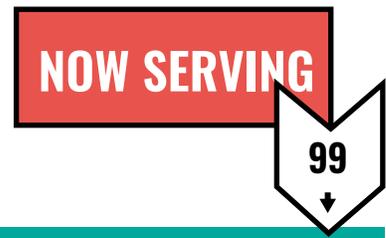
- Offer work-from-home options for all employees who can perform duties remotely.
- Change shifts.
 - Stagger shifts and start times to maximize distancing.
 - Allow 30-minute buffers between shifts if possible so that employees don't come into contact during transition.
 - Cross-train team, so that teams can better stagger shifts.
- Provide visual markers on floors for six-foot distancing, per CDC guidance.
- Restrict movement between departments and/or functions (e.g. don't allow traffic between production and office workspaces).
- Stagger breaks and lunch schedules.
- Offer lunch breaks in vehicles instead of shared cafeterias or break rooms.
 - Employees need to bring their own meals and be able to eat them without use of a microwave.
- Conduct phone/email/virtual meetings instead of in-person meetings, even when at office.
- Limit meetings to no more than 10 individuals, provided appropriate spacing is possible.
- Hold meetings in large spaces where people can spread out at six-foot intervals.
- Space out desks and work stations; construct temporary walls between workstations. 🌐

Working with vendors



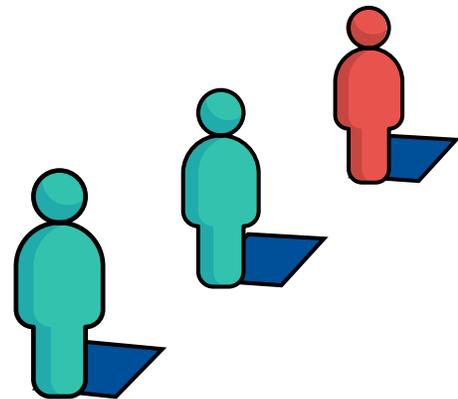
- Request health and travel assessments for vendors/contractors coming on-site.
- Separate contractors and vendors from the workforce (have them use separate bathrooms and entrances if possible).
- Prohibit nonessential vendors and deliveries from entering facility.
- Require deliveries to be dropped outside facility door, eliminating vendors from entering facility.
- Maintain a contact log for all persons coming into an office or manufacturing plant registering their date, time, name, contact information, person they are meeting with, and if they have had COVID-19 or been in contact with anyone in the past 14 days that has. 🌐





Customer service

- Offer curbside delivery instead of in-store pick-up.
- Provide on-site services to customer's facility once their business is closed (after hours).
- Offer drive-through service only.
- Add plastic barriers/shields at registers.
- Ask customers to stay in their vehicles in parking lot while they wait.
- Conduct virtual sales calls.
- Limit the number of customers in the facility to ensure appropriate distancing, along with visual markers on floors for six-foot distancing, per CDC guidance. 🌐



Travel considerations

- Require a two-week quarantine for employees who return from outside of the country or a domestic COVID-19 hotspot.
- Require a two-week quarantine for employees traveling more than 100 miles from facility. 🌐



Workplace signage



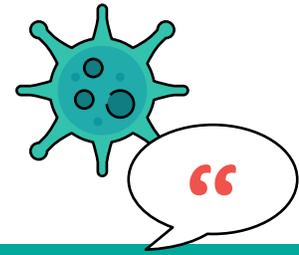
- Post internal signage that can be used to alert or remind employees about guidelines and expectations and responsibilities.
- Post external signs on doors alerting visitors to restrictions on entry and movement in and around facility as well as any applicable guidelines and expectations. 🌐

Employee Health



- Conduct temperature or employee wellness checks at the start of shifts to ensure employees do not exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Fever >100.4 F
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Create a master schedule for all employees that shows when people may come in contact with others; use this for contact tracing in the event of a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 exposure.
- Create a response plan for employees who report or demonstrate symptoms at work, have recently been at work and tested positive or have been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 case, or have not recently been at work but have tested positive or have been in contact with confirmed COVID-19 case.
- Ask employees about their health status before they return to work from a sick leave (even if they were out with a headache); require certification by a health care professional of ability to safely return to work (particularly for those noted above).
- Offer a variety of leave options for employees who may have to miss work because of a COVID-19-related reason. 🌐

Ongoing Communication



- Communicate and educate employees and management to carry out the plan and protocols, as well as clear direction on roles and responsibilities.
 - Post signs on door to instruct customers/visitors on business's safety protocols.
 - Provide remote workers with a list of free resources to stay healthy and active at home (i.e. ergonomic tips, stress-relief tools, fitness resources).
 - Provide pre-recorded safety training videos for customer-facing activities.
 - Maintain an up-to-date repository on the company's shared network that allows employees to access all COVID-19 documents, resources, and company protocol.
- Ensure employees are informed about potential benefit lapses and help them access any available assistance programs. 

How to stay fit and active...



mochamber.com/recovery

Support local business

mochamber.com/buymo

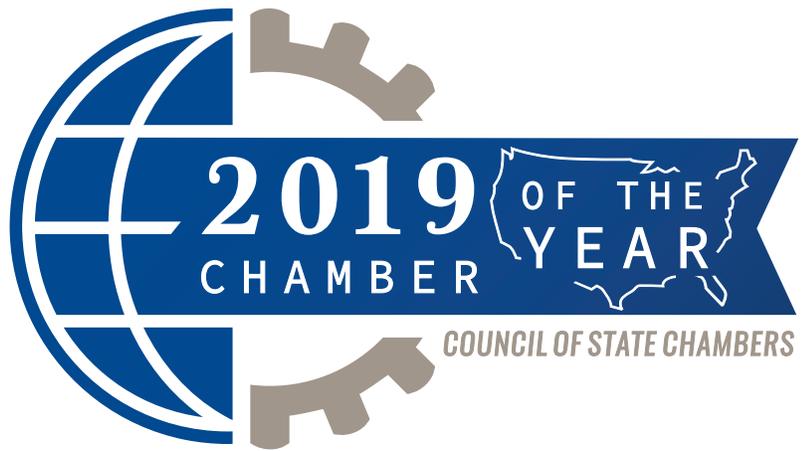
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OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY