

Resources to Help Reopen the Workplace

President Trump announced [guidance for a phased approach](#) to reopening businesses at the discretion of state and local officials. While employees are eagerly awaiting their return to work, the following factors should be considered once employers are given the green light to resume business operations.

Create a plan

Employers should plan ahead to reduce the possibility of COVID-19 exposure in the workplace and have procedures in place to address a situation if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.

- Develop policies in accordance with federal, state and local regulations to address social distancing, the use of personal protective equipment, temperature checks, sanitation, use and disinfection of common and high-traffic areas and business travel
- Communicate policies to internal staff along with external services who may have access to the building.
- Employers should also secure appropriate personal protective equipment by following the [guidelines outlined by OSHA](#).

Return to work in phases

- Determine which employees are deemed essential and allow workers to return over a period of time.
- Follow social distancing protocols by reducing the number of staff on site by encouraging telework whenever possible/rotating employees' schedules.
- Allow flexibility for employees who may not be able to fully return to work when operations resume due to the closure of schools and childcare facilities.

You should consider consulting your legal counsel regarding these matters as well as any union contract considerations. Nothing in this document should be construed as providing tax advice. Please consult with your own professional tax advisor. In addition, this document represents the information that we have up to the date the presentation was made and cannot be relied upon for additional updates beyond that date.



Adjusting to the new normal

Employees may return to work with a different mindset and begin to push for changes in the workplace. Now realizing that remote work is an option, the demand for flexibility could be much higher. Employers may notice some benefits to teleworking on their end as well such as reduction in costs and increased productivity.

Some employees may be hesitant to return to work and organizations should be mindful that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), certain employees who have a disability that puts them at greater risk of COVID-19 may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation.

Employers may need to provide hazard, or premium pay to those employees reporting to work during this period and who may be more likely to exposure of COVID-19.

- Hazard pay is not currently mandated by federal law but may be offered by employers to provide extra pay to those employees.
- Employers who choose to provide hazard pay should offer an equal incentive amount based on the position to ensure that employees are treated the same.

Mandatory posters

The Department of Labor has issued the following notices of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requirements. As of April 1, 2020, this notice must be posted in a conspicuous place where employees can see it.

- [Families First Act for those with 500 or fewer employees](#)
- [Families First Act for federal employees](#)

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OSHA Guidance

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has provided guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19. OSHA has also listed the following [ten steps](#) that employers can take to reduce the risk of exposure:

- 1 Encourage workers to stay home if sick.
- 2 Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- 3 Promote frequent hand washing and provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol
- 4 When possible, limit worksite access to only essential workers.
- 5 When possible, establish flexible worksites and flexible work hours.
- 6 Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks or other work tools and equipment.
- 7 Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces, equipment and other elements of the work environment.
- 8 Use EPA-approved cleaning chemicals with label claims against the coronavirus.
- 9 Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use of all cleaning and disinfection products.
- 10 Encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns.

We're here to help.

For more information, [contact covidhr@mcmcpa.com](mailto:covidhr@mcmcpa.com) and a member of MCM CPAs & Advisors COVID-19 Solutions Group will be in touch.

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