

Survive and Advance

Does Your Business Have A Return To Work Action Plan?

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As states begin to lift stay-at-home orders and establish criteria for reopening, officials continue to emphasize the need for businesses to adopt a gradual approach in bringing employees back to work.

As you look to evaluate when and how to reopen your business, be sure to create a "Return To Work Action Plan" that meets CDC, OSHA, EEOC, state, and local guidelines. Below is a high level roadmap – this is not a complete plan, nor legal advice - instead, consider it something to get you started. Be sure to consult legal counsel and comply with CDC, OSHA, EEOC, state, and local guidelines.

Conduct a Risk Assessment to determine what steps need to be taken prior to opening.

- Identify hazards by performing a walk-through of the premises and considering which areas are "high-risk."
- Decide who may be harmed and how by identifying which groups or individuals are the most at risk.
- Assess risks by determining how likely a particular risk is to occur and what the ramifications would be if it were to occur.
- Control risks by establishing certain control measures such as improved cleaning protocols, mandating PPE equipment, continuing work from home orders etc.

Create a Cross-Functional Pandemic Response Team

- While the design of your team can and should vary based on your business, including the following roles will be important: Team Lead, Covid-19 Prevention and Protocols Lead, Sanitization and Disinfection Lead, and Communication Lead.
- The team should prioritize designating responsibilities for managers and employees, including familiarizing themselves with the action plan, understanding symptoms of COVID-19, and practicing social distancing.

Modify the Workplace

- Make necessary physical workplace modifications, including separating desks and workstations to ensure proper social distancing and adding partitions to open floor plans.
- Establish workplace protocols, such as establishing crowd control measures and limiting in person meetings.
- Modify employee scheduling to minimize the number of employees at work at any given time.

Disinfect the Workplace

- Wear proper PPE while cleaning.
- Clean surfaces first, then use EPA-registered disinfectant, remembering to prioritize all high-risk areas.
- Replace HVAC air filters.

Establish Employee Screening, Exposure, and Confirmed Illness Protocol

- Screening measures to ensure the health of employees returning to work can include a health survey, temperature reading, or COVID-19 test upon entry to the building. Any and all screening needs to meet EEOC guidelines and implemented on a nondiscriminatory basis and results are treated as confidential medical information. Be sure to let employees know that you will be screening them.
- Establish procedures for isolating employees who have temperatures or test positive and protocol for ensuring they get home safely. Also establish protocols for communication to other employees who have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 should self-quarantine. Employees who wish to return to work after recovering for COVID-19 should follow CDC recommended guidelines, shown [here](#).

Create Employee Safety Training Materials

- Employee training safety materials should include information on social distancing guidelines, use of PPE, personal hygiene and etiquette, and cleaning responsibilities. Some states require educational materials be distributed to employees and posted on the premises.

As the status of COVID-19 is rapidly evolving, it is important to continue to monitor the results of your "Return to Work Action Plan" and adjust accordingly in order to meet the needs of your business, while complying with CDC, OSHA, EEOC, state, and local guidelines. Links to some helpful information below.

- [CDC - National Health Guidelines](#)
- [OSHA - National Safety Guidelines](#)
- [EEOC - Employment and Labor Compliance Information](#)
- [US Chamber of Commerce - State By State Guidelines for Reopening](#)
- [AIHA - Industry Specific Guide - Back To Work Safely](#)
- [Smith Brothers Insurance - Coronavirus Survive & Advance Information](#)