

Back to work: Six ways to safely reopen your business



Additional information:

Want more tips on how to stay safe and healthy while working? Check out our resources at saif.com/coronavirussafety.

There is an overwhelming amount of information on the requirements and recommendations for reopening your business. Reopening will occur according to the governor's plan, with a phased approach by county. [Check frequently for updated employer guidance](#).

We recommend you consult an employment lawyer or your HR department if you have questions about HR issues related to reopening. Follow their guidance, as well as information specific to your industry. Here are six things to consider.

Social distancing

In order to ensure employees are 6 feet apart from each other and customers, you may want to reconfigure your space or create barriers. If that's not possible, consider staggering or modifying employee schedules to limit the number of workers in the workplace at a given time.

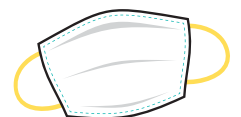
Continue to follow [public health guidelines regarding special accommodations and protections for vulnerable or high-risk employees](#). This could include allowing higher risk employees to continue working from home.

Wearing masks

Cloth face coverings protect others from exposure to the wearer. They are not a replacement for industry or task-specific required respirators and PPE.

In Oregon, masks or cloth materials that cover the nose and mouth are required when physical distancing cannot be maintained. This includes:

- Grocery stores
- Pharmacies
- Public transit
- Salons/personal services
- Ridesharing services



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The state strongly recommends that these businesses also establish a mandatory face-covering policy for customers.

Even if you are not required to wear a face mask, the CDC encourages all workers to wear a cloth face covering to help protect people they may come into contact with.

Cleaning and disinfecting

Clean your workplace before reopening and disinfect if it has been occupied within the last 7 days. Clean and disinfect immediately if an employee has tested positive for COVID-19 or is presumed positive. Prioritize disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

Maintain a regular cleaning schedule. When cleaning or disinfecting, it's important to include any shared vehicles. Continue existing cleaning practices for outdoor areas.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has specific [industry guidance](#) for workplaces, based on risk level.

Daily health checks

Conducting daily in-person or virtual health checks for employees is optional [according to the CDC](#). If you do, consider conducting these for all employees that enter the worksite. Even if an employee works alone most of the time, they may still be in contact with others in common areas. If social distancing isn't possible in your workplace, consider whether it's feasible to conduct a daily health check for vendors as well.

If you decide to do temperature checks, be sure to use no-touch thermometers, or have employees self-report. You may also consider having employees fill out a questionnaire on their symptoms, either in person or online. Follow guidance from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding confidentiality of medical records from health checks. Keep in mind these are

not diagnostic tests; people may be contagious without exhibiting signs of coronavirus, like a high temperature.

Develop an action plan in the event an employee develops symptoms while in the workplace, tests positive for COVID-19, or is determined to be presumptively positive by a public health authority. The CDC has [guidance on criteria](#) for when employees who have stayed home can stop home isolation and return to work.

Employee training

If possible, build in time for training before you reopen.

Train all employees on coronavirus-specific policies and procedures, including screening, physical distancing requirements, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), and what to do if they are sick or exposed.

If you're hiring new employees, they may not be familiar with your industry and the workplace hazards. Don't forget to provide basic safety and health training geared to your specific work environment.

Mental well-being

Many employees may be experiencing stress or anxiety. It's important to acknowledge family needs, job security, finances, and disruptions to daily life may exacerbate stress and mental health challenges. Everyone deals with this stress differently.

Make sure your employees know what resources are available, including pandemic-specific services available through an employee assistance program (EAP), health plan, or wellness program. This could include telehealth services or free phone apps and online tools.

More information can be found at saif.com/coronavirussafety.

