

Coronavirus Update



As Cartersville Medical Center continues preparedness efforts to respond to impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) around our community, we share some of our safety precautions and best practices to help area businesses safeguard their workforces and workplaces.

Protecting Your Business & Workforce During COVID-19 Outbreak

Ask employees, vendors and partners to self-screen daily. To minimize the risk of exposure to a communicable illness, sick employees should stay home. Ask every individual – and those visiting your organization – to self-screen and ensure their health before coming to the facility. If they’re experiencing fever, cough or shortness of breath – common symptoms associated with COVID-19, have them call their doctor or county health department to see if they need to seek immediate help.

Follow standard recommended safety protocols. If an employee, vendor or partner experiences symptoms – or becomes exposed to someone with symptoms, ask them to work remotely and follow the recommended CDC protocols for self-isolating. The worst possible scenario is someone inadvertently exposing others to the virus or spreading germs.

With many employees’ spring break vacations coming up, it’s more important than ever to have a plan in place for those who might be travelling to areas – both domestic and abroad – hit hard by the COVID-19 outbreak. Follow strict guidelines set by the CDC and/or your county and state health departments for those who’ve visited high-risk areas. Or make it your company policy that requires these travelers to work from home for a set amount of time until they’re deemed safe and noncontagious.

Know who is at risk. For many people, COVID-19 will present in a mild manner – very similar to the flu – and they can recover safely at home with rest and fluids. People at highest risk are those over age 65 and who have a chronic medical disease or illness.

Get the facts from a trusted source. As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to evolve, we urge you to stay abreast of the current safety guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and what’s happening in our community from local county and state officials. You can find the latest online from the:

- **CDC:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus
- **Georgia Department of Public Health:** <https://dph.georgia.gov/>

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Limit visitors and vendors. During this time of heightened focus on wellness and infection prevention, you don't need extra traffic potentially bringing unnecessary germs to your office. You may need to consider instituting some slight disruptions or inconveniences, such as:

- Consolidating access points to your building
- Directing deliveries to one central location
- Cancelling/rescheduling nonessential meetings or large gatherings
- Conducting business virtually in the short term

Reinforce the importance of hand washing and cleanliness. The single most important thing all of us can do is wash our hands – and wash them often. Health experts recommend using either soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel for at least 20 seconds (the amount of time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice). Make sure you have adequate supplies throughout your office and/or facilities. Consider placing highly visible “protection kits” of antibacterial soap/hand sanitizer, tissues and disinfectant wipes in such hightraffic areas as break rooms/cafés, near the time clock or at entry/exit points.

Encourage employees to frequently clean cell phones, devices, keyboards, door knobs and surfaces often. And remind them to avoid touching their face, nose and mouth as that is how viruses like COVID-19 are spread.

Communicate your efforts and keep everyone informed. The safety of your employees and your business is critical, so let everyone know that you're acting out of an abundance of caution in implementing safety precautions.

This might mean you need to post signs at entrances indicating that you request employees – and clients and other visitors – who aren't feeling well go home and return when they're better. Post updates on your company website and intranet to let others know that you're taking action as a community leader to keep everyone safe.