Checklist for Businesses with Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

Employer reporting requirements

The Governor's "Safe Start" Proclamation requires an employer to notify their local health jurisdiction within 24 hours if they suspect COVID-19 is spreading in a workplace, or if they know of 2 or more employees with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in a 14-day period.

Employer responsibilities

All businesses are obligated to keep a safe and healthy facility in accordance with state and federal safety and health rules. They must comply with specific COVID-19 worksite safety practices outlined in the "Safe Start" Proclamation and Safe Start Washington Plan. Business should also be in compliance with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces and the Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations. The Department of Labor & Industries Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) recently issued Emergency rule (CR-103E) that requires employers to comply with all of the Governor's emergency proclamations for operation. The Governor's website has a COVID-19 Safety Template.

Workers should be screened before entry and spaced at work. An employer must provide employees (at no cost to them) cloth facial coverings, unless greater protection is required.

Employers are encouraged to identify a central point of contact (POC) who will receive information about all suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and follow up as needed. The POC will liaise with Public Health and serve as a point of contact for employees to report all suspected and confirmed cases and ensure centralized tracking. All employees should know who the POC is and how to contact them.

If a suspected or confirmed case COVID-19 worked while contagious

☐ **Immediately send home employees who test positive and/or employees with symptoms of COVID-19 who were close contacts of the positive employees.**

    a. Strongly encourage symptomatic employees to get tested. Free or low-cost testing is available at several locations, regardless of immigration status.

    b. Employees should be tested 48 hours or later from last exposure.

    c. If more than two employees test positive in a 14 days period, notify your local health department within 24 hours.

d. Provide sick leave and benefit information to support isolation.

e. Provide contact information of business COVID POC

f. Let employee know that contact tracers may contact them and what to expect.

☐ **Be familiar with return to work conditions.** Employees who test positive for COVID-19 cannot return to work until after an isolation period:

a. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms started and

b. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and

c. Other symptoms have improved.

☐ **Clean and disinfect the facility.** Usually the facility does not need to be shut down. If it has been less than 7 days since the sick employee was in the facility, close off any areas or shared equipment used for long periods of time by the sick person: wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting, or if not feasible wait as long as possible. During this period, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in these areas.

☐ **Identify workers or clients who might have been exposed at work.** A close contact is any person who was within 6 feet of a contagious COVID-19 case for at least 15 minutes. A person is contagious 2 days before their illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days before positive test was collected) until the time they are isolated. Review logs, databases, and video footage, and interview employee to identify contacts.

a. Inform exposed employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

b. Most workplaces should follow the Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure and instruct employees with close contact to stay home for 14 days quarantine, telework if possible, and self-monitor for symptoms.

c. Be aware that a negative test does not rule out COVID-19 and that the full quarantine must be completed. This is because it can take up to 14 days for infection to start.

d. Essential workplaces should follow the guidance on Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers. Employers in critical infrastructure must manage return to work for potentially exposed workers in ways that best protect the health of those workers, their co-workers, and the general public. Consult with your local health department.

2. **Communicate to larger affected workforce** as appropriate. Be transparent about confirmed cases and close contacts while protecting employee confidentiality. Explain steps being taken to reduce transmission and reinforce any particular actions

or changes that employees should take to stay safe. Provide information about how to contact the COVID-19 POC for any questions or concerns.

3. **Pre-screen all workers for symptoms prior to each shift.** Consider a single point of entry to more easily complete worker screening but ensure social distancing if employees must wait to be screened.

4. **Maintain a list of confirmed and any suspected cases among employees and customers, and a list of all exposed people.** Be prepared to share this list with Public Health. A template is available here.

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the current COVID-19 situation in Washington, Governor Inslee's proclamations, symptoms, how it spreads, and how and when people should get tested. See our Frequently Asked Question for more information.

COVID-19 is not connected to race, ethnicity or nationality. Stigma will not help to fight the illness. Share accurate information with others and avoid rumors and misinformation.

Have more questions about COVID-19? Call: **1-800-525-0127**. For interpretative services (open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.), press # when they answer and **say your language**. For questions about your health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, consult your health care provider.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

- 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (DOH)
- COVID-19 Frequently asked questions (DOH)
- Get the Facts About Coronavirus (CDC)
- Stigma Reduction (DOH)
- Directory of local health jurisdictions (DOH)
- "SAFE START – STAY HEALTHY" Proclamation by the Governor
- Emergency (CR-103E) - COVID-19 Prohibited Business Activities and Conditions for Operations (Washington State Department of Labor & Industries)
- Testing location by health Jurisdictions (DOH)
- When you can be around others (CDC)
- Cleaning and disinfecting (CDC)
- Public health guidance for community-related exposures (CDC)
- Information for essential businesses
- Phase 3 Safe Start Plan Template