



## Protecting Employees and the Public

Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio Department of Health have announced the development of a recovery plan to gradually re-open businesses. Not all businesses will re-open at the same time. The process will be implemented in phases, based on data and potential risk to minimize the spread of COVID-19. While we await guidance from the State of Ohio, the following planning steps are a reasonable approach Medina County businesses may consider.

**Starting to think through the implementation of these types of precautions can help your business be ready to respond when the Governor presents the plan for Ohio.**

### Key Considerations:

1. Preventing the spread of the COVID-19 within a work environment is synonymous to preventing spread within the community.
2. Prevention measures will be the joint responsibility of the business owners or management, in conjunction with employees, and customers.
3. Aggressive case investigation and quarantine following the identification of a clinically diagnosed case of COVID-19 will be mandatory to prevent a community outbreak. A business should develop a plan to address a possible closure due to quarantined staff and/or the need to sanitize the facility.

### Staff and Customer Actions:

1. When social distancing requirements (six feet of separation) cannot be met, staff should be prepared to wear a mask. Customers may be similarly encouraged or required for some interactions.
2. Hand sanitizer, wipes, or other opportunities to routinely clean hands must be available to employees and customers.
3. Vulnerable or at-risk individuals should be provided an opportunity to be separated or to have appointments at times that decreases interaction with the general public.

### Questions the business should ask:

- Have you developed a 'mask' policy for employees and customers?
- Have you developed a policy to address customers who are in at-risk categories?
- Do you have employees who can be tasked with assuring social distancing and other protections? This is an important way to maintain requirements and also reduce complaints
- Are hand wipes, hand washing opportunities easily accessible?

### Environmental Considerations:

1. Enhanced hygiene practices should be implemented. Routine cleaning should be developed that disinfects high contact surfaces routinely through a shift and not just daily. It may be necessary to clean after each client in long contact professions. Cleaning solutions and practices need to adhere to manufacture recommendations using a cleaning product labeled as killing coronaviruses and listed on the EPA website.
2. Partitions or other physical barriers between customers and staff or between staff who work in close contact with one another should be considered where appropriate to reduce spread.
3. Tissues and hand sanitizer should be readily available when possible.

*Questions the business should ask:*

- Do you have a protocol for routinely cleaning high contact surfaces during a work shift?
- Do you have a supply of appropriate cleaning solutions? Are staff familiar with its proper use?
- Have you reviewed work spaces so that each work station is more than 6 feet apart?
- Have you considered partitions to reduce direct exposure of staff or customers?

**Business Practices:**

1. Employees that can work from home should continue to do so as appropriate.
2. Business should be conducted by phone or online when possible. When in-person service is needed, appointments and other strategies to decrease foot traffic and congregating within a space should be used.
3. Implement a program to monitor employees for fever and symptoms at the start of each day or shift.
4. Staggered lunches, breaks, or work shifts are recommended reduce the number of employees within a space.
5. Employees that are ill should be sent home immediately. Customers who are ill should similarly be sent home.
6. Informational posters and communications with employees and customers should be available to reinforce hygiene practices necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
7. Policies that address leave for illness, possible isolation, or leave needed for possible quarantine should be developed. When possible, this should extend to leave needed to care for or follow quarantine orders due to an ill household contact.

*Questions the business should ask:*

- Do you have sick leave policies that require employees to be home if ill?
- Do you have policies that address customers who may be symptomatic (ill) during an appointment or business transaction?
- Have you considered/ made available work-from-home options for as many staff as possible?
- Have you developed a plan for staggered breaks? Work shifts?

Businesses can work toward reopening in advance of the Governor's and Director's specific direction by considering the questions above. Businesses are encouraged to use this time to build their capacity to protect their employees and customers. Medina County Health Department is committed to working closely with local companies to assist in making these adjustments to meet the state requirements.

The Governor has also indicated as he begins a phased-in approach to opening various sectors of business, employees and customers will be the driving voice questioning the business's compliance with the final guidance. This perspective will likely result in a heightened vigilance from employees and customers. Each business's ability to comply with the requirements will be in the public eye.

As a reminder, the final decisions regarding reopening non-essential businesses rests with Governor DeWine and Director Acton. These recommendations are only an interim guide for planning.

For resources and more information on safely operating your business during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit [MedinaHealth.org](http://MedinaHealth.org) or call (330) 723-9688, Option 2.



