



# SPECIAL COVID-19 UPDATE

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## ARE YOUR BUILDINGS AND OFFICES PREPARED TO OPERATE IN A TIME WITH COVID-19?

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As self-isolation procedures are lifted, it is important to be prepared for the return of your tenants and employees to their normal places of work. However, returning to work does not mean that COVID-19 risks can be forgotten – there are precautions that must be taken to continue controlling the coronavirus. Educating workers, forming a risk team, and enacting proper control measures are all necessary to help prevent tenants, employees, and third parties from getting sick at your places of business.

The following checklist is meant to assist you in your preparation. It must be noted that this is not a comprehensive list but rather a prompt for further idea generation. Should you have any questions or would like further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Parker, Smith & Feek team, and we will be happy to assist you.

### IMPLEMENTING A WRITTEN PLAN TO PREVENT THE INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD OF COVID-19

#### Education

- Are your tenants aware of how the coronavirus spreads and how to control it?
- Do you have a plan in place to communicate this to tenants?

- Have you prepared resources for training and educating your tenants?
- Have you put up posters/signs at common areas, entrances, restrooms, frequently used locations, etc.?
  - » The CDC has provided [informational signs](#) that can be printed and posted, including audience recommendations and alternative languages.

#### Risk Team

- Have you assembled a risk team within your organization to control the business's exposure to the COVID-19 virus?
- Departments that should be represented on the team include:
  - » **Corporate** – Handle high level coordination and interface with the local health department.
  - » **Risk management** – Develop plan and direct mitigation efforts.
  - » **Legal** – Consult on insurance, media, and employee protections. This representative must be familiar with the ADA, FMLA, OSHA General Duty Clause, Whistleblower Protection Act, and premises liability.

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» **Facilities/maintenance** – Regulate building systems, interface with third-party contractors, and complete building recovery procedures.

» **Other** – security, housekeeping

- ☑ Have you communicated the creation and importance of the risk team to your tenants?

### Risk Assessment

- ☑ Have you conducted a risk assessment of your organization and your industry?
- ☑ Is your organization complying with federal/state/local regulations and/or recommendations?
  - » [OSHA has published guidelines](#) for preparing workplaces for COVID-19.
- ☑ Do you or your tenants require close contact, or can business be conducted remotely?
- ☑ Are hygiene and cleaning materials, as well as PPE available at all times in common locations?
  - » Refer to the [EPA's list of disinfectants](#) to use against SARS-CoV-2. Alternatives are also listed should certain products be sold out.
- ☑ Is PPE available for your workers while interacting with tenants and guests?
- ☑ If face masks are in use, have they been fit tested?

### Preventing Staff Illness

- ☑ Do employees and tenants know to stay home when sick?
- ☑ Are you prepared to require self-isolation if employees:
  - » Have recently been exposed or have reason to believe they have been exposed to the coronavirus?
  - » Are experiencing symptoms?
  - » Are caring for a sick family member?
  - » Have recently travelled to high risk areas?

- ☑ Do you have requirements in place for sick employees to return? For example, if an employee is showing symptoms or positive test, requiring two negative tests 24 hours apart.
- ☑ Are employees trained in self-health checks before returning?
- ☑ Are tenants similarly educated in preventing staff illness?
- ☑ Do your tenants have screening procedures in place for staff arriving to work, such as a wellness check?
- ☑ Are you aware of the information you are allowed ask employees before returning to work?
  - » Testing of symptomatic employees, disclosure of diagnosis, recent symptoms, and potential exposure history, etc.
- ☑ Are proper cleaning and disinfecting methods being used?
  - » The CDC has [published guidelines](#) for cleaning and disinfecting facilities.

### If Staff is Sick

- ☑ Can you contain the infected area/areas?
- ☑ Can you move the operations of the infected area?
- ☑ Is it feasible to create a negative pressure zone around the infected area, allowing you to increase ventilation?

### Control Measures

- ☑ Have you eliminated large social gatherings or altered them to reduce or distance attendees? Examples of sound alterations include implementing non-contact greetings, discontinuing communal food/beverages, spreading out seating, etc.
- ☑ Are workers practicing social distancing of 6 feet when interacting with other employees, tenants, or guests?
- ☑ Are protective resources available for workers in areas where social distancing may be impossible, such as elevators?

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- ☑ Are physical barriers an option?
- ☑ Are there restrictions on carpooling?
- ☑ Are split shifts an option?
- ☑ Are there adequate personal hygiene resources available? E.g. hand washing facilities, alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% alcohol), CDC sneeze etiquette, etc.
- ☑ Again, refer to the [EPA's list of disinfectants](#) to use against SARS-CoV-2. Alternatives are also listed should certain products be sold out. Do you have the safety data sheets for cleaning/sanitation products you purchase?

#### Guests/Third Parties

- ☑ Is your building open to the public or thru traffic?
- ☑ Will you need more security in lobbies or similar areas?
- ☑ Do you have limits on how many visitors can be on the premises at one time?
- ☑ Do you have signs discouraging waiting or congregating in open or public areas?

#### Returning to Unoccupied Buildings

- ☑ Have you inspected fire protection, alarms, HVAC systems, generators, cooling towers, etc. for damage, leaks, or maintenance needs?
- ☑ Have you inspected the building for leaks that might have occurred while unoccupied?
- ☑ Have you been practicing proper procedures to prevent and test for bacteria growth, such as Legionella in water?
  - » The CDC has [a resource](#) for the owners and managers of buildings and healthcare facilities should know about Legionella.
  - » Have you been maintaining building water temperatures?

- » Have you considered running water from any flow sites (sinks, showers, hoses, etc.) for 5-10 minutes every week to prevent water stagnation?
- » Have you been maintaining disinfection protocols, keeping chlorination levels at 0.5 ppm?

These are truly unprecedented times and your continued dedication to providing a safe work environment for your tenants, employees, and their families will contribute greatly to our society's recovery and return to normalcy. Employers and building owners play a crucial role in controlling the spread of COVID-19, and it's important to remember that we can quickly find ourselves in another outbreak if we collectively rush this process. If you have any questions or would like further assistance, reach out to your Parker, Smith & Feek team who will be happy to help.

General resources for more information:

- WA L&I General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces – <https://www.lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-164-000.pdf>
- Oregon OSHA Guidance related to COVID-19 – <https://osha.oregon.gov/Pages/re/covid-19.aspx#general>