Getting Back to Business Safely

Employer Guide

Information obtained from Governor Tom Wolf, CDC, OSHA, and UPMC as of May 7, 2020.
We’re Here for You — Now and Always

During this COVID-19 pandemic, our health care providers, emergency responders, food service workers, delivery drivers, and grocery store staff have been doing everything in their power to keep our communities safe and well. Together we will soon begin the journey of reopening our local places of business. We want to see the doors open, but the way we conduct business in the foreseeable future will be different. Our employee and customer safety is now the number one priority. Because of our diligence in washing hands, wearing facemasks, and social distancing, we are beginning to “flatten the curve” and slow the spread of this virus in our region. Our goal is to keep the number of occurrences trending downward, and that is a responsibility on all of us as we begin to “safely” come back together.

This safety guide addresses a number of common questions about how to prepare for, and deal with, the coronavirus in the workplace. We hope you find it useful as you prepare your plans on “getting back to business.” By being proactive and diligent, we will continue to see our region get back to our new “normal.”

And on behalf of our entire northcentral Pennsylvania UPMC family, we are prepared and ready to serve and we promise that no matter what, we will always be here for you.

Steve Johnson, President and CEO, UPMC in the Susquehanna region
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What We Know About COVID-19

What is COVID-19?
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

Symptoms
The symptoms that are currently being seen with COVID-19 are:

- Cough
- Fever
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle pain

Pre-symptomatic Individuals

- Pre-symptomatic refers to the time between catching the virus and showing symptoms.
- According to the World Health Organization, 75% of people who test positive without symptoms will shortly display symptoms.
- It is thought that pre-symptomatic individuals **CAN** transmit the virus to others.

Asymptomatic Individuals

- Asymptomatic individuals carry the active virus in their body but never develop any symptoms.
- We cannot truly determine the impact of asymptomatic cases until testing has increased.
- It is thought that asymptomatic individuals **CAN** transmit the disease to others.

Virus Spread

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person by:
  - being in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks landing in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  - a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.
- How easily a virus spreads from person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious, like measles, while other viruses do not spread as easily.
- Another factor is whether the spread is sustained, which means it goes from person-to-person without stopping.
- **The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people.** Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggest that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious.
Employer Obligations

Guidance On Preparing Workplaces For COVID-19

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has prepared a guide for employers on how to prepare the workforce to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is recommended employers take the time to review this guide, which can be found on the OSHA website. While OSHA does not have a specific standard around COVID-19, employers have an obligation under the General Duty Clause (GDC) to provide a workplace “free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.” COVID-19 falls under this GDC requirement and employers must be prepared to address this pandemic within their workforce.

Guidance For Businesses Permitted To Operate

To continue to limit the spread of COVID-19, Governor Tom Wolf provided guidance that details procedures businesses must follow to conduct in-person operations in counties slated to move to the yellow phase of reopening on May 8. All businesses, including non-profits, permitted to conduct in-person operations are subject to this guidance. This guidance is based on the building safety and business safety orders, under which nearly all life-sustaining businesses have been operating during the red phase.

Key takeaways from the Guidance For Businesses Permitted to Operate:

- Establish and implement a plan in case the business is exposed to a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. See Governor Wolf’s guidance for what this plan needs to include.
- If there’s a suspected case of COVID-19 in your workplace, it is required to take each employee’s temperature before they enter the business. An employee must be sent home if they have a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, or higher.
- Prevent large groups from entering or leaving the building by staggering work start and stop times.
- If a meeting needs to be held in person, limit the number of employees to 10 and maintain a social distance of six feet.
- Provide non-medical masks for employees to wear at all times and make it mandatory to wear masks while on the work site. Employers may approve masks obtained or made by employees according to the Department of Health policy.
- Require all customers to wear masks while on the premises. Businesses that provide medication, medical supplies, or groceries must provide an alternate, non-contact means of delivering goods for customers who cannot wear a mask.
  - However individuals who cannot wear a mask due to medical condition (including children under 2 years per CDC guidance) may enter the premises and are NOT required to provide documentation of such medical condition.
- Install shields or other barriers at registers and check-out areas to physically separate cashiers and customers, or take other measures to maintain social distancing between customers and employees.
- Schedule hand-washing breaks for employees at least every hour and assign an employee to wipe down carts and hand-baskets before the customer uses it.

The full guide can be downloaded at the governor.pa.gov website, or by clicking here in the electronic version of this guide.
Protecting Yourself and Your Employees

Preventive Measures

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus through social distancing.
- It’s important to wash your hands often, avoid close contact with others, cover your coughs and sneezes, and clean/disinfect surfaces often.
- Wear cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Washing Your Hands

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoiding Close Contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Put distance between yourself and other people.
  - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
  - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
- What is social distancing?
  - Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people outside of your home.

Cover Cough and Sneezes

- If you are in a private setting and do not have on a facemask, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean and Disinfect

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- After cleaning, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.

For more information, visit cdc.gov and search for “coronavirus businesses and workplaces” or click here in the electronic version of this guide.
UPMC AnywhereCare
Easy, 24/7 access to high-quality, low-cost care for flu symptoms

With UPMC AnywhereCare, you can get Virtual Urgent Care for cold and flu symptoms, allergies, and other nonemergency conditions. Download the app today!

4.9 out of 5 stars in the Apple App Store

Nondiscrimination statement
UPMC Health Plan complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

1UPMC Health Plan is the marketing name used to refer to the following companies, which are licensed to issue individual and group health insurance products or which provide third party administration services for group health plans: UPMC Health Network Inc., UPMC Health Options Inc., UPMC Health Coverage Inc., UPMC Health Plan Inc., UPMC Health Benefits Inc., UPMC for You Inc., and/or UPMC Benefit Management Services Inc.

Translation Services
注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-855-869-7228（TTY：711）。

UPMC Health Plan
How to Properly Use
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

A facemask should:
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Include multiple layers of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.

Can I use a homemade facemask?

- CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.
- Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.
- The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for health care workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

What is the right way to wear a facemask?

- When putting on a facemask or cloth face covering, use two fingers to point to either side of the top of the nose, indicating that the covering fits well in this area.
- Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and/or mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

Should I wash my homemade facemask?

- Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.
- A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

Who should not wear a facemask?

- The CDC’s guidance states that facemasks should not be place on young children younger than 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance.

For more information on how to use clothmasks, visit cdc.gov and search for “cloth face coverings” or click here in the electronic version of this guide.
How to Properly Use Personal Protective Equipment (cont.)

Gloves

While the CDC is not yet requiring glove use, it is important to understand proper techniques after contaminating a worn glove.

_How to properly remove gloves:_

- Reminder! You should always consider the outside of your gloves to be contaminated, no matter how long you wore the gloves.
- Using a gloved hand, grasp the palm area of the other gloved hand and peel off first glove.
- Hold removed glove in gloved hand.
- Slide fingers of ungloved hand under remaining glove at wrist and peel off second glove over first glove.
- Discard gloves in a waste container.
- If your hands get contaminated during glove removal, immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- It is important for perform hand hygiene after removing PPE. Hand hygiene should be performed by using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol or washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If hands are visibly soiled, soap and water should be used before returning to alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
COVID-19 and Workplace Safety

For most employers, protecting workers will depend on emphasizing basic infection prevention measures. As appropriate, all employers should implement good hygiene and infection control practices, including:

- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing, including by providing workers, customers, and worksite visitors with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

- Provide employees and customers with tissues and trash receptacles.
- Employers should explore whether they can establish policies and practices, such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts), to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others if state and local health authorities recommend the use of social distancing strategies.
- Discourage workers from using other workers’ phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment.

Screening Employees

Screening employees is an optional strategy that employers may use. There are several methods that employers can use to protect the employee conducting the temperature screening. The most protective methods incorporate social distancing (maintaining a distance of 6 feet from others), or physical barriers to eliminate or minimize the screener’s exposures due to close contact with a person who has symptoms during screening.
How to **Clean and Disinfect a Workspace**

**Clean**

- Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
  - **High touch surfaces include:**
    - tables
    - doorknobs
    - light switches
    - countertops
    - handles
    - desks

**Disinfect**

- Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty then use a household disinfectant.
- Recommend use of EPA-registered household disinfect which can be found on the CDC’s website.
- Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Many products recommend:
  - Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
  - Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.
  - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.
  - Ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
  - Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
  - Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.
  - To make a bleach solution, mix:
    - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water.
    - OR
    - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.

**Soft Surfaces**

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes:

- Clean the surface using soap and water, or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.
- Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
How to Clean and Disinfect a Workspace (cont.)

Electronics
For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, computer mouse, and remote controls:

- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer’s instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance is available, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol.
- Dry surfaces thoroughly.

Laundry
For clothing, towels, linens, and other items:

- Launder items according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people’s items.
- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove gloves and wash hands right away.
Suspected COVID-19 Cases and Accessing Testing

Employees who have symptoms when they arrive at work or become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home. Employees who develop symptoms outside of work should notify their supervisor and stay home.

Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation and have consulted with a healthcare provider and state or local health department.

Employers should not require sick employees to provide a COVID-19 test result or health care provider’s note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or return to work. Health care provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner. UPMC has a specimen collection site in Williamsport for patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. The specimen collection site is located at 609 Brandon Ave., Williamsport.
Primary care when you need it.

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Our primary care team offers complete care for patients of all ages, ensuring our communities have access to exceptional health care for every stage of life. Whether it is a minor injury, routine check-up, or a chronic medical condition, our team is here for you and your family 24 hours a day, seven days a week with around-the-clock nurse telephone support, as well as same-day and walk-in appointments and convenient evening and weekend hours.

To find a primary care provider, and search our office locations, visit UPMC Susquehanna.org/PrimaryCare.
When to Allow an Employee Back to Work After Having COVID-19

Scenario 1: Employee who has fever and cough but NO COVID-19 diagnosis.

Let’s say you have an employee who has had a fever and cough but did not get confirmation they were infected with COVID-19. They have fully recovered from their illness with or without medical intervention. Based on the CDC guidelines, you can allow them to return to work only under all the following conditions:

- At least 3 days have passed since recovery, with no fever for a minimum of 72 hours. Employees must have no abnormal temperature for 72 hours without the use of any fever-reducing medicines (aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen).
- Their respiratory symptoms have improved.
- 7 days have passed since the beginning of any symptoms.

Scenario 2: An employee who has confirmed COVID-19 but is asymptomatic.

What about an employee who has been confirmed (tested positive by a medical professional) with COVID-19 but has not become ill due to the virus? They must remain in isolation following their diagnosis. Based on the CDC guidelines, they should be able to return to work only under all the following conditions:

- After at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 test.
- They have not become ill.
- For an additional 3 days after they end isolation, they continue to limit contact (stay 6 feet away) with others.
- They wear a mask or other covering of their nose and mouth to limit the potential of dispersal of respiratory secretions.

Scenario 3: An employee with confirmed COVID-19 and shows mild symptoms.

This is an employee who has been confirmed (tested positive by a medical professional) with COVID-19 and has become mildly or moderately ill due to the virus. These employees were the ones who self-isolated and medicated at home and did not require hospitalization. Based on the CDC guidelines, they should be able to return to work only under all the following conditions:

- At least 3 days have passed since their recovery, with no abnormal fever for a minimum of 72 hours. Employees must have no significant temperature for 72 hours without the use of any fever-reducing medicines (aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen).
- Respiratory symptoms have improved.
- No continuing illness: the employee exhibits no symptoms of COVID-19.
- The employee has had 2 confirmed negative COVID-19 tests, administered by a medical professional and spaced at least 24 hours apart.
When to Allow an Employee Back to Work After Having COVID-19 (cont.)

Scenario 4: An employee who is confirmed to have COVID-19 and requires hospitalization.

An employee who has been confirmed (tested positive by a medical professional) with COVID-19 and has become ill due to the virus, requiring hospitalization may be at higher risk of shedding (dispersing respiratory secretions) and spreading the infection. The CDC recommends rigorous testing before returning these employees to work since they may experience longer periods of viral detection compared to those with mild or moderate symptoms.

The CDC writes, “Severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., medical treatment with immunosuppressive drugs, bone marrow or solid organ transplant recipients, inherited immunodeficiency, poorly controlled HIV) may also have longer periods of SARS-CoV-2 RNA detection and prolonged shedding of infectious recovery.”

Considerations for High Risk Employees:

For those who have been hospitalized and others in high-risk categories, the contagion may last longer than for others. Further, they suggest, “Placing a patient in a setting where they will have close contact with individuals at risk for severe disease warrants a conservative approach.”

Returning to Work Guidelines:

The CDC recommends a test-based strategy before returning high-risk and hospitalized employees to work. Employees with conditions that might weaken their immune system may have “prolonged viral shedding after recovery.” The CDC recommends these employees discuss returning to work with their personal health care provider to best assess if they pose no threat to coworkers.

This may include re-testing to verify they are no longer shedding the virus. Businesses should consider each of these staff members on a case-by-case basis, requiring verified testing and return to work authorizations from the worker’s health care professional.

The CDC adds some employers may apply more stringent criteria to allow staff members to return to work, which may be based on whether a “higher threshold to prevent transmission is warranted.” These could include requiring:

- A longer time after recovery before an employee returns to work.
- Requiring employees are tested for COVID-19, then adhering to the guideline’s criteria before they can return.
How to Manage Customers and Visitors

Employers can make changes to their visitor and customer processes upon check-in by collecting extra information from whomever is entering a facility. Ask them if they have experienced a fever, or have traveled recently to a high-risk area, and store that information in your visitor log. These questions should be asked every time they come to your office, whether they’ve been there before or not. You may potentially want to monitor whether the visitor/customer had any person-to-person contact during their visit to your office and help you store that information should you want to track risk factors.

You can also add an agreement to your process that asks a series of questions of your visitors before they can complete the check-in process. Here are recommended questions to ask visitors every time they enter a facility:

- Are you experiencing any common flu symptoms, like a fever or cough?
- Have you been in person-to-person contact with someone who has exhibited symptoms, currently is diagnosed, or has been exposed to someone who has exhibited coronavirus symptoms in the last 7 days?
- Visited an area where there has been a significant outbreak of the coronavirus with the last 7 days?
Workplace Wellness Reminders

Employee Motivation
High stress levels in the workplace affects the morale of employees and demotivates which results in a drop of productivity. Stress also causes an increase in absenteeism and employee turnover. Good management skills can boost your employee morale, motivate employees, and improve company culture. Healthy employees are happier in the workplace and more productive and want to come to work! This positive work environment will rub off onto coworkers which cultivates a healthier work culture.

Absenteeism
“Mental Health Days” are one of the main causes of absent employees. Stress causes depression, anxiety and a weakened immune system. Healthy management of stress in the workplace will reduce company costs by reducing sick days and improving productivity.

Tough Times Call for Tough Leaders
During stressful times, employees look for leadership and direction from their supervisors. Having open communication and clear-cut expectations will help put your employees’ minds at ease through this difficult transition.

Showing You Care
Implementing stress management as well as other wellness initiatives shows your employees that you care about their overall health and wellbeing. Having this added benefit will show employees they are appreciated. The outcome is keeping healthy employees in a less stressful workplace longer.

Communication
Talk with you employees and find out what specific parts make their jobs stressful. When employees feel as though they are heard, it will help employers gain trust as well as lower employees stress levels.
Tips To Have Healthy and Happy Employees

- Offer guided meditation at lunch time or specific times throughout the week.
- Offer free exercise bands, exercise balls, or chances to win a Fitbit or spin bike to keep employees in tune with their fitness goals.
- Start each meeting with some form of exercises. You can start each meeting with 5 minutes of stretching/yoga or hold “walking meetings” so employees can get those extra steps in.
- Offer employees flexible workout time during workday.
- Offer to swap out desk chairs for stability balls and standing desks. An employee should not be sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time and an employee that is more active throughout the day is prone to be more focused and motivated in their work.
- *IF POSSIBLE* Encourage employees to walk or bike to work.
- Have a park bench and garden area with a small fountain in a calm location at your worksite. This area can be designated for a relaxing break and time away from the desk.
- Develop a walking path around your building or grounds of employment with mile markers. Hold challenges to utilize the walking path during the workday.
- Offer free or discounted memberships to the gym. This will show your employee not only care about their health but also you are rewarding them with health.
- Promote mental health awareness. Have resources available for counselors and promote your companies EAP.
- Have healthy lunches at meetings. Offer to have discounted meal services provided for work to stray employees away from ordering takeout. If you have a cafeteria, promote healthy foods by replacing junk food.
- Have wearable technology challenges.
- Encourage employees to take 15-minute breaks every 4 hours to get up and move around.
- Have an employee community garden.
- Create an employee healthy recipe board in the break room.
- BE INVOLVED WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES AND WORKPLACE WELLNESS!
HELP THE HELPERS

They keep our fridges stocked, our streets safe, our lights on, and our hospitals and pharmacies running.

But sometimes the helpers need help.
We’re seeing friends and neighbors offering to drop off their groceries, walk their dog, or cook them a healthy meal.
Or just picking up the phone and saying “thanks.”

We can all help the helpers.
After all, we couldn’t keep going without them.