



Reopening New York

Office-Based Work Guidelines for Employers and Employees

These guidelines apply to all business activities where the core function takes place within an office setting that have been permitted to [reopen](#) as well as to office-based businesses statewide that were previously permitted to operate as essential. This guidance may apply – but is not limited – to businesses and entities in the following sectors: Professional services, nonprofit, technology, administrative support, and higher education administration (excluding full campus reopening). Please note that these guidelines may also apply to business operating parts of their business functions under different guidelines (e.g. front office for a construction company). See Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Office-Based Work for full details.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, all operators of office workspaces should stay up to date with any changes to state and federal requirements related to office workspaces and incorporate those changes into their operations. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and standards.

	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In Phase II, limit the total number of occupants at any given time to no more than 50% of the maximum occupancy for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy. ✓ A distance of at least 6 ft. must be maintained amongst all individuals at all times, unless safety of the core activity requires a shorter distance. ✓ Any time workers or visitors must come within 6 ft. of another person, acceptable face coverings must be worn (ensuring that mouth and nose are covered). Individuals must be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within 6 ft. ✓ Prohibit the use of tightly confined spaces (e.g. elevators, vehicles) by more than one individual at time, unless all individuals are wearing face coverings. If occupied by more than one person, keep occupancy under 50% of maximum capacity. ✓ Post social distancing markers using tape or signs that denote 6 ft. of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations, restrooms). ✓ Limit in-person gatherings as much as possible and use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings (e.g. meetings) should be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants. ✓ Shared workstations (e.g. “hot-desks”) must be cleaned and disinfected between users. ✓ Reduce interpersonal contact and congregation through various methods (e.g. adjusting workplace hours, limiting in-person presence to necessary staff, shifting design, reducing on-site workforce, staggering arrival/departure times to reduce congestion in lobbies/elevators). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Modify or reconfigure the number of workstations and employee seating areas and desks for their workers, so that workers are at least 6 ft. apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when facing one another) and are not sharing workstations without cleaning and disinfection between use. ✓ Implement strict clean-desk policies, so that non-essential items are stored in enclosed cabinets or drawers, rather than on desks. ✓ Limit use of shared workstations (e.g. “hot-desks”), when feasible. ✓ Leverage technology, such as room sensors and real-time dashboards, to quantify and display utilization of spaces throughout the office. ✓ Mark six feet distance circles around workstations and other common stationary work areas. ✓ Reduce bi-directional foot traffic by posting signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces. ✓ Limit on-site interactions (e.g. designate an egress for individuals leaving their shifts and a separate ingress for individuals starting shifts) and movements (e.g. workers should remain near workstations as often as possible). ✓ Add desks to spaces previously used for group gathering (e.g. meeting spaces, conference rooms). ✓ Close non-essential amenities and communal areas which promote gathering or are high-touch. ✓ Stagger worker schedules to observe social distancing for any gathering. ✓ Consider limiting all non-essential travel.

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STOP THE SPREAD.

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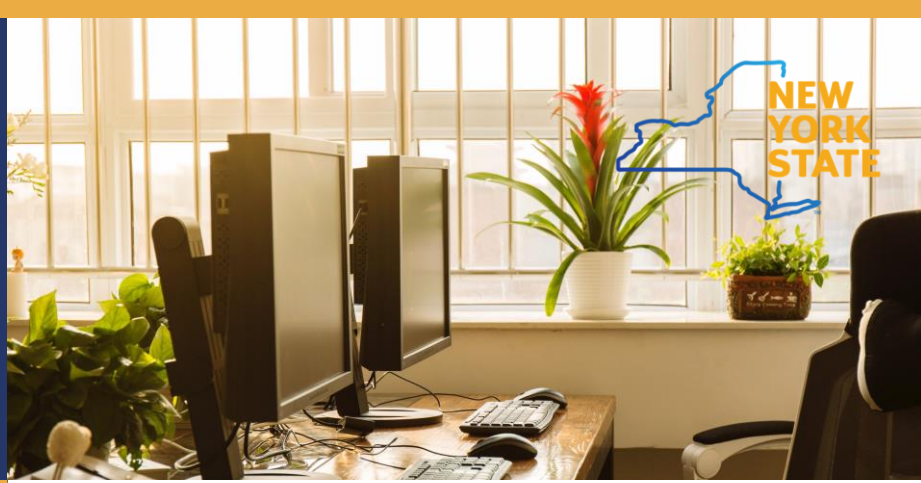
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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Physical Distancing (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Non-essential common areas (e.g. gyms, pools, game rooms) must remain closed. 	
Protective Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide workers with an acceptable face covering at no-cost to the employees/contractors and have an adequate supply of coverings in case of need for replacement. ✓ Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth (e.g. homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), surgical masks, and face shields. ✓ Clean, replace, and prohibit sharing of face coverings. Consult the CDC guidance for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as instructions on use and cleaning. ✓ Train workers on how to don, doff, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE (training should be extended to contractors if the building managers/owners supply contractors with PPE). ✓ Must advise workers and visitors to wear face coverings in common areas including elevators, lobbies, and when traveling around the office. ✓ Limit the sharing of objects, such as tools, laptops, notebooks, telephones, touchscreens, and writing utensils, as well as the touching of shared surfaces; or, require workers to wear gloves when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched surfaces; or, require workers to perform hand hygiene before and after contact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintain adequate supply of face coverings, masks and other required PPE should a worker need a replacement, or should a visitor be in need.



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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Hygiene and Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain cleaning logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning. ✓ Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations in office, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels, lined garbage can, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible. ✓ Provide and encourage participants to use cleaning/disinfection supplies before and after use of shared and frequently touched surfaces, followed by hand hygiene. ✓ Ensure that equipment is regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants, including at least as often as employees and contractors change workstations. ✓ Cleaning and disinfecting of the office location, shared surfaces, and other areas, as well as equipment, should be performed using Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) products identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19. ✓ Regularly clean and disinfect the site and more frequently clean and disinfect high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces. ✓ Rigorous cleaning and disinfection must occur at least after each shift, daily, or more frequently as needed. ✓ Regularly clean and disinfect the location or facility and conduct more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high risk areas used by many individuals (e.g. restrooms) and for frequently touched surfaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Avoid use of furniture that is not easily cleaned and disinfected (e.g. cloth fabric sofas). ✓ Wherever possible, increase ventilation of outdoor air (e.g. opening windows and doors) while maintaining safety precautions.

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Hygiene and Cleaning (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event that an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g. elevators, lobbies, building entrances, badge scanners, restrooms handrails, door handles). ✓ Prohibit shared food and beverages (e.g. buffet meals). 	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Affirm you have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that you will implement them. ✓ Post signage inside and outside of the office location to remind personnel and customers to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols. ✓ Train all personnel on new protocols and frequently communicate safety guidelines. ✓ Establish a communication plan for employees and visitors with a consistent means to provide updated information. ✓ Provide building managers/owners a list of essential visitors expected to enter the building. ✓ Maintain a continuous log of every person, including workers and visitors, who may have close contact with other individuals at the work site or area. ✓ If a worker or visitor was in close contact with others at the office location and tests positive for COVID-19, the employer must immediately notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers, visitors, and/or customers (if known) who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop webpages, text and email groups, and social media campaigns to provide information to workers, customers, and visitors that include instructions, training, signage, and information. ✓ Work with building management to help facilitate any building-wide communications. ✓ Post signage inside and outside of the building to remind individuals to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols.



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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Communication (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conspicuously post safety plans on site. 	
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Employees who are sick should stay home or return to home, if they become ill at work. ✓ Implement mandatory health screening assessment (e.g. questionnaire, temperature check) for employees, contractors, and other visitors, asking about (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days. Responses must be reviewed and documented daily <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a person has COVID-19 symptoms AND EITHER tests positive for COVID-19 OR did not receive a test, the individual may only return after completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine. • If a person does NOT have COVID-19 symptoms BUT tests positive for COVID-19, the individual may only return after completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine. • If a person has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is symptomatic, the individual should follow the above protocol for a positive case. • If a person has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time AND is NOT symptomatic, the individual must complete a 14 day self-quarantine. ✓ Coordinate with building managers to facilitate screening. Tenants are responsible for screening their own employees and visitors, unless Responsible Parties and building management have agreed to alternate arrangement to ensure screening is in effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prevent workers or visitors from intermingling in close contact with each other prior to completion of the screening. ✓ Daily temperature checks may be conducted per Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines. ✓ Maintain a log of every person, including workers and visitors, who may have close contact with other individuals at the work site or area, such that all contacts may be identified, traced and notified in the event a worker is diagnosed with COVID-19. ✓ Screen individuals at or near the building entrance (if space allows) to minimize the impact of a positive individual in case of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. ✓ Coordinate with building managers to identify individuals who have completed a remote screening. ✓ Use screening tools in building entrances, in coordination with building management where possible, to identify potentially symptomatic visitors and direct them to a secondary screening area to complete a follow-on screening.



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Screening (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ On-site screeners should be trained by employer-identified individuals familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols and wear appropriate PPE, including at a minimum, a face covering. ✓ Identify a point-of-contact as the party for workers and visitors to inform if they later are experiencing COVID-19-related symptoms, as noted in the questionnaire. ✓ Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and contact tracing in the event of a positive case. 	