

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce and our 4,500 business and federated partners remain committed to doing our part in assisting to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. The health and safety of our members, their employees and the general public remains our top priority. We believe that federal and state actions taken to address the challenges posed by the evolving COVID-19 crisis must appropriately balance public health and safety with the economic realities that our members are facing at this time.

We are committed to working collectively to safely re-open and re-build our economy. With input from Chamber members, and other stakeholders from across the state, we have compiled the following framework of best practices to assist Maryland businesses in their efforts to establish safe workplaces for their employees, consumers and the general public.

Reopening commerce requires that certain essential resources and critical services are in place. These include public health and safety measures like: 1) access to more widespread testing; 2) access to personal protective equipment (PPE); and 3) expansion of contact tracing capabilities. Employees need confidence in these safety measures and access to critical services like public transportation and childcare before they return to work. Once these issues are

addressed, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce envisions a phased-in approach to re-opening, and subsequently re-building, our economy.

The strength of Maryland's economy is based on its diversity and includes many sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, hospitality, biotech, government contracting, among others. Each of these and the businesses within them face unique challenges requiring unique solutions and flexibility based on their needs. The best practices outlined in this document may not be appropriate for every sector and are meant to serve as a guide, not a one-size-fits-all approach, to establishing safe workplaces.

COVID-19 Guidance

The appropriate starting point for all Maryland businesses is the comprehensive guidance provided by the federal government through the **U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**. Additional state guidance can be found via the **Maryland Department of Health** and **Maryland Department of Labor**.

[MORE >](#)



Best Practices and Baselines for Reopening Workplaces

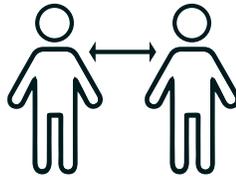
COMMUNICATION

- ▶ Make information immediately available to employees, consumers and the general public about safe workplace changes
- ▶ Communicate updates and changes promptly
- ▶ Communicate with and educate employees and management to carry out protocols; provide clear direction on roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Utilize signs to convey instructions on business safety protocols



SOCIAL DISTANCING

- ▶ Allow flexibility with respect to work sites and work hours. This may mean providing alternating shifts for employees to reduce employee density and providing special rules for business visitors or clients
- ▶ Continue to allow for remote or telework where and when possible
- ▶ Limit access to employee gathering places
- ▶ Conduct phone/email/virtual meetings instead of in-person
- ▶ Limit in-person meetings to no more than 10 individuals, providing appropriate physical space during same
- ▶ For the safety of employees and consumers, implement contact-less transactions to the extent possible



SANITATION PROTOCOLS

- ▶ Train employees on frequent hand washing, properly covering coughs and sneezes, and refraining from touching the face and post the CDC graphics on these protocols



- ▶ Clean and sanitize surfaces frequently, paying extra attention to common touch areas and shared spaces
- ▶ To the extent possible, provide touch-free solutions to employees

MONITORING EMPLOYEE HEALTH

- ▶ Encourage employees to self-report if they are feeling ill and track this information; this will be useful for contact tracing in the event of a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case
- ▶ Conduct employee wellness checks at the start of shifts
- ▶ Create a response plan for employees who report or demonstrate symptoms
- ▶ Implement flexible sick leave policies consistent with public health guidance and federal/state laws
- ▶ Where safety training or periodic workplace testing is mandated by OSHA, determine whether alternatives (such as web-based training) can be implemented



LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- ▶ Keep apprised of guidelines issued by federal and state agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and federal, state and local health departments to make sure measures you adopt for employees and consumers are legally compliant
- ▶ Ensure that business recordkeeping satisfies regulatory requirements (and if federally funded loans or tax credits for reimbursement of paid leave are to be sought, the business satisfies U.S. Treasury Department requirements)
- ▶ Consult with experienced legal counsel regularly

