ACRISURE®

Limitless Growth Through Exceptional Partnerships™

CREATING A RETURN TO WORK ACTION PLAN

This resource is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as legal advice. Readers should contact legal counsel for legal advice.

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ACRISURE AND OUR AGENCY PARTNERS ARE HERE FOR YOU

Acrisure and our Agency Partners understand it will be a gradual effort to return to places of work.

In many cases, the decision to reopen offices will not be clear-cut. As one contemplates various scenarios, it's important to have a plan to keep everyone healthy and safe. Please be sure to refer to guidance laid out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and OSHA designed to keep employers, employees and customers safe.

This guide and our COVID-19 Resource Center contain various materials, including posters, template letters for employees, news and insights, HR guidelines, benefits and compliance considerations, and other useful assets.

ACRISURE COMPLIANCE SOLUTIONS: RETURNING TO WORK RESOURCE GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

Click here to access an additional guide developed by Acrisure's Compliance Solutions team, which examines the many issues employers may face during the recall process to provide a safe environment for their workers to return as well as to consider potential compliance concerns that may arise in the process.

Topics include:

- General Return to Work Considerations
- Employers' and Employees' Roles in Maintaining a Safe Workplace
- Compliance Considerations
- Wage and Hour & Employee Benefits Considerations
- Sample Workplace Coronavirus Infection Email to Employees
- Sample Teleworking Policy

REOPENING DECISIONS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

After the government allows businesses to reopen, firms still need to determine whether it makes sense to resume operations. While the complexity of risk assessments will differ from business to business, they typically involve the following steps:

- **Perform a walkthrough** of the premises and consider high-risk areas.
- **Decide who may be harmed and how,** especially high-risk individuals.
- **Determine how you'll control risk—** Options include risk avoidance (eliminate hazards), risk control (preventive action), and risk transfer (transfer exposures to a third party).

FORM A PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAM

To ensure that employees receive clear communications and that your company is on the same page when it comes to your return to work action plan, it's essential that you create a pandemic response team:

- **Team lead(s)**
- **COVID-19 prevention and protocols lead**
- **Sanitization and disinfection lead**
- **Communication lead**
- **Managers and supervisors—**Leadership, including managers and supervisors, should familiarize themselves with the details of the action plan and be prepared to answer questions.
- **Employees—**Outline a number of best practices that employees should follow, such as staying home when sick, practicing good hygiene in the office, and social distancing with colleagues.

WORKPLACE PREPARATIONS FOR REOPENING

MODIFYING THE WORKPLACE

Many workplace modifications will be based on social distancing protocols, which may also be required by states or local orders as a condition of being permitted to reopen.

1. **Physical workspace modifications**—Suggested changes to physical layouts include separating desks and workstations to ensure that there are 6 feet between each person; closing or limiting access to common spaces, including conference rooms, break rooms and cafeterias; and establishing contactless drop zones for all deliveries including mail, packages and food.

2. **Workplace protocols**—To keep employees safe, your business will need to change protocols for in-person interactions and physical contact. For instance, establish and enforce a crowd control plan that maximizes remote work to ensure that as few employees are in the building at once. Limit the number and size of in-person gatherings and meetings to a degree that allows for social distancing. Continue to leverage digital tools to encourage collaboration.

3. **Employee scheduling**—If remote work is limited or not possible, employers can consider staggering shifts or creating groups of employees that are to work together in shifts throughout the pandemic response.

DISINFECTING THE WORKPLACE

Some professional cleaning services may be available to hire for a deep-clean and disinfection of your business. However, if you need to clean your office or building yourself before reopening, keep the following tips in mind.

- **Wear proper PPE while cleaning**
- **Focus on entryways and exits and other high-touch common surfaces**
- **Use an EPA-registered disinfectant** against SARS-CoV-2—Reference the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website.
- **Replace air filters**

EMPLOYEE SCREENING PROTOCOLS

To keep employees safe, consider conducting screening procedures to identify potentially ill employees before they enter the office. Self-assessment of symptoms coupled with policies/practices that support staying at home when sick are baseline suggestions. Any employee screening should be implemented on a nondiscriminatory basis, and all information gleaned should be treated as confidential medical information under the Americans with Disabilities Act—specifically, the identity of workers exhibiting a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms should only be shared with members of company management with a true need to know. Be sure to notify employees of your screening procedures to avoid any surprises.

WORKPLACE PREPARATIONS FOR REOPENING (CONT.)

EXPOSURE AND CONFIRMED ILLNESS PROTOCOL

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or believe they have been infected will be instructed to follow the advice of a qualified medical professional and self-quarantine. When self-quarantining, employees should follow CDC-issued guidelines and employees returning to work should follow relevant local/state/federal guidelines (specificity depends on where you are located).

USE OF PPE

Viruses like COVID-19 can be transmitted through the eyes, nose and mouth via tiny viral particles known as aerosols. Non-medical grade face masks or coverings are generally considered a meaningful way to limit infected individuals who are asymptomatic from spreading this virus, and can limit hand-to-face contact by non-infected individuals. When social distancing is not feasible, masks are at least recommended.

EXTERNAL LINKS AND RESOURCES

- CDC Guidelines on Social Distancing
- CDC Covid-19 Response for Opening America Up Again
- Industry and Business-specific Safety Considerations from OSHA and the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
- Contact an Acrisure Agency Partner

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Please consult a legal or medical professional for further advice.

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