

## Best Practices and Guidance on COVID-19

### **Best practices to consider:**

- Communicate with your employees – let them know you are thinking about the issue and that they can ask questions if concerned (provide a primary point of contact).
- Consider temporary policies to encourage working from home or paid leave for anyone experiencing any symptoms or with family members experiencing symptoms.
- Communicate proactively with board/lenders/investors if there is a potential material impact on your business; preview the magnitude of the impact and any potential upcoming actions or decisions needed.
- Limit non-critical travel and avoid exposure to large groups (i.e. conferences, sporting events).
- Offer to conduct meetings via videoconference when appropriate to limit travel and demonstrate concern for others.
- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Place in multiple locations and conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- Review guidance from CDC related to limiting spread of COVID-19 (also applies to traditional flu) and post reminders in visible locations for employees.
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>
  - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

### **Recommended strategies for employers to use now:**

- **Actively encourage sick employees to stay home:**
  - Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay home until they are free of fever (>100.4° F using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
  - Ensure sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
  - Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temp employees about the importance of sick employees staying home.
  - Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide documentation in a timely way.
- **Separate sick employees:**
  - CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from

other employees and be sent home immediately. Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).

- Call ahead before visiting your doctor. If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

- **Emphasize respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees:**

- Place posters that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and [hand hygiene](#) at the entrance to your workplace and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for employees.
- Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Place in multiple locations and conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.

- **Perform routine environmental cleaning:**

- Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees.

- **Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps:**

- Advise employees to check themselves for symptoms of [acute respiratory illness](#) before starting travel and stay home if they are sick.
- Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- **Additional Measures in Response to Currently Occurring Sporadic Importations of the COVID-19:**

- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of potential exposure.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should refer to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of potential exposure.

**How it spreads:**

- **Person-to-person spread**
  - The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
    - Between people in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
    - Through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- **Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects**
  - It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not the main way the virus spreads.

**Potential email template:**

Team:

I want to assure you that we are aware of the increasing concern and impact related to the coronavirus (COVID-19), and we are doing everything we can to both protect employees and visitors, and to minimize the risk of disruption to our business. In addition, we are reviewing potential policies and actions to take going forward as the situation develops over the coming weeks.

If you have any symptoms of acute respiratory illness or a fever, please do not come to work. Seek medical care by contacting your healthcare provider (call before going to a physician's office, urgent care or ER). In addition, if anyone in your family is experiencing these symptoms, please contact your supervisor and avoid coming to work until you can confirm you have not been exposed.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (and the traditional flu) is to practice good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette (cover mouth and nose when coughing), avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose, and avoiding close contact with people that are sick or showing potential symptoms.

If you have questions about how to handle a situation, or about company policies or resources, please don't hesitate to ask. [Designated Contact] is leading this process [Company Name], so please include [him/her] in any communications or requests. We also encourage you to review information from credible sources such as the CDC and World Health Organization if you have questions about the virus and current updates.

If you have been to a country on the CDC travel watchlist (China, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand) in the past 14 days, please notify your supervisor and [Direct Contact] immediately. If your role requires travel, and you are uncomfortable with any of your responsibilities or upcoming travel plans, please let us know by communicating with your direct supervisor or [Designated Contact], and we will do our best to resolve it.

Sincerely,

[CEO]