ACIR
Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
Best Practices Guidelines

Updated 1-28-2021 - Declaration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies

Libraries

Critical Functions/Responsibilities
Libraries serve as a focus for intellectual growth, research and learning for people of all ages. Through libraries, cities and towns provide collective access to books and other resources which no individual could hope to afford.

Statutory Issues/References
☐ Chapter 190 - Public Libraries
☐ Sec. 11-32. Legislative body of municipality may establish or operate a public library. ... Such library and reading room shall be free to the use of the inhabitants of the city, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the board of trustees may adopt in order to render the use of the library and reading room of the greatest benefit.

Executive Orders

Declaration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies
January 26, 2021

On March 10, 2020, in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 disease associated with a novel coronavirus that was affecting multiple countries and states and had resulted in the spread of infections in Connecticut and surrounding states, as well as resulting shortages of personal protective equipment and other supplies that could jeopardize public safety and civil preparedness, and in order to provide me and other appropriate officials with all authorities necessary to limit the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and protect public safety within the State of Connecticut, I declared a public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency throughout the State...On September 1, 2020, in anticipation of the expiration of those states of emergency and in recognition of continued and newly emerging threats to public health and safety and civil preparedness posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I renewed the March 10, 2020 declarations and declared new public health and civil preparedness emergencies through February 9, 2021...Since I declared and renewed those public health and civil preparedness emergencies, and due in no small part to the orders I have issued pursuant to those emergencies, Connecticut has made significant progress in limiting the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating its devastating public health and economic effects. And yet, while it has been more than a month since I have issued a new executive order, those orders currently in effect remain crucial to the state’s civil preparedness and ability to protect the public health. COVID-19 remains a global pandemic, capable of spreading quickly within our state. New and unforeseen challenges have arisen since September of last year, when I declared new and renewed emergencies. The current, second wave and the recent mutations of the virus have made clear that many of the existing orders will remain essential beyond February 9. While our vaccination effort currently leads the country in many respects, an effective mass vaccination program requires that I be vested with all of the flexibility and resources that the declared states of emergency provide. As was true in September of last year, the risks to public health and to our state’s economy would be heightened substantially if the existing emergencies expired as scheduled on February 9. As a result, and for the same reasons I declared emergencies on March 10 and declared new and renewed emergencies on September 1...I am renewing the existing public health emergency and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the State...I hereby declare that new states of public health and civil preparedness emergency exist throughout the State...These new and renewed states of emergency shall run concurrently and remain in effect until April 20, 2021, unless earlier terminated by me.

☐ 7N-1 - Addressed social distancing in order to minimize COVID-19 exposure, amended and superseded by Executive Order 7D and now 7N-1
Executive Order 7N Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7N.pdf
Please. Wear a Mask

7B - Suspension of in-person open meeting requirements: The order modifies statutes regarding state and local government meetings that are required to permit members of the public to attend in-person and authorizes those meetings to be held remotely by conference call or videoconference, provided that the public is provided remote access to view or listen to the meetings and access materials for the meetings. Sec. 1-206, 225 and 226

Executive Order 7B Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7B.pdf

7H-1 - Amended by 7ZZ-10 - Restrictions on workplaces for non-essential business: The order directs all non-essential businesses and not-for-profit entities in Connecticut to prohibit all in-person functions if they are able to, effective Monday, March 23, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. The governor is encouraging all businesses to employ, to the maximum extent possible, any telecommuting or work-from-home procedures that they can safely implement. The governor’s order excludes any essential business or entity providing essential services or functions, such as healthcare, food service, law enforcement, and similar critical services.

Executive Order 7H Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7H.pdf

7L-3 - Suspends restrictions on the re-employment of retired municipal employees: To enable municipalities to meet critical staffing needs caused by COVID-19 with skilled and experienced employees who require little to no additional training, the order modifies state statutes to allow certain retired employees who are in the municipal retirement system to work without any hourly or durational limitation while also continuing to receive retirement allowances. Sec. 7-438(b). Continuation of retirement allowance upon other public employment. Participation in state retirement system. Reemployment by participating municipality.

Executive Order 7L Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7L.pdf

7V-1 - Safe workplaces in essential businesses: Requires the Department of Economic and Community Development to work in consultation with the Department of Public Health on the development of legally binding statewide rules prescribing additional protective measures that every workplace in Connecticut deemed essential – and any other business or nonprofit allowed to remain open – must follow. Such rules will be mandatory throughout the state.

Immediately upon Governor Lamont’s signing of this executive order, the Department of Economic and Community Development published the Safe Workplaces Rules for Essential Employers on its website, outlining guidance for these businesses. These rules go into effect immediately. Nothing in such rules or this order shall supersede Executive Order No. 7S, Section 1, or the “Safe Stores” rules

Go to DECD’s website for the most recent guidance: https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/Safe-Workplace-Rules-for-Essential-Employers

Executive Order 7V Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7V.pdf

7X-3 - Extension of closures, distancing, and safety measures through May 20, 2020: Extends the date for all previously enacted closures, distancing, and safety measures until at least May 20. This includes previously enacted limits on restaurant, bar, and private club operations; closure of on-site operations at off-track betting facilities; closure of operations at gyms, sports, fitness, and recreation facilities and movie theaters; closure of large shopping malls; closure of places of public amusement; safety and distancing measures for workplaces and non-essential businesses, prohibition on social and recreational gatherings of more than five people; and restrictions on retail operations.

Executive Order 7X Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7X.pdf

7BB-1 - (Repealed and Replaced with EO 7NNN) Cloth face coverings or higher level of protection required in public wherever close contact is unavoidable - Each employee shall be required to wear a mask or other cloth material that covers his or her mouth and nose at all times while in the workplace. Towns shall issue such masks or cloth face coverings to their employees. In the event a town is unable to provide masks or cloth face coverings to employees because of shortages or supply chain difficulties, towns must provide the materials and CDC tutorial about how to create a cloth face covering, or compensate employees for the reasonable and necessary costs employees expend on such materials to make their own masks or cloth face coverings.
• Nothing in these rules shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition.

• If a person declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition as described above, such person shall not be required to produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition.

Executive Order 7BB Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7BB.pdf

7QQ-6 - Clarification that Commissioner Orders Issued Pursuant to the Governor’s Executive Orders Are Not Regulations Subject to the UAPA. Section 4-166(16) of the Connecticut General Statutes is modified to clarify that the definition of a regulation does not include any amendment or repeal of an existing regulation and any directive, rule, guidance, or order issued by a Commissioner or Department Head pursuant to a Governor’s Executive Order during the existing civil preparedness and public health emergency and any renewal or extension thereof. Notwithstanding Sections 4-166 to 189, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, any Commissioner or Department Head, as permitted or directed by any such Governor’s executive order, may modify or suspend any regulatory requirements adopted by the Commissioner or Department Head that they deem necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the public health. This section applies to all orders that have been issued since the declaration of public health and civil preparedness emergencies on March 10, 2020 and for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency, including any period of renewal of such emergency declaration.

Executive order 7QQ Link: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7QQ.pdf

7NNN - 1 - Executive Order No. 7BB, Section 2, issued on April 17, 2020, is repealed. Effective immediately, any person in a public place in Connecticut, whether indoors or outdoors, who does not maintain a safe social distance of approximately six feet from every other person shall cover their mouth and nose with a mask or cloth face-covering. In addition, individuals shall use a mask or cloth face covering when using the services of any taxi, car, livery, ride-sharing or similar service, or any means of mass public transit, or while within any semi-enclosed transit stop or waiting area.

• Nothing in this order shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, a child in a child care setting, or anyone under the age of 2 years. Any person who declines to wear a mask or face covering because of a medical condition shall be exempt from this order and any requirement to wear masks in Sector Rules or other rules issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), but only if such person provides written documentation that the person is qualified for the exemption from a licensed medical provider, the Department of Developmental Services or other state agency that provides or supports services for people with emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities, or a person authorized by any such agency. Such documentation need not name or describe the condition that qualifies the person for the exemption.

• The Commissioner of DECD shall issue updated versions of Sector Rules, Safe Workplace Rules for Essential Employers, or other rules issued pursuant to previous executive orders, which updated versions shall set forth updated requirements for face coverings within those settings, and which, when complied with, shall constitute compliance with this order.

• This order shall supersede and preempt any current or future municipal order whenever such order conflicts with this order.

Executive Order Link 7NNN: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7NNN.pdf

9.1 - Commissioners of Early Childhood and Education May Issue Operational Rules. To promote and secure the safety and protection of adults and children in public schools and childcare settings, including camps, related to the risks of COVID-19, the Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Early Childhood, in consultation with the Commissioner of Public Health, may issue binding guidance, rules, or orders for operation of schools or childcare settings that each deems necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic or its effects or to implement any previous or future executive order issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such rules or binding guidance may include rules related to the required use of masks or face-coverings in school buildings and child care settings and may allow for medical, developmental, or disability-related exceptions; phase-in periods in early childhood settings to promote compliance and acclimation by young children; and mask breaks, as each commissioner deems necessary. Such guidance, rules, or orders are not included in the definition set forth in Section 4-166(16) of the Connecticut General Statutes. The operative school reopening document issued by the State Department of Education on June 29, 2020, entitled Adapt, Advance, Achieve: Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together, and related addendums, as
amended from time to time, are deemed such binding guidance, rules or orders as authorized by this order. This authority to issue rules or binding guidance related to mask use in early childhood settings supersedes the exception for children in child care settings contained in Executive Order No. 7NNN, Section 1.


☐ 9B.2 - Authorization for the Issuance of Fines. Section 51-164n(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes is amended to authorize the Commissioner of Public Health, local health directors, district health directors, and their designees; municipal chief executive officers and their designees; and state and municipal police officers, peace officers as defined in Section 53a-3(9) of the Connecticut General Statutes, special police forces described in Section 10a-156b of the Connecticut General Statutes, and public safety departments of institutions of higher education to issue fines for the violations listed below. All fines collected pursuant to this order shall be distributed to the General Fund. In any case in which a person is charged with a violation pursuant to this order, the procedures set forth in Section 51-164n through 51-164r of the Connecticut General Statutes shall apply. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to limit, alter, modify or suspend any penalties or remedies that otherwise apply to violation of orders issued pursuant to civil preparedness and public health emergencies or that are otherwise available through existing executive orders. For purposes of this section, “business entity” means a public or private corporation, a limited liability company, an unincorporated association, a partnership of any kind, or a sole proprietor.

a. Any person who, while in any public place or in any location where and for whom wearing a mask or face covering is required by Executive Order No. 7NNN or any DECD Sector Rules, or other lawful authority, as each is amended from time to time, other than a person who qualifies for the medical exemption set forth in Executive Order No. 7NNN or who while outdoors maintains a distance of approximately six feet from every other person, who fails to wear a mask or cloth-face covering shall be guilty of a violation and fined one hundred dollars. A business entity, rather than the employee, is liable for a fine of the same amount for any employee’s failure to wear a required mask or cloth-face covering while at work.

b. Any person or business entity who organizes, hosts, or sponsors a gathering that violates the gathering size restrictions set forth in the DECD Rules for Gatherings and Venues and Sector Rules for Outdoor Events issued pursuant to Section 2 of Executive Order No. 7ZZ and Section 2 of Executive Order No. 7NNN, as amended from time to time, shall be guilty of a violation and fined five-hundred dollars.

c. Any person who attends a gathering that violates the gathering size restrictions set forth in the DECD Rules for Gatherings and Venues and Sector Rules for Outdoor Events issued pursuant to Section 2 of Executive Order No. 7ZZ and Section 2 of Executive Order No. 7NNN, as amended from time to time, shall be guilty of a violation and fined two-hundred and fifty dollars.

Executive Order Link 9B - https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-9B.pdf

☐ 9F1 - Amendments to Size Restrictions on Certain Gatherings. Effective on October 8, 2020, Executive Order No. 7TT, Section 2 is amended to provide that religious, spiritual, or worship gatherings, if held indoors, are limited to no more than 50 percent of the building’s capacity or a maximum of 200 people, whichever is lower, and such services, if held outdoors, are limited to the number of people that can be accommodated safely by the venue or location provided that all persons present wear masks, unless speaking from designated safe locations, and that a distance of 6 feet is maintained between all persons or groups not from the same household.


☐ 9H1 - Remote Participation in Municipal Meetings. Notwithstanding any provision of the Connecticut General Statutes, Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or any ordinance, charter, bylaws or other rule:

a. Any municipal (as defined in Section 12 of Executive Order No. 7l) agency, board, commission, council or local legislative body, and, in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, the board of selectmen, may hold a public meeting or hearing that provides for remote participation in its entirety, or for remote participation in conjunction with an in-person meeting, which shall be referred to herein as a “hybrid meeting.” Remote participation shall include the opportunity to offer public comment, if otherwise generally permitted at such meetings, and the ability of electors or qualified voters to vote, if eligible pursuant to state statute, municipal charter, or other applicable legal authority, at any meeting, annual town meeting or special town meeting. Officials conducting hybrid meetings shall make provisions to allow at least some members of the public and press to attend in the same location as the officials conducting the meeting in a manner consistent with public health
Best Practices Guidelines

Guidance for limiting the transmission of COVID-19. Municipal bodies conducting in-person or hybrid meetings shall consult with and take steps recommended by local or state public health officials to conduct such meetings in a manner that significantly reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Remote and hybrid meetings shall proceed in a manner as closely consistent with the applicable statutes, special acts, town charters, municipal ordinances, resolutions or procedures as possible, and in compliance with the open meeting provisions set forth in the Freedom of Information Act, as modified by Executive Order No. 7B.

b. No member of any municipal agency, board, commission, council or local legislative body shall be denied the opportunity to participate and vote in any meeting or proceeding using remote technology if such member requests to do so, and a member of any such body may request to participate remotely in all meetings for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency, and shall not be required to file an individual request for each meeting.


9L1 - Extension of COVID-19 Executive Orders to February 9, 2021. Pursuant to the emergency declarations issued on September 1, 2020, all executive orders issued pursuant to the public health and civil preparedness emergencies declared on March 10, 2020 and renewed on September 1, 2020 (COVID-19 Orders) that are unexpired and currently in effect as of the date of this order are hereby extended through February 9, 2021, unless earlier modified or terminated by me. Any individual section of any such order that is scheduled to expire on any other specific date shall remain in effect until such specific date, and any specific effective date or date for action contained in any such individual section shall remain valid. By way of illustration, and for the sake of clarity, Executive Order No. 9E has no specific duration because each individual section has specific dates for expiration or other action. The specific deadlines within such order, including the January 1, 2021 expiration of the eviction moratorium in Section 1 of that order and the February 9, 2021 expiration of the café liquor permits provided for in Section 2 of that order, shall remain unchanged and unaffected by this order.

9L2 - Extension of Agency and Municipality Orders of Concurrent Duration with Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergencies. Any unexpired order, rule, regulation, directive or guidance issued by any official, agency, department, municipality, or entity pursuant to an unexpired COVID-19 Order, which by its own terms provides that it shall remain in place for the duration of the public health and civil preparedness emergency shall remain in effect until February 9, 2021, unless earlier modified or terminated by the issuing authority or a subsequent executive order.

Executive Order Link 9L - https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-9L.pdf

Continuity Issues

- **Staffing** - may be an issue as a result of direct (people getting ill or having to take care of family members who are ill) and/or any increase in workload as a result of office closures. This may be a particular challenge for towns with limited tax collector office staffing prior to the pandemic.

- **Remote Work** - Remote work is by-in-large new to municipalities - including libraries.

- **Broadband Access** - People lacking home broadband access, public libraries are often the only source of free access to computers and the internet - the pandemic coupled with library closures widen the digital divide

- **Safety** - In all aspects of either town employees retiring to work within libraries or visitors (once/when libraries open) safety from COVID-19 infection is a priority. Libraries have the challenge of preparing their staff, facilities and visitors to ensure safety is maximized.

- **Re-Opening** - This is not the simple matter of opening the doors and going back to business the way things were before the pandemic. We are and will be in the pandemic for the foreseeable future - any openings will be required to adjust to that fact.

Suggested Best Practices

- **NO State Guidance has been issued for the re-opening of Public Libraries** - Accordingly, it is advised that municipalities not open libraries, in terms of interior space, until specific guidance for re-opening is made.

Please. Wear a Mask
In making plans and decisions - **Remember - the pandemic is NOT over** - there is no indication if we are at the beginning, middle or end.

**Re-Opening a town library to employees and the public is not and should not simply a matter of opening the door and its business as it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**Generally**
- Libraries should remain open in terms of services provided on a remote/online basis.
- There should be NO public interactions until the Governor has authorized such actions.

**Re-Opening Plan**

Libraries, before re-opening should form a **Re-Opening Committee** made up of Library Staff, Local Health Department and Bargaining Unit Members, Outside venders (if used in operations) to develop a comprehensive Re-Opening Plan (Suggest each town adhere to **CDC guidance** - **COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings** ([https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/office-buildings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/office-buildings.html)). Such a plan, at a minimum should:

1. **Identify where and how workers might be exposed to COVID-19 at work.**
   - Conduct worksite assessments to identify COVID-19 prevention strategies. (CDC)
   - Classify worker risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and establish protocols and PPE to protect workers. (OSHA)

2. **Develop hazard controls using the hierarchy of controls to reduce transmission among workers. Include a combination of controls noted below.**
   - Maintain a continuous log of every person, including workers and visitors, who may have close contact with other individuals at any town facility.
   - If a worker tests positive for COVID-19, the Town must immediately notify their local health department and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers or visitors who had close contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.
   - Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and contact tracing in the event of a positive case.
   - Make special accommodations for personnel who are members of a vulnerable population.

3. **Change the way people work**
   - Continue to encourage telework, whenever possible and feasible with business operations. If such a system worked during the height of the pandemic - why change?
   - If possible, return to work in phases.
   - Close common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact, or enforce strict social distancing protocols.
   - Minimize non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

4. **Educate employees and supervisors about steps they can take to protect themselves at work.**
   - Educate workers in the language they understand best about coronavirus and how to prevent transmission, and the employer’s COVID-19 policies.
   - Place information posters, including ones in alternative languages in accordance with the town’s LEP Plan, that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and proper hand hygiene practices at the entrance to the workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
   - Provide training on proper hand washing practices and other routine infection control precautions, such as avoiding touching the face and avoiding touching surfaces often touched by passengers or fellow employees. Including key times to clean hands include:
     - Before, during, and after preparing food.
     - Before eating food.
     - After using the toilet.

**Please. Wear a Mask**
After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
Before and after work shifts.
Before and after work breaks.
After touching frequently touched surfaces.
After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings.

For employees who commute to work using public transportation or ride sharing, consider offering the following support:

- If feasible, offer employees incentives to use forms of transportation that minimize close contact with others (e.g., biking, walking, driving or riding by car either alone or with household members).
- Ask employees to follow the CDC guidance on how to protect yourself when using transportation.
- Allow employees to shift their hours so they can commute during less busy times.
- Ask employees to wash their hands as soon as possible after their trip.

5. **Conduct a full Analysis of Service Delivery Analysis** Before Returning to Pre-pandemic Delivery Systems

- Using the Re-Opening Committee consisting of Staff, Bargaining Unit Representatives, Business and the Public to review each COVID-19 related adjustment made by the municipality as it relates to the delivery of services. Specifically:
  - Impact on the quality of services - improved, diminished or unchanged
  - Cost Impacts - more, less or unchanged
  - Virtual Meetings vs Conventional Meetings - gain in public access?
  - Unmet opportunities? What else could/should have been done?

According to the **American Library Association**, libraries could:

- Extended online renewal policies
- Expanded online services like e-books and streaming media
- Added virtual programming
- Redeploying print collection budgets to digital materials
- Reaching out by phone to those digitally disconnected
- Deploying library 3D printers to print face shields for our local hospitals and facilities
- Adapting in-person programs for online delivery, such as the virtual story times and online knitting group
- Adding or expanding virtual library cards - adding e-books and e-audiobooks
- Leveraging social media to share information related to COVID-19
- Expanded the range of their public Wi-Fi

**Staffing**

- The State and Federal governments define "essential" workers - all municipal workers should be defined as essential
- Towns may consider either an inter-municipal agreement or mutual aide agreement with a neighboring community to either share staff or "piggyback" various town staffing with a community with more capacity.
- Before exercising this option, **municipalities should consult with their bargaining units to meet any staffing challenges** to ensure proper coordination in accordance with the terms of existing bargaining agreements and all applicable laws including but not limited to the Teachers Negotiations Act and the Municipal Employees Relation Act.
- **Regional councils of government** should be assembling rosters of qualified staffing who can fill in as independent contractors on an as-needed basis to fill vacancies or work loads of member towns
  - Avoids need for inter-town agreements
  - Independent contractors used to fill temporary need should be allowed through E.O. so as not to conflict with local collective bargaining agreements
  - COGs must engage and involve bargaining unit representatives to be part of any regional staffing.
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✓ Towns with either staffing capacity issues or a temporary interruption in staffing due to COVID-19 could bridge such situations utilizing their regional council of governments (COGs). The nine regional COGs either have the staffing capacity or the ability to “staff up” to preform most town functions. COGs have the statutory authority (8-31b) to provide most any function a town may need. COGs already provide dozens of services otherwise preformed individually by towns on a shared or regional basis.

✓ Utilizing Executive Order 7L-3 municipalities are allowed to re-hire retired municipal employees - allowing communities third experienced staff. Before exercising this option, municipalities should consult with their bargaining units to meet any staffing challenges to ensure proper coordination in accordance with the terms of existing bargaining agreements.

✓ Cross-train existing staff to preform many of the routine office functions

✓ Ensure that employers do not discipline, terminate or otherwise retaliate against workers who utilize sick time, FMLA, disability, unemployment or any other benefit to which they are entitled during a public health emergency.

CDC Interim Guidance For Employers With Workers At High Risk

As workplaces consider a gradual scale up of activities towards pre-COVID-19 operating practices, it is particularly important to keep in mind that some workers are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These workers include individuals over age 65 and those with underlying medical conditions. Such underlying conditions include, but are not limited to, chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, hypertension, severe heart conditions, weakened immunity, severe obesity, diabetes, liver disease, and chronic kidney disease that requires dialysis. Workers at higher risk for severe illness should be encouraged to self-identify, and employers should avoid making unnecessary medical inquiries. Employers should take particular care to reduce workers’ risk of exposure to COVID-19, while making sure to be compliant with relevant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) regulations. First and foremost, this means following CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance for reducing workplace exposure for all employees. All decisions about following these recommendations should be made in collaboration with local health officials and other state and local authorities who can help assess the current level of mitigation needed based on levels of COVID-19 community transmission and the capacities of the local public health and healthcare systems. In addition, the guidance offered below applies to workplaces generally; specific industries may require more stringent safety precautions. Finally, there may be essential workplaces in which the recommended mitigation strategies are not feasible. CDC is releasing this interim guidance, laid out in a series of three steps, to inform a gradual scale up of operations. The scope and nature of community mitigation suggested decreases from Step 1 to Step 3. Some amount of community mitigation is necessary across all steps until a vaccine or therapeutic drug becomes widely available. Scaling Up Operations:

In all Steps:

✓ Establish and maintain communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community

✓ Protect employees at higher risk for severe illness by supporting and encouraging options to telework

✓ Consider offering workers at higher risk duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (eg , restocking shelves rather than working as a cashier), if agreed to by the worker

✓ Encourage any other entities sharing the same work space also follow this guidance

✓ Provide employees from higher transmission areas (earlier Step areas) telework and other options as feasible to eliminate travel to workplaces in lower transmission (later Step) areas and vice versa

✓ Step 1: Scale up only if business can ensure strict social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers; workers at higher risk for severe illness are recommended to shelter in place

✓ Step 2: Scale up only if business can ensure moderate social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers; workers at higher risk for severe illness are recommended to shelter in place

✓ Step 3: Scale up only if business can ensure limited social distancing, proper cleaning and disinfecting requirements, and protection of their workers and customers

For any type of mask, appropriate use and disposal are essential to ensure that they are as effective as possible and to avoid any increase in transmission. WHO offers the following guidance on the correct use of masks, derived from best practices in health care settings:

- Perform hand hygiene before putting on the mask;
- Place the mask carefully, ensuring it covers the mouth and nose, adjust to the nose bridge, and tie it securely to minimize any gaps between the face and the mask;
- Avoid touching the mask while wearing it;
- Remove the mask using the appropriate technique: do not touch the front of the mask but untie it from behind;
- After removal or whenever a used mask is inadvertently touched, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub, or soap and water if hands are visibly dirty;
- Replace masks as soon as they become damp with a new clean, dry mask;
- Do not re-use single-use masks;
- Discard single-use masks after each use and dispose of them immediately upon removal.


From the Harvard Business Review, 5 Tips for Safely Re-Opening Your Office - https://hbr.org/2020/05/5-tips-for-safely-reopening-your-office

1. "Require please and thank you. The only way to create and sustain change is to have 100% accountability: Employees must understand that they are not simply responsible to follow safe practices themselves (the first 100%), they are also responsible to ensure everyone around them does as well (the second 100%). Instruct employees that when anyone sees anyone violate safe practices, they are to remind them of proper protocol with a polite, “Please.” For example, “Please wear a mask when you’re in the office.”...Leaders must be instructed that when they’re reminded of a safety guideline, there is only one permissible response: an immediate “Thank you” followed by compliance. Period.”

2. Hold a Covid boot camp when you return to the office. The idea of a "boot camp" is to break down old patterns and introduce new ones. The easiest time to reset norms is when no one knows what is normal.

3. Practice with fire drills. Hold daily fire drills in the first week, where you ask people to stop what they are doing and practice the new behaviors. In the weeks following, twice a week is sufficient. Effective fire drills also require leadership. Leaders must walk all employees through the motions of each new safety behavior, including saying please and thank you. Fire drills require much less time, but are critical to sustaining change because they remind employees of how important the behaviors are.

4. Perform daily rounds. As the saying goes, "you don't get what you expect, you get what you inspect." Just like in a hospital, leaders must use a checklist to do "rounding" and measure compliance results. They can walk the work area and observe the degree to which proper behavior is being practiced. They should score it every day for the first 30 days and do their observations at unpredictable times of day. After that, rounding can happen every other day.

5. Keep score publicly. Leaders should then post the rounding scores publicly, every day. Above the score they can place a large circle with colors denoting the organization's level of compliance: Green = 95%+. Yellow = 80-90%. Red = <80%. They must commit to post the results no matter what they are and make sure they are visible to clients and customers. Embarrassment is a powerful motivator for improvement and the more public the embarrassment, the greater the motivation.

These practices may feel awkward for many employees and leaders, especially those who haven’t been part of concerted workplace safety efforts before. But these are unusual times and if we want to keep everyone safe and healthy, people have to do things outside of their comfort zones.

If leaders take these practices seriously, they will be able to inculcate new norms much more quickly. Doing so is not only important for employee safety but for the health of your business. Adherence to these critical behaviors will make it possible for business to reopen — and to stay open.

Maintain Healthy Environment (CDC)

✓ Intensify cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces
✓ Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air
✓ Ensure all water systems are safe to use
ACIR

Best Practices Guidelines

✓ Modify layouts to promote social distance of at least 6 feet between people – especially for person who do not live together
✓ Install physical barriers and guides to support social distancing if appropriate
✓ Close communal spaces, or stagger use and clean and disinfect between use
✓ Limit sharing of objects, or clean and disinfect between use

☐ Maintain Healthy Operations (CDC)
✓ Protect people at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19
✓ To cope with stress, encourage people to take breaks from the news, take care of their bodies, take time to unwind and connect with others, particularly when they have concerns
✓ Maintain awareness of local or state regulations
✓ Stagger or rotate scheduling
✓ Create static groups or “cohorts” of individuals and avoid mixing between groups
✓ Pursue virtual events. Maintain social distancing at any in-person events, and limit group size as much as possible
✓ Limit non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations, especially with those who are not from the local area
✓ Encourage telework and virtual meetings if possible
✓ Consider options for non-essential travel in accordance with state and local regulations
✓ Designate a COVID-19 point of contact
✓ Implement flexible and non-punitive leave policies
✓ Monitor absenteeism and create a back-up staffing plan
✓ Train staff on all safety protocols
✓ Consider conducting daily health checks such as temperature screening or symptom checking
✓ Encourage those who share the facilities to also adhere to mitigation strategies
✓ Put in place communication systems for:
  ✓ Individuals to self-report COVID-19 symptoms, a positive test for COVID-19, or exposure to someone with COVID-19
  ✓ Notifying local health authorities of COVID-19 cases
  ✓ Notifying individuals (employees, customers, students, etc.) of any COVID-19 exposures while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with privacy laws
  ✓ Notifying individuals (e.g., employees, customers, students) of any facility closures

☐ Other Safety Measures:
✓ Maintain minimum six-foot separation between all employees (and customers) in all interactions at all times. When strict physical distancing is not feasible for a specific task, other prevention measures are required, such as use of barriers, minimizing staff or customers in narrow or enclosed areas, and staggering breaks and work shift starts.
✓ Tightly enclosed spaces or small rooms should be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing cloth face coverings, masks or respirators. If occupied by more than one person, will 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 on the site (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations)
✓ 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.
✓ Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.
✓ Provide (at no cost to employees) and require the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, goggles, face shields and face masks as appropriate or required for the work activity being performed. Cloth face coverings must be worn by every employee not working alone on the job site unless their exposure dictates a higher level of protection under L&I safety and health rules and guidance.
✓ Ensure frequent and adequate hand washing with adequate maintenance of supplies. Use disposable gloves where safe and applicable to prevent virus transmission on tools or other items that are shared
✓ Conduct regular cleaning and disinfection at least after every shift, daily, or more frequently as needed, and frequent cleaning and disinfection of shared objects (e.g., tools, machinery) and surfaces, as well as high transit areas, such as restrooms and common areas, must be completed

☐ Facilities

Please. Wear a Mask
• **CDC Recommendations:**
  ✓ Ensure that ventilation systems in your facility operate properly. For building heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC systems) that have been shut down or on setback, review new construction start-up guidance provided in ASHRAE Standard 180-2018, Standard Practice for the Inspection and Maintenance of Commercial Building HVAC Systems.
  ✓ Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, and other methods. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk for current or subsequent occupants, including children (e.g., allowing outdoor environmental contaminants including carbon monoxide, molds, or pollens into the building).
  ✓ Evaluate the building and its mechanical and life safety systems to determine if the building is ready for occupancy. Check for hazards associated with prolonged facility shutdown such as mold growth, external icon, rodents or pests, or issues with stagnant water systems, and take appropriate remedial actions.

• **Engineering controls: Ventilation in the building:**
  ✓ Increase the percentage of outdoor air (e.g., using economizer modes of HVAC operations) potentially as high as 100% (first verify compatibility with HVAC system capabilities for both temperature and humidity control as well as compatibility with outdoor/indoor air quality considerations).
  ✓ Increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces, if possible.
  ✓ Disable demand-control ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on temperature or occupancy.
  ✓ Consider using natural ventilation (i.e., opening windows if possible and safe to do so) to increase outdoor air dilution of indoor air when environmental conditions and building requirements allow.

• **Engineering Controls: Improve central air filtration:**
  ✓ Increase air filtration to as high as possible (MERV 13 or 14) without significantly diminishing design airflow.
  ✓ Inspect filter housing and racks to ensure appropriate filter fit and check for ways to minimize filter bypass.
  ✓ Consider running the building ventilation system even during unoccupied times to maximize dilution ventilation.
  ✓ Generate clean-to-less-clean air movement by re-evaluating the positioning of supply and exhaust air diffusers and/or dampers and adjusting zone supply and exhaust flow rates to establish measurable pressure differentials. Have staff work in areas served by “clean” ventilation zones that do not include higher-risk areas such as visitor reception or exercise facilities (if open).
  ✓ Consider using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to help enhance air cleaning (especially in higher risk areas).
  ✓ Ensure exhaust fans in restroom facilities are functional and operating at full capacity when the building is occupied.
  ✓ Consider using ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) as a supplement to help inactivate the virus.

• **Engineering controls: Isolate workers from the hazard (CDC):**
  ✓ Modify or adjust seats, furniture, and workstations to maintain social distancing of 6 feet between employees.
  ✓ Install transparent seats, furniture, and workstations to maintain social distancing of 6 feet between employees.
  ✓ Arrange reception or other communal seating area chairs by turning, draping (covering chair with tape or fabric so seats cannot be used), spacing, or removing chairs to maintain social distancing.
  ✓ Use methods to physically separate employees in all areas of the facilities including work areas and other areas such as meeting rooms, break rooms, parking lots, entrance and exit areas, and locker rooms.
  ✓ Use signs, tape marks, or other visual cues such as decals or colored tape on the floor, placed 6 feet apart, to indicate where to stand when physical barriers are not possible.
  ✓ Replace high-touch communal items, such as coffee pots, water coolers, and bulk snacks, with alternatives such as pre-packaged, single-serving items.
CDC has free, simple posters available to download and print, some of which are translated into different languages. 
- [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc)

Covid-19 Social Distancing Calculator (From The Colorado Department Of Health)

*IMPORTANT NOTICE:* This calculator is provided to assist you in planning social distancing for your employees and customers. However, the results given by this calculator do not relieve you of your obligation to follow all applicable Public Health Orders as they apply to your space. The configuration of any given space (aisles, racks, etc.) may result in a lower actual capacity limit. It is up to each business to ensure compliance with all portions of current orders. You may find information about more specific business sector requirements using the links below. In order to maintain at least 6 feet of separation from each other when taking into account the unpredictable dynamics of each person's movement, this calculator uses a 12 foot grid distribution.

1. **Enter The Total Square Footage Of The Space.** Due to the varying nature of use and shared facilities, each space within a building may need to be analyzed individually. Proprietors of shared spaces should account together for common areas within a larger area, including, but not limited to, entrances/exits and plan in partnership with others, to ensure all social distancing requirements can be met and maintained for staff and the public interacting within the shared space.

2. **Estimate the percent of floor space occupied by items such as furniture, equipment, displays, etc.**

3. **Maximum number of people that the space can accommodate with adequate 6 feet social distancing.** Any codes, regulations, or ordinances requiring a smaller number of people must be followed. Use the links below to find space specifics and other requirements & recommendations per business sector.

### 6 ft. Grid
**Can't Pass and Maintain Distance**

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### 12 ft. Grid
**Can Pass and Maintain Distance**

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Or use the State of Colorado’s online tool (https://www.calconic.com/calculator-widgets/social-distancing-calculator/5ef21c169444bf0029086759) that calculates transmission risk using the total square footage of the space and objects in the room to determine how many people can safely be there at one time.

Resources

☐ Connecticut library Association - https://ctlibraryassociation.org
☐ Key Resources for Libraries in responding to the Coronavirus Pandemic, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-libraries

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Please wear a cloth face covering.


The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) is a 25-member agency of the State of Connecticut created in 1985 to study system issues between the state and local governments and to recommend solutions as appropriate. The membership is designed to represent the state legislative and executive branches, municipalities and other local interests, and the general public.

The role of ACIR, as contained in Section 2-79a of the Connecticut General Statutes, is to: (1) serve as a forum for consultation between state and local officials; (2) conduct research on intergovernmental issues; (3) encourage and coordinate studies of intergovernmental issues by universities and others; and (4) initiate policy development and make recommendations to all levels of government.

For Further Information, Please Contact:

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