REOPEN Connecticut®

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Governor Ned Lamont

Best Practices for Reopening

March 19, 2021

BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

GOAL
Proactively protect public health and speed up the pace of economic, educational, and community recovery while restoring Connecticut's quality of life.

1 SAFETY FIRST

We will reopen society safely and securely with a proactive program that safeguards the health of our vulnerable residents, continues physical distancing, and provides clear safeguard rules for businesses and institutions deemed safe to reopen.

2 SCIENCE-DRIVEN

Our strategy will rely on a scientifically validated set of public health interventions. Patient assessment, testing, proactive tracing, field studies, and public health guidance will be deployed simultaneously to contain infection.

3 PREPARED

We will work closely with hospitals and health systems to procure and distribute critical personal protective equipment, and assess capacity of beds and ventilators to ensure optimal standard of care.

4 CHOICE

Individual businesses within sectors allowed to open are empowered to make their own choice on when they reopen. When they open, they must comply with rules we lay out to safeguard their employees and customers.

5 DYNAMIC

We include a suite of tools to inform an adaptive plan that can be nimbly scaled or rolled back rapidly based on real-time critical health metrics.

BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

HOW WE WILL OPEN OUR ECONOMY SAFELY

Our plan to open the economy will address two factors:

WHAT businesses can open and when.
HOW businesses must operate **if they choose to open.**

WHAT:

- We know that some businesses put employees and customers at greater risk of transmission.
- We will prioritize opening businesses that pose a lower transmission risk and drive outsized impact on the economy.
- Transmission risk is defined as contact intensity and modification potential of businesses.
  - Contact intensity considers contact proximity, contact length, and number of contacts.
  - Modification potential considers the businesses' ability to socially distance and sanitize in accordance with regulations.
- We will assess the impact on state economic health with a focus on number of employed individuals, total GDP impacted, and impact on small businesses that make up the backbone of our economy.

HOW:

- We will provide clear operational guidance to businesses on how to reopen while ensuring the safety of both employees and customers.
- Guidance will include social distancing and hygiene, as well as the use of personal protection – for business operators, workers, and customers.
- The goal is to not only open safely, but create confidence in our society across employers, employees, and customers.
- The level of guidance will gradually become less restrictive over time, as our confidence in the ability to monitor and contain the disease increases.

BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

WHAT: SECTOR REOPENING OVER TIME

The state will open its economy with a gradual approach.
The first set of businesses started reopening when we saw a sustained 14-day decline in hospitalizations, had adequate testing capacity, had a contact tracing system in place, and had procured sufficient PPE. The timing for that reopen was May 20th, 2020.

ALWAYS OPEN	Manufacturing Construction Real estate	Utilities Essential retail Child care	Hospitals
MAY 20TH	Restaurants (outdoor only, no bar areas) Outdoor recreation (limited capacity)	Remaining retail Offices (continue WFH where possible)	Museums, Zoos (outdoor only) University research
JUNE 1ST	Hair salons, Barbershops		
JUNE 17TH	Restaurants (outdoor, indoor, no bar areas) Hotels/Lodging All personal services Indoor recreation	Sports, Sports clubs & complexes, Gyms, Fitness centers, Pools Outdoor arts, Entertainment, Events (limited capacity)	Amusement parks Libraries Museums, Zoos, Aquariums Social clubs
JULY 20TH	Indoor events	Outdoor events	
SEPTEMBER 1ST	Senior Centers		
OCTOBER 8TH	Indoor Performing Arts Venues		

BEST PRACTICES FOR REOPENING

HOW: SAFEGUARDS

As we continue to reopen businesses, we will open at our strictest controls on business operations and societal interaction. This will include, among other measures:

- Strict cleaning and disinfection protocols in all settings.
- Those who can work from home should continue to do so.
- Those in high-risk groups (comorbidities) and over the age of 65 should continue to stay safe and stay home.
- Facemasks should continue to be worn in public at all times.
- Social gatherings will be restricted in accordance to the Governor's executive order.

As we see progress on a defined set of public health metrics (detail to follow), we will gradually loosen safeguards. This will allow for the next set of businesses to open and potentially for businesses already open to operate with additional leeway. We expect this will occur over the coming months.

As always, we will make decisions based on data and science. Our plan intentionally allows for sufficient time for learning, adoption of behaviors, and ultimately the achievement of improved health metrics that create the necessary environment for new business operations. If public health metrics deteriorate, the State may choose to revert back to stricter safeguards.

HOTELS/LODGING

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HOTELS/LODGING

OVERVIEW

As Connecticut's hotels/lodging operate in the current climate, the most important consideration will be the health and safety of employees and guests. Hotels/lodging must exercise caution throughout the phases of reopening, ensuring strict adherence to the protocols listed on the Sector Rules for Reopening webpage. Those businesses that are not able to meet state requirements, should delay opening until they are able.

While these best practices provide a way for hotels/lodging to reopen in as safe a manner as possible, risks to guests and employees cannot be fully mitigated. Guests who choose to visit hotels/lodging during this time should be fully aware of potential risks. Individuals over the age of 65 or with other health conditions should not visit hotels/lodging, but instead continue to stay home and stay safe.

Hotels/lodging should take these best practices as the minimum baseline of precautions needed to protect public health in Connecticut. Individual businesses should take additional measures as recommended by industry guidelines or by common sense applied to their particular situation. We urge employees and guests to stay vigilant and pay attention as to whether they are faithfully implementing state requirements.

FURTHER RESOURCES

You can find more resources, guidelines, and best practices here:

- **AMERICAN HOTEL AND LODGING ASSOCIATION**
  https://www.ahla.com/sites/default/files/safestayguidelines060320_0.pdf
- **WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**
  https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331638/WHO-2019-nCoV-Hotels-2020.1-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- **OSHA**
  https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf
- **UNITE HERE**
  http://local217.org/guidelines

HOTELS/LODGING

WORK FROM HOME
Encourage employees to continue to work from home where possible, and put in appropriate measures to facilitate this where possible.

PLAN FOR REOPENING
Share these best practices with your employees and inform them of any additional specific measures being taken in response to COVID-19.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
Appoint a program administrator who is accountable for implementing these rules.

CLEANING PLAN
Develop cleaning plans and checklists that incorporate these rules. Ensure it is clear which employees are responsible for implementing the plans.

TRAINING
The employer should institute a training program and ensure employee participation in the program. Training should be provided at no cost to the employee and during working hours. The training materials should be presented in the language and at the literacy level of the employees. Employers should continuously update staff on changes to these best practices. The training should include:

- Best practices outlined in this document
- Protocols on how to clean and use cleaning products (incl. disinfectants) safely
- Additional guidance can be found here:
  https://osha.washington.edu/sites/default/files/documents/FactSheet_Cleaning_Final_UWDEOHS_0.pdf

NOTE: If any on-site duties are subcontracted, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure subcontractors are also appropriately trained.

PERSONAL PROTECTION
Estimate required personal protection for employees and begin procuring.

HOTELS/LODGING

THOROUGH CLEANING

Complete a thorough cleaning of facility prior to reopening, including but not limited to:

- Entrances/lobbies, hallways, elevators, door handles/door knobs
- Bathrooms
- Kitchens
- Shared equipment (e.g. printers, scanners, phones, key card machines, vending machines)

LOG EMPLOYEES & GUESTS

Maintain a log of employees and guests on-premise over time, to support contact tracing.

SHIFTS

Stagger shift start/stop times and break times to minimize contact across employees.

LIMIT INTERACTION

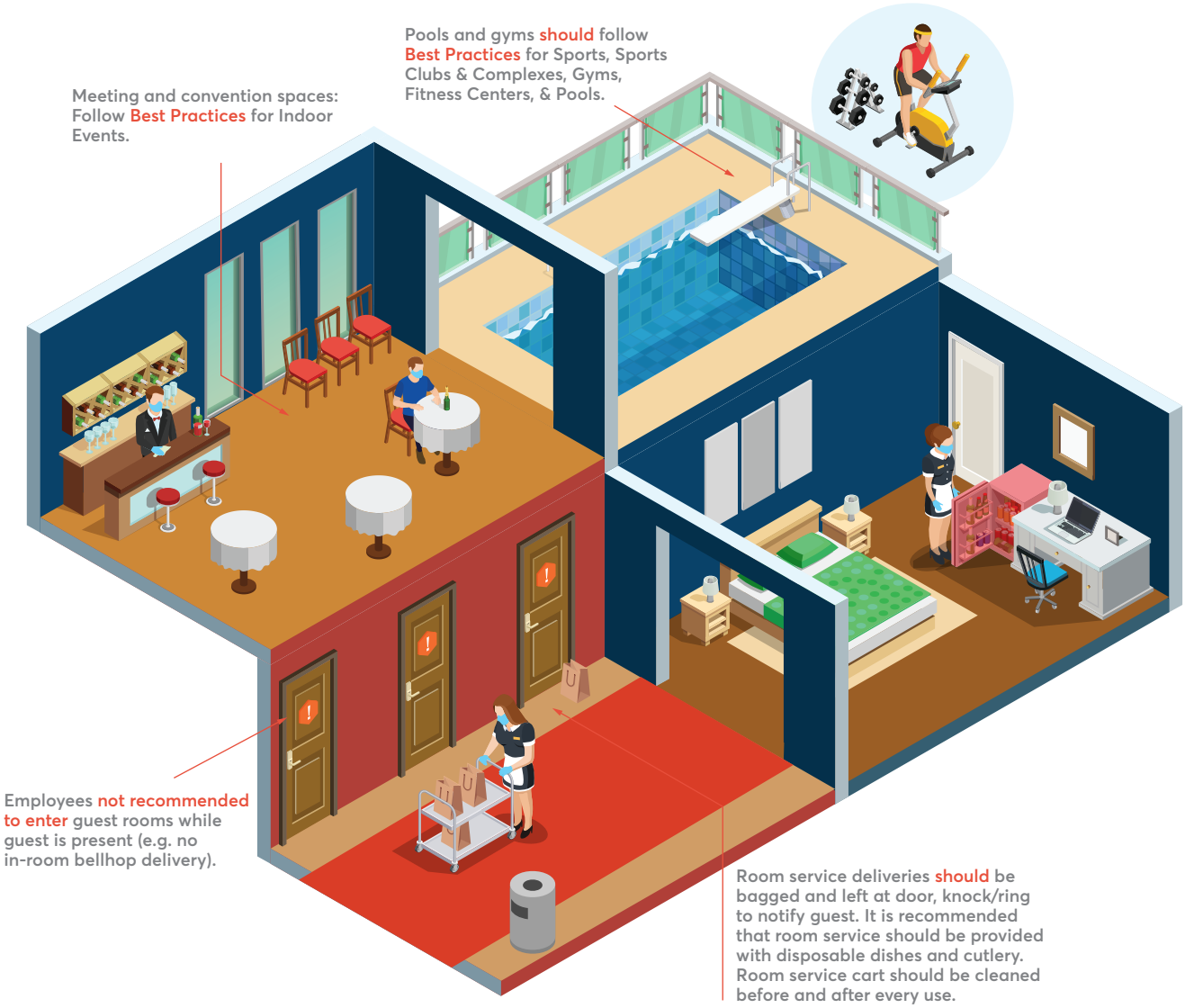
Limit visitors and service providers on-site. Utilize the following recommendations:

- Shipping and deliveries should be completed in designated areas.
- Concierge services should be provided by phone only.
- Room service deliveries should be bagged and left at door, knock/ring to notify guest. It is recommended that room service should be provided with disposable dishes and cutlery. Room service cart should be cleaned before and after every use.
- Employees not recommended to enter guest rooms while guest is present (e.g. no in-room not recommended bellhop delivery).
- Recommended Passive Decontamination of 24 hours after a guest has checked out.

CERTIFICATION

Complete the self-certification on the DECD website to receive a Reopen CT badge. Once complete, businesses can choose to post the badge on-site and on social media to advertise adherence to CT rules and build customer confidence.

HOTELS/LODGING



HOTELS/LODGING

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SIGNAGE
Post clear signage that reinforces new policies, e.g.:

- Social distancing protocols
- Cleaning and disinfection protocols
- Personal protection protocols (face masks, gloves)
- Employees should stay home if sick/experiencing symptoms
- Guests should not enter if they are experiencing symptoms
- Additional signage can be found here: https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/COVID-19-Signage-for-Download

ONGOING MESSAGING
Use announcement system and screens to reinforce distancing instructions.

COMMON AREAS
Rearrange common areas to account for social distancing and clean frequently.

SOCIAL DISTANCING MARKERS
Install visual social distancing markers to encourage employees to remain 6 ft apart (e.g. at check-in counter, by elevators); implement and mark single-direction flow in hallways and doorways where possible.

PARTITIONS
Use partitions where a 6 ft distance cannot be maintained, where possible (e.g. at check-in counter).

MEETING & CONVENTION SPACES
Follow Best Practices for Indoor Events.

DISCRETE WORK ZONES
Cleaning crews should service specific zones/floors to minimize overlap, where possible; check-in personnel and back-of-house employees should remain at same desk/workstation through workday where possible.

SHARED EQUIPMENT
Ensure employees do not share equipment to the extent possible. If shared, clean after each use.

HOTELS/LODGING

VENTILATION

For facilities with central ventilation systems, increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system where possible. For facilities where a central ventilation system is not used, window air conditioning units or unit ventilators should be adjusted to maximize fresh air intake into the system; blower fans should be set on low speed and pointed away from room occupants to the extent possible. Ceiling fans should be adjusted so that fins are rotating in a direction that draws air up toward the ceiling rather than down onto occupants. Window fans should be turned to exhaust air out of the window in the direction of the outdoors. Window fans that blow air into a room or free-standing fans that only serve to circulate existing air around a room should not be used.

TIME REQUIRED TO CLEAN

Management and Housekeeping staff shall meet to discuss enhanced cleaning procedures and the amount of incremental time it will take to clean each room.

- Lodging Establishment shall provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift.
- Lodging Establishment shall allow housekeepers extra time to clean rooms without loss of pay to account for required precautions and to allow them to conduct more thorough cleaning and disinfection of rooms between guests.

RESTAURANTS

Follow Best Practices for Restaurants.

CLEANING

Guest to be given the choice to have rooms cleaned daily, upon check-out, or some other interval.

- Guest may be given this choice upon reservation, check-in, electronically, or through other means.
- Recommend not incentivizing guests to forgo daily cleaning.

POOLS & GYMS

Should follow Best Practices for Sports, Sports Clubs & Complexes, Gyms, Fitness Centers, & Pools.

HOTELS/LODGING

NON-ESSENTIAL AMENITIES
Are allowed as long as they are thoroughly cleaned.

ELEVATORS
Encourage social distancing while using elevators by:

- Encouraging social distancing while individuals queue using visual markers
- Requesting that elevators be shared by family groups only, where possible
- Using signage displaying healthy elevator use protocols including passenger limits and safe distances in the carriage (e.g. markers in every corner)
- Using elevator attendants to manage flow and discourage over-crowding
- Encouraging alternatives, such as stairs, where possible

TOUCHLESS APPLIANCES
Install touchless appliances wherever possible, including:

- Contactless payment; mobile check-in and check-out with digital receipts
- Paper towel and soap dispensers
- Doors: make doors no touch or have a door person during high volume times

FRONT DESK
Install shields if 6 ft of distance cannot be maintained.

HOTLINE FOR VIOLATIONS
Post clear signage that includes the state hotline (211) for employees and customers to report potential violations of these rules.

DISPOSABLE ITEMS
Provide disposable items where possible (e.g. plastic cups, single-use shampoo/conditioner containers, tissue boxes)

HOTELS/LODGING

PERSONAL PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES

- All employees are required to wear a facemask or other cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth. Employees that cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition must provide documentation to their employer.
- Employees may utilize their own cloth face covering over that provided by their employer if they choose.
- Ensure employees can procure more personal protection on-site (e.g. in case protection is compromised).
- Gloves and eye protection are required when using cleaning chemicals.

EMPLOYERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING PERSONAL PROTECTION TO THEIR EMPLOYEES

- If businesses do not have adequate personal protection, they cannot open.

PERSONAL PROTECTION FOR CUSTOMERS

Customers are required to bring and wear facemasks or other cloth face covering that completely covers the nose and mouth while in common areas.

- Businesses have the right to refuse service to an individual who is not wearing a mask.

HOTELS/LODGING

HAND SANITIZER
Hand sanitizer shall be made available at entrance points and common areas, where possible.

HANDWASHING
Ensure employees wash their hands routinely using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

CLEANING, DISINFECTANT PRODUCTS AND/OR DISPOSABLE DISINFECTANT WIPES
Make available near commonly used surfaces, where possible, e.g.:

- Bathrooms
- Elevators
- Shared equipment (e.g. printers, scanners, phones, vending machines, key card machines)

CLEANING EQUIPMENT
Use only disposable cleaning equipment where possible and periodically discard of any cleaning equipment made of cloth/absorbent materials (e.g. mopheads, wiping cloths).

KEY CARDS
Disinfect key cards during handover at check-in and check-out.

LAUNDRY
Wash linens and uniforms with detergents, dry thoroughly, and store in closed cabinets.

- Launder bed scarves/duvets/ curtains frequently.
- Bag dirty linens in the guest room.
- Uniforms should be laundered daily at no cost to employees.

HOTELS/LODGING

TRASH
Empty and clean garbage cans in public areas regularly; ensure trash cans/bins have lids.

SHARED BATHROOMS
Clean frequently and implement use of cleaning log for tracking. Clean multiple times a day and hourly during busy times.

- Recommend posting signage encouraging reduced capacity in bathrooms, and reminding individuals to wash their hands and wear a mask
- Consider placing a wastebasket outside of the bathroom

CLEANING & DISINFECTING
Follow federal guidelines (CDC, EPA) on what specific products should be used and how.

- Use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 and that are appropriate for the surface. Prior to wiping the surface, allow the disinfectant to sit for the necessary contact time recommended by the manufacturer. Train staff on proper cleaning procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
- Disinfectants are irritants and sensitizers, and should be used cautiously.
- Clean and disinfect common areas, high transit areas, and frequently touched surfaces on an ongoing basis (at least daily) and more frequently if used more often. Clean and disinfect shared objects between use. Examples include:
  - Entrances/lobbies and hallways
  - Elevators, including panels and buttons
  - Door handles/door knobs
  - Shared equipment (e.g. printers, scanners, phones, vending machines, key card machines, luggage carts)

HOTELS/LODGING

DAILY HEALTH CHECK

Ask employees resuming on-premise work to confirm they have not experienced COVID-19 CDC-defined symptoms and to monitor their own symptoms, including cough, shortness of breath, or any two of the following symptoms.

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue

Employees should stay home if sick.

IN THE EVENT OF A POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE

Employees should inform their employers, and follow state testing and contact tracing protocols. In addition:

- Employee should contact local public health to initiate contact tracing.
- Recommend 24-hour passive decontamination in the event of a positive case, and follow CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Additional information can be accessed at:

  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html

LEAVE

Employers shall adhere to federal guidance pertaining to paid leave for employees and provide this guidance to employees. Employers shall post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Department of Labor poster. The poster can be accessed at:

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/posters

- Additional guidance can be accessed at:

  https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Employers may not retaliate against workers for raising concerns about COVID-19 related safety and health conditions.

- Additional information can be accessed at www.whistleblowers.gov
- Additional information for the public sector can be accessed at www.connosha.com