

COVID-19 Return-to-Work Framework Elements



MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL
Chapter of the National Safety Council

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GOAL: To provide a framework or checkpoints for a business or other organization to use to help prevent further spread of COVID-19 as Minnesota moves toward increasing personal, business and community activity.

Note: These recommendations are intended to provide a cross check on practices for gap identification with full recognition that many of these elements are already known and in use.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESS:

1. Know Your Exposure Potential

All planning and actions should begin with a health protection screening based on the type of human interactions present. Assess your operations for places people come into contact with people and COVID-19 could be transmitted.

Examples of Exposure Potential Types:

- ▶ **Type 1** – Manufacturing, warehousing, B2B services, “Internalized” govt services — largely self-enclosed, managed and manageable interfaces between workers and others.
- ▶ **Type 2** – Retail, personal services/treatment at fixed location (stores, salons, clinics, doctors and dentist offices, body art shops) — multiple person-to-person interfaces, both at some distance and/or at very close distances.
- ▶ **Type 3** – Mobile direct services (landscaping, home repair, cabs, ride share, home delivery) — single or limited personal interaction/contact in environments ranging from very open to very closed.
- ▶ **Type 4** – Gathering places (schools, churches, care homes, mass transit, parks, entertainment) — potential for large numbers of people gathering or gathered in close proximity for sustained periods of time.

2. Know Your Situation

Review services/sectors/workplaces in operation for successes and gaps. Look again at exposure potential and upgrade or downgrade existing guidance and recommended practices to ensure actual practices address the exposure potential (occurring or possible).

Example: The meat packing industry has been deemed essential, has been operating and has shown infectious disease transmission. This sector is currently under inspection and review to improve practices. This same process should occur in all currently operating workplaces, including health care.

3. Remind Yourself of Your Exposure Experience

Sectors (essential services and other) with experience and practice with infectious diseases, gained prior to or during the COVID-19 pandemic period, should be used to assess to identify measures and practices that have a) worked to prevent infection, b) are routinely used in other sectors that are not operating but could be, and c) can be transferred to other sectors, including essential service sectors that need additional infection prevention.

Example: Are there practices from operations like yours that can be applied to your situation?

4. Have a Re-Shutdown Plan

A plan to (re)implement restrictions on operations/human contacts, including infectious disease occurrence criteria and action triggers, must be an integral part of any plan to re-start operations.

5. Go Beyond Compliance

Just as beyond compliance thinking in a safety program leads to a culture of prevention, thinking beyond compliance on infectious disease will protect your employees and company at work and at home.

Factors to Consider in Return to Work Planning by Exposure Type

Type 1 Framework

Type 1 – Manufacturing, warehousing, B2B services, “Internalized” govt services, office and administrative functions, non-retail operations — largely self-enclosed, managed and manageable workplaces/interfaces between people. Some of these services have been classified as essential and have been operating.

FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS:

Situation Review

- If operating, conduct audit of infectious disease patterns and use/compliance with recommended practices and guidelines to determine necessary remedial actions.

Physical/Biological

Pre-return Disinfection and Re-infection Prevention

- Facility
- Fleet
- External points of contact (i.e. clients, suppliers)
- Employee equipment and personal wear
- Home and other regular employee contact point
- PPE use recommendations — scaled by risk
- Shift/employee arrival modifications

Facility Re-start/Return to Normal Operations

- Conventional facility restart safety audits (normal operational safety)
- Integration of social distancing elements/plan
- Employee re-orientation (consider “new” employee style reorientation for all on expected practices)
- Returning employee integration with staff who have been working
- Safety process changes/updates (opportunity to go beyond compliance)
- Visitor/Supplier/Delivery protocols
- Re-shutdown protocols due to infection reemergence

Employment/HR

- Clarify/review individual’s employment status as needed based on status during COVID-19 emergency period (working, working in extended or hazard status, working from home, not working, change in hours, change in pay)
- Review infection detection/reporting/associated actions protocols (normalize to “regular” work environment)
- Review workers compensation/retirement implications during COVID-19 shut down and continuing
- Assess leave/PTO interface both during and following shut down period
- Review work from home policies to potentially accommodate experience during COVID-19

Emotional/Mental Health Support

- End-of-shutdown support system (preparing employees for return to work, return to school, leaving the relative safety of quarantine)
- Return to work support — reestablishing schedules, dealing with backlog stress, day care and after school care changes, aging family member care changes
- Financial counseling/support — shut down related financial stress management, employee financial support
- Substance use counseling/support
- Fatigue and mental health support
- Interruption of routine medical services support (e.g. medicines, specialists, routine care)

Leadership

- Top leadership presence and ongoing communication supporting all of the above

Factors to Consider in Return to Work Planning by Exposure Type

Type 2 – Retail, personal services/treatment at fixed location (stores, salons, clinics, doctors and dentist offices, body art shops) — multiple person-to-person interfaces, both at some distance and/or at very close distances.

FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS:

Note: All the elements of the Type 1 Framework apply. Areas of emphasis are noted below under the major framework areas. A significant portion of Type 2 sectors/services are NOT operating and have different re-start challenges.

Situation Review

- If operating, conduct audit of infectious disease patterns and use/compliance with recommended practices and guidelines to determine necessary remedial actions.

Physical/Biological

Pre-return Disinfection and Re-infection Prevention

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- Fleet
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- Employee equipment and personal wear
- Home and other regular employee contact point
- PPE use recommendations — scaled by risk
- Shift/employee arrival modifications

Facility Re-start/Return to Normal Operations

- Additional focus on restarting safely AND a very different customer/visitor interaction environment requiring attention to employee numbers and spacing, customer numbers and spacing and PPE challenges.
- Conventional facility restart safety audits (normal operational safety)
- Integration of social distancing elements/plan
- Employee re-orientation (consider “new” employee style reorientation for all on expected practices)
- Returning employee integration with staff who have been working
- Safety process changes/updates (opportunity to go beyond compliance)
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Factors to Consider in Return to Work Planning by Exposure Type

Type 3 – Mobile direct services (landscaping, home repair, cabs, ride share, home delivery) — single or limited personal interaction/contact in environments ranging from very open to very closed.

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- Employee equipment and personal wear
- Home and other regular employee contact point
- PPE use recommendations — scaled by risk
- Shift/employee arrival modifications at staging points or main operations centers

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Factors to Consider in Return to Work Planning by Exposure Type

Type 4 – Gathering places (schools, churches, care homes, mass transit, parks, entertainment) — potential for large numbers of people gathering or gathered in close proximity for sustained periods of time.

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Guidance and Resources (MN State Task Force)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html

Minnesota Department of Health: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html

Occupational Safety and Health Administration: www.osha.gov

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry: www.dli.mn.gov

HAND WASHING

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html

youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo

RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE: COVER YOUR COUGH/SNEEZE

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

SOCIAL DISTANCING

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html>

HOUSEKEEPING

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

EMPLOYEES EXHIBITING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html

TRAINING

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html

www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

www.dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID_19_business_plan_template.pdf

OTHER RESOURCE LINKS


National Safety Council: www.nsc.org/work-safety/safety-topics/coronavirus

Minnesota Safety Council: www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/Covid19.cfm

MRA — The Management Association: www.mranet.org/covid-19-updates#workforce-planning



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