



May 7, 2020

## Oregon General Guidance for Employers on COVID-19

### General considerations for your workplace:

- Comply with any of the Governor's Executive Orders that are in effect.
- Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if employees develop symptoms at the workplace.
- Understand how COVID-19 is transmitted from one person to another—namely, through coughing, sneezing, talking, touching, or via objects touched by someone with the virus.
- Make health and safety a priority by implementing safeguards to protect employees and the public. Federal and state guidelines, including sector-specific guidance, will help you determine which safeguards are recommended or are required, for example, use of personal protective measures such as face coverings or masks.
  - CDC has detailed [general guidance](#) to help small businesses and employees prepare for the effects of COVID-19.
  - Oregon's specific guidelines for the following sectors can be found at (<https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19#collapseOHAGuidance>):
    - Health care
    - Transit
    - Retail
    - Childcare/Early childhood education
    - Personal services
    - Outdoor recreation
    - Restaurants
- Consider modifying employee schedules and travel to reduce unnecessary close physical contact (physical distance of less than (6) six feet between people).
- Be aware of protected leave requirements and plan ahead for any anticipated workforce adjustments.

## Modification of employee schedules and travel

Considerations for modifying employee schedules and travel as feasible:

- Identify positions appropriate for telework or partial telework, including consideration of telework for employees who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19 complications due to underlying medical conditions identified by the CDC.
- Stagger or rotate work schedules or shifts at worksites to ensure employees are able to sufficiently maintain physical distancing.
- Limit non-essential work travel.

## Workplace safety

Implement workplace safeguards as feasible or when required. [See also sector-specific guidance here.](#)

- Implement physical distancing measures consistent with the Governor's Executive Orders and state guidance.
- Increase physical space between workers. This may include modifications such as markings on the floor demonstrating appropriate spacing or installing plexiglass shields, tables or other barriers to block airborne particles and maintain distances. Review and follow any sector-specific guidance issued by the state that recommends or requires specific physical distancing measures.
- Restrict use of any shared items or equipment and require disinfection of equipment between uses.
- Reinforce that meticulous hand hygiene (frequent and proper handwashing) is of utmost importance for all employees. Ensure that soap and water or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand sanitizer is provided in the workplace. Consider staging additional hand washing facilities and hand sanitizer for employees (and customer use, if applicable) in and around the workplace.
- Regularly disinfect commonly touched surfaces (workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, doorknobs, etc.), as well as high traffic areas and perform other environmental cleaning.
- Employers may encourage or require employee use of cloth or disposable face coverings as indicated by sector-specific guidance. If employers require use of cloth face coverings, employers must provide cloth or disposable face coverings for employees.
- Consider upgrades to facilities that may reduce exposure to the coronavirus, such as no-touch faucets and hand dryers, increasing fresh-air ventilation and filtration or disinfection of recirculated air, etc. Consider touchless payment method when possible and if needed.

- Limit the number of employees gathering in shared spaces. Restrict use of shared spaces such as conference rooms and break rooms by limiting occupancy or staggering use.
- Restrict non-essential meetings and conduct meetings virtually as much as possible. If in-person meetings are necessary, follow physical distancing requirements.
- Consider regular health checks (e.g., temperature and respiratory symptom screening) or symptom self-report of employees, if job-related and consistent with business necessity.
- Train all employees in safety requirements and expectations at physical worksites.

## **Employee leave and health insurance**

Be aware of federal and state protected leave and paid leave laws (if applicable) and requirements for health insurance coverage:

- Advise employees to stay home and notify their employer when sick.
- Review and comply with any applicable requirements for maintaining employee health insurance coverage.
- Healthcare provider documentation is generally not required to qualify under federal and state leave laws due to COVID-19 related circumstances or to return to work.
- Review and comply with any applicable required federal and state leave law protections for employees who are unable to work due to COVID-19 related circumstances.
- Determine whether your business can extend paid or unpaid leave and if feasible adopt a temporary flexible time off policy to accommodate circumstances where federal or state law does not provide for protected or paid leave.
- Develop an action plan consistent with federal and state guidance if an employee develops symptoms while in the workplace, tests positive for COVID-19 or is determined to be presumptively positive by a public health authority.

## **Downsizing and layoffs**

If downsizing or other workforce adjustment measures are necessary, adhere to applicable state and federal requirements regarding notice of layoffs and recalls for affected workers:

- Determine whether alternatives to layoff may be feasible such as furloughs or reduced schedules.
- Refer employees to resources including filing for unemployment benefits and community services.
- Create a plan for recalling employees back to work.

## Union workplaces

If you have a unionized workforce, determine obligations to bargain with the union or unions which represent your employees.

### Links to additional information:

For the most up to date information from Public Health and the CDC:

- <https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served//LE2356.pdf>
- <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASESCONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

### For COVID-19 Guidance from the State and Federal Sources:

Resources for businesses and employers to plan, prepare, and respond to COVID-19, which is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean:

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

- Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries: Coronavirus and Workplace Laws. <https://www.oregon.gov/boli/Pages/Coronavirus-and-Workplace-Laws.aspx>
- Department of Labor Guidance: Employer Paid Leave Requirements for Covid-19 related circumstances. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave>
- General guidance for businesses and employers to help them plan, prepare, and respond to COVID-19: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)
- Workplace cleaning and disinfecting recommendations, including everyday steps, steps when someone is sick, and considerations for employers: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)
- Safety practices for exposures in the workplace:
  - Cleaning and disinfection practices post exposure: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
  - Safety practices for workers who may have had exposure to a person with COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

- OSHA guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19:
  - Oregon OSHA: <https://osha.oregon.gov/Pages/re/covid-19.aspx> (English and Spanish links)
  - National OSHA: English: [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf), and Spanish: [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3992.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3992.pdf)
- Oregon Employment Department: COVID-19 Related Business Layoffs, Closures, and Unemployment Insurance Benefits:  
[https://govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment\\_COVID19](https://govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment_COVID19)
- COVID-19 insurance and financial services information:  
<https://dfr.oregon.gov/insure/health/understand/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

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