



BEST PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEE SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE

Wholesalers around the country have been deemed an essential business and therefore may remain operating during the global COVID-19 pandemic. WSWA aggregated a list of recommended practices from state health departments, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to help you continue business operations and keep employees healthy.

FIRST STEPS

1. Go Straight to The Experts

For updates on COVID-19 from health and governmental agencies, such as the CDC and your state and local health agencies. Review the [CDC's Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) to plan, prepare and respond to COVID-19.

2. Develop an Emergency Communication and Response Plan

For guidance on a continuing communications response please review Price Waterhouse Cooper's guidance [here](#). Additionally, for guidance on transitioning to teleworking, please watch the [ASAE Telework Presentation](#).

3. Educate Your Employees about COVID-19 Spread, Symptoms, and Prevention

Review the [CDC COVID-19 Page](#) and the [WHO COVID-19 Page](#).

- **Symptoms:** Patients with COVID-19 typically have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath.
- **How does COVID-19 Spread?** According to the [CDC](#), the virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

4. Identify a Workplace Coordinator

Designate an employee who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and ensure that employees have his or her contact information.

THE HEALTH OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

• Proper Usage of Face Masks

See [guidance](#) from the Food and Beverage Issue Alliance to learn the difference between face masks and how to properly put on a face mask and keeping it sterile.

- **Consider Screening Each Employee**

Follow [guidance](#) such as the following from the Washington State Department of Health: Managers/supervisors should meet each employee outside the establishment upon an employee’s arrival for a work shift. The manager should evaluate the employee for obvious signs of illness and send the employee home if symptoms such as cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, or signs of a respiratory infection, are directly observed.

Managers/supervisors should screen and prohibit any employee from entering the restaurant premises if the employee answers “yes” to any of the following questions:

- Are you currently experiencing signs or symptoms of respiratory infection, such as cough, fever, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
- Have you had close contact with any person who has been tested and confirmed to be infected with COVID-19?
- Have you returned from international travel or a cruise within the last 14 days?
- Have you returned from travel to any area known to have high numbers of positive cases or community spread of COVID-19, including New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, within the last 14 days?

Here is a sample [chart](#) from the Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment:

Employee Health Screening Form									
Business:	Person completing form:				Date:				
<p>Screen each employee for these symptoms before they start their shift and after they complete each shift. Circle an answer (y=yes, n=no) for each symptom for each employee. If an employee reports <u>any</u> of the symptoms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send employee home immediately. 2. Increase cleaning in your facility and promote social distancing (staff at least 6 feet apart from one another). 3. Exclude employee until they are fever-free (without medication) for 72 hours <u>and</u> 7 days have passed since their first symptom. 4. If multiple <u>employees</u> have these symptoms, contact your local health department. 									
Employee Name	Before starting shift				After completing shift				Notes Describe other symptoms
	Fever	Cough	Shortness of breath	Other symptoms	Fever	Cough	Shortness of breath	Other symptoms	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	
	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	

- **Send Sick Employees Home Immediately**
 Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way. See [OSHA Guidance](#).
- **Remain HIPPA and ADA Compliant**
 If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, employers should notify fellow employees of their possible exposure but keep his or her name and health conditions confidential. See [What You Should Know About the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and COVID-19](#) for more information.
- **Review and Consider Adjusting Sick Leave Policies**
 Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of and understand these policies. See [OSHA Guidance](#).
- **Follow [CDC Guidance](#) on When Can Sick Employees Return to Work:**
 - If staff have been tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting results, they should remain under home isolation precautions.
 - If staff have tested positive for COVID-19, they should remain under home isolation precautions for seven days from specimen collection OR until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms of acute infection resolve, whichever is longer.
 - If staff have tested negative for COVID-19 and have compatible symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), they should stay home from others until 72 hours after all symptoms of acute infection resolve.
 - If staff have fever with cough or shortness of breath and have not been tested for COVID-19, they should stay home away from others until 72 hours after fever is gone and symptoms of acute infection resolve.
 - If staff have other non-compatible symptoms and have not been tested for COVID-19, they should stay home until 24 hours after all symptoms are gone without the use of medicine.
- **Record Work-Related COVID-19 Cases**
 Under OSHA's recordkeeping requirements, COVID-19 is a recordable illness, and employers are responsible for recording cases of COVID-19 if the case is work-related. See [OSHA Guidance for Recording Cases](#).

WORKPLACE HYGIENE

- **Discourage Handshaking**
Encourage the use of noncontact methods of greeting.
- **Put an Enhanced Cleaning Schedule in Place**
Create a new cleaning schedule and update procedures on employee hygiene practices. See [CDC Guidance](#).
- **Perform Routine Environmental Cleaning**
Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, including trucks, dollies, clipboards, computer equipment, countertops, and doorknobs and all equipment that enters the premise using a bleach-and-water solution (0.1% solution; 1:50 dilution) or disinfectant with a label that says “EPA approved” for killing bacteria and viruses. No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time. See [OSHA Guidance](#).
- **Provide Disposable Wipes**
Place disposable wipes in common areas so that frequently used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before and after each use.
- See [OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#) for additional recommendations.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS

- **Avoid Collecting Empty Beer, Wine, or Spirits Containers During Outbreak**
The Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, Midwest Independent Retailers Association, and Michigan Retailers Association have advised retailers to stop taking beer, wine and soda containers as the COVID-19 virus can live on surfaces for several days. See [article](#).
- **Reducing Face-To-Face Meetings in Favor of Virtual Meetings**
- **Close Administrative Offices**
- **Work with Your Clients to Establish Safe Delivery Protocol**
Be willing to accommodate legal retailer requests such as not stocking or merchandising products if they are uncomfortable having non-employees in their stores.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **CDC Guidance: Safety Practices for Critical Workers Who May Have Had Exposure**
- **Legal FAQs for Employers:** <https://www.fisherphillips.com/faqs>
- **Food and Beverage Issue Alliance:** <https://www.feedingus.org/>
- **The Food Industry Association:** <https://www.fmi.org/food-safety/coronavirus>
- **Small Business Relief:**
 - [Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program](#)
 - [Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- **State Health Departments:** Frequently check your state health department website:
 - [Alabama Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Alaska Department of Health and Social Services](#)
 - [Arizona Department of Health Services](#)
 - [Arkansas Department of Health](#)
 - [California Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment](#)
 - [Connecticut Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Delaware Division of Public Health](#)
 - [DC Health](#)
 - [Florida Department of Health](#)
 - [Georgia Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Hawai'i State Department of Health](#)
 - [Idaho Department of Health and Welfare](#)
 - [Illinois Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Indiana State Department of Health](#)
 - [Iowa Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Kansas Department of Health & Environment](#)
 - [Kentucky Department for Public Health](#)
 - [Louisiana Office of Public Health](#)
 - [Maine Division of Public Health Systems](#)
 - [Maryland Department of Health](#)
 - [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#)
 - [Michigan Department of Health & Human Services](#)
 - [Minnesota Department of Health](#)
 - [Mississippi State Department of Health](#)
 - [Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services](#)
 - [Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services](#)
 - [Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services](#)
 - [Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#)
 - [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services](#)
 - [New Jersey Department of Health](#)
 - [New Mexico Department of Health](#)
 - [New York State Department of Health](#)
 - [North Carolina Division of Public Health](#)
 - [North Dakota Department of Health](#)
 - [Ohio Department of Health](#)
 - [Oklahoma State Department of Health](#)
 - [Oregon Health Authority](#)
 - [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#)
 - [Rhode Island Department of Health](#)
 - [South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control](#)
 - [South Dakota Department of Health](#)
 - [Tennessee Department of Health](#)
 - [Texas Department of State Health Services](#)
 - [Utah Department of Health](#)
 - [Vermont Department of Health](#)
 - [Virginia Department of Health](#)
 - [Washington State Department of Health](#)
 - [West Virginia Department of Health & Human Resources](#)
 - [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#)
 - [Wyoming Department of Health](#)