

Review:

# COVID-19 Health & Cleanliness Practices for Public Access Environments

Eryn Ebach, Graduate Research Assistant  
Katie Givens, Program Manager

---



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF DIVERSITY AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

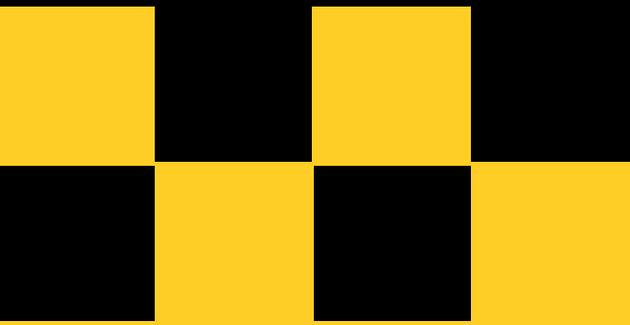
Public Policy and  
Management Center



The Public Policy and Management Center has completed a review of recommendations from federal, state and local agencies, businesses, and nonprofits on COVID-19 guidelines for health and safety in public access environments.

The PPMC recommends all readers review the state of Kansas Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas, KDHE Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Website, and their county health department's guidance on COVID-19.

This guide is a summation of information to further assist our partners in developing their own reopening plans.



# Employee Sick Leave, Supportive Policies and Practices

Workplaces should consider less restrictive leave policies to support employees during COVID-19.

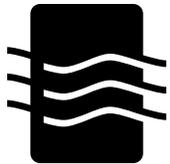
- Adopt and communicate clear policies and protocols related to COVID-19; both posted and provided to all customers, patrons, and staff
- Encourage employees who are sick to stay home. If an employee arrives at work showing symptoms of illness, immediately separate them from other employees or customers and send them home
- Medical facilities may be overwhelmed and unable to provide documentation in a timely manner. It is recommended that employees should not be required to test positive for COVID-19, or provide a doctor's note to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work
- Sick leave policies should extend to employees who have a member of their household exhibiting symptoms. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act provides expanded Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)
- Ensure compliance with ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and other EEO laws if requiring daily health screenings; screens should be administered based on business necessity
- Ensure policies are understood and enforced consistently; consider a virtual training on PPE and new policies and procedures prior to reopening



# Engineering Controls

Research shows that increased ventilation rates and outdoor circulation can improve engineering controls in ventilation systems.

- Consider improving the engineering controls using the building ventilation system.
  - Increase ventilation rates and increase the amount of outdoor air that circulates in the system
- Best practices have been identified for social distancing in business locations.
  - Increasing the physical space between employee workspaces
  - Increasing the physical space between employees and customers
  - As appropriate, the use of physical barriers to separate employees from customers
  - The use of rope-and-stanchion systems to keep customers from waiting or congregating near work areas
  - Place social distancing posters and floor markers in buildings
  - Consider drive-through services or partitions to protect employees and customers
  - Consider restricting the number of customers allowed inside the facility at any point in time
  - Consider scheduling at-risk customers during off-peak hours



# Administrative Controls

Research shows that the below administrative controls allow organizations to implement consistent cleaning and health practices.

## ■ Support respiratory and hand sanitation etiquette for employees and customers

- Provide tissues and no-touch receptacles for trash
- Encourage employees to cough or sneeze into a tissue and dispose of used tissues
- If tissues are unavailable, employees should cough or sneeze into their elbow, never their hands
- Provide hand sanitizer in waiting rooms and near doors



## ■ Perform routine cleaning and disinfection

- Increase the frequency of regular cleaning and disinfection
- New cleaning practices are not required as long as organizations are using CDC approved processes and cleaning products (See linked guidelines)
- Clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces (keyboards/keypads, pens/styluses, telephones, handrails and doorknobs)
- Increase trash removal using appropriate sanitation standards and protections



## ■ Provide disposable wipes\* for employees and customers to wipe down keyboards/keypads, telephones, handrails and doorknobs after each use

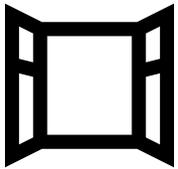
- Provide wipes for customers and ask them to clean surfaces themselves after each use reducing the chance of worker exposure
- If possible, limit customer and employee use or sharing of frequently touched surfaces

\* it is recommended that disposable wipes are not flushed down toilets

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Engineering and Administrative controls should be used in conjunction with personal protection measures as described by the CDC. Personal Protective Equipment or PPE may be used in conjunction with these measures not in place of the measures.

- Priorities should be on handwashing or sanitizing, and social distancing. PPE is recommended as additional safeguards in public
- State guidance recommends individuals wear face coverings in public settings
  - This is not in place of other controls
  - PPE can provide a false sense of security, causing individuals to abandon social distancing and improved sanitation practices
- Some businesses decided to provide staff with face masks and gloves, IF they have access to them
  - Those who do not have access to face masks have implemented policies allowing and encouraging employees to utilize personal masks if they have them
  - Many public service organizations, banks, grocery chains have installed Plexiglass, sneeze guards, and other protective barriers at reception desks or check in/cashier stands



# Social Distancing

Some best practice ideas in promoting social distancing are:

- Remove unnecessary furniture and equipment
  - Waiting area separated by at least 6 feet from employees and other customers
  - Block or remove workstations, tables, equipment, etc. that are in close proximity to one another
- Post signage instructing individuals on newly adopted policies and procedures on social distancing
- Utilize appointments to allow for cleaning in between appointments or room use
- Discontinue the use of printed materials, magazines, newspapers, or other shared items in waiting rooms, including office items shared among patients such as pens or clipboards
- Take time to think through customer flow and create efficiencies
  - Consider asking individuals to pre-fill out paperwork prior to appointments
  - Continue virtual services or bringing other services online



# Staffing Patterns

As states begin to reopen physical locations to the public, it is important to think through staffing patterns and tasks.

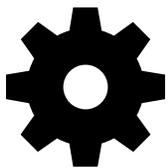


- Access to office space and phased or alternating workforce scheduling
  - Limiting the number of staff in business locations
  - This may be in the form of a schedule; employee A- MWF and Employee B- TTH or based on if the employee is in a high-risk category for COVID-19



- Consider a phased approach to reopening in-person services, such as offering appointment only versus walk-in services

- Provide cleaning/disinfecting in shared spaces and restrooms; block off stalls or sinks to ensure social distance



- Determine organizational capacity to accommodate change in staff and customer behavior (i.e. extended hours)
    - Offer staff options to work in off-peak hours
    - Offer customers virtual, in home, or delivery services
-

# Communication

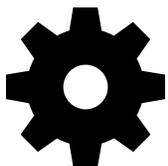
Clear and consistent communication on expectations of COVID-19 policies, procedures and tasks is critical for both customers and staff members to successfully navigate new standards or expectations.



- Ensure staff members understand new expectations and procedures prior to returning to work
  - Provide training to staff, or if appropriate, customers on policies, new procedures, etc.



- Post signage about new policies and procedures at entrances
  - Include a statement, “subject to change”



- Share expectations on websites, social media and by email blast
- Think through changes completely and ensure all stakeholders are informed
  - Provide verbal and written direction
  - If not an emergency course correction, provide enough time for adoption

- Communication should be two-way; make sure you are listening to employees and stakeholders as you adopt new practices
-

# References & Resources

## American Association of Family Physicians

- [Checklist to Prepare Physician Offices for COVID-19](#)

## Center for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting your Facility](#)

## Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

- [ADA/EEOC/Rehabilitation Act on Coronavirus](#)

## Kansas Department of Health and Environment

- [COVID-19 and Food Safety FAQ](#)
- [Guidance for Homeless Shelters and Homeless Service Providers During an Outbreak of COVID-19](#)

## Mercer Survey

- [Survey- How are companies supporting their employees during this outbreak?](#)

## Lear

- [Interactive Safe Work Playbook](#)

## Occupational Safety and Health Administration

- [Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Workers and Employers of Workers at Increased Risk of Occupational Exposure- Retail Workers](#)

## Public Library

- [American Library Association COVID-19 Issues](#)
- [Georgia Libraries- Recommendations for Library Services during COVID-19 Pandemic](#)



# References & Resources

## Restaurants

- [Freddy's USA - COVID 19 Reponses](#)
- [National Resturant Association Reopening Guidance](#)

## Sample Grocery Store Policies

- [National Grocers Association](#)
- [Aldi](#)
- [Albertsons](#)
- [Kroger](#)

## State of Colorado

- [Colorado Guidance for Schools, Workplaces, Communities](#)
- [Community Mitigation Business Guidance](#)

## Sedgwick County

- [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#)

## State of Kansas

- [Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas](#)
- [Industry Guidance](#)

## Workforce Association Resources

- [National Association of Workforce Boards New Page](#)
- [Robbin and Associates Coronavirus Resource List](#)
- [Epsetein Becker Green Caoronavirus Resource Center](#)

## World Health Organization

- [Getting Your Workplace Ready for COVID-19](#)



**WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

*DIVISION OF DIVERSITY AND  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT*

*Public Policy and  
Management Center*

Please reach out to the PPMC for more  
specific research or assistance



[wichita.edu/PPMC](http://wichita.edu/PPMC)



[facebook.com/WSUPPMC/](https://facebook.com/WSUPPMC/)



[@WSUPPMC](https://twitter.com/WSUPPMC)



[katie.givens@wichita.edu](mailto:katie.givens@wichita.edu)

