

HEALTHIER WORKPLACES | A HEALTHIER WORLD

Reopening: Guidance for Small Lodging Establishments

Guidance Document

aiha.org

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Overview

Small lodging establishments (including hotels, inns, and bed and breakfast businesses) across the United States have been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most, if not all, were deemed "non-essential" in the U.S. by state and federal governments, resulting in employers halting operations and closing workplaces. Currently, many states are in the process of trying to re-open parts of their economies, including some non-essential businesses.

Small lodging establishments include but are not limited to:

- Small hotels (boutique, historic)
- Inns
- Bed and Breakfast; AirBnB, HomeAway, VRBO, etc.
- Cabins
- Hostels
- Vacation Rentals

With stay-at-home and shelter-in-place restrictions beginning to lift, owners and managers of hotels, lodges and inns are challenged with difficult questions pertaining to preparing the premises in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, such as:

- What measures can we enact to protect the health of employees, guests, visitors, and vendors?
- What communication do we need to keep everyone informed of the preventive steps being taken to keep everyone safe?
- What training do we need for employees?
- What limitations do we need to implement for both employees, guests, visitors, and vendors?
- How do we handle crowd management throughout the venue, including peak times?
- What precautions should we take regarding high touch interactive surfaces (e.g., counters, restrooms, common areas, doorknobs, etc.)?

- How can we ensure potential guests who are sick or have been in contact with someone COVID-19 do not stay at our facility?
- How do we effectively and safely turn over rooms?
- How do we keep common areas set up for safe physical distancing?

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is thought to be spread primarily through aerosolized respiratory droplets at close range. Airborne transmission from exposure to very small droplets over long distances is unlikely. However, there is evidence that this mode of transmission is possible, particularly in crowded, indoor spaces. People may also become infecting by touching contaminated surfaces. The virus has been shown to survive in aerosols for hours and on surfaces for days. Infection can occur through eyes, nose, and mouth exposures. There is also strong evidence that people can spread the virus while pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic.

If small lodging establishments have shared spaces for dining, entertainment, or leisure, they may be prone to crowding; therefore, they should approach reopening with a heightened level of caution.

This document offers practical guidance for owner/manager and employee led actions in a small lodging/accommodation facility. It aims to address the key questions above by providing tips for 1) facility preparation, 2) operating procedures and 3) employee readiness.

What should an Innkeeper or Hotelier do to protect themselves, their employees, quests, visitors, and vendors?

Owners/Managers should continually monitor global (World Health Organization [WHO]), federal (Centers for Disease Control [CDC] and Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA]), state, and local guidelines for changes in recommenda-



tions, disinfection strategies, worker protections and other best management practices.

Owners/Managers should also consider developing a knowledgeable team to monitor, assess, and implement new strategies as they become available. In addition, they should consider the following strategies for reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission in regards to physical distancing, ventilation, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, restrooms, gathering areas and contact surfaces, personal hygiene, employee wellness, personal protective equipment (COVID-19-related protective equipment should include cloth or disposable face coverings and face shields for close contact activities, regular work gloves) training, waste and laundering, and communication.

Preparing the Facility for Reopening

Common Areas: Lobby, Front Desk, Concierge Desk, Shared Spaces, and Parking Services

- Common areas (e.g., lobby, check-in desk, security check-in, shared kitchens/beverage areas, restaurant/dining) should be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis at minimum.
- Regulate the use of common areas with clear signage (including maximum occupancy) and physical distancing measures in accordance with public health rules and guidelines.
- Limit the number of guests in a common area or shared space, including visitors of the guests.
- Place marks on floor wherever a line my develop to assure proper physical distancing.
- Require cloth or disposable face covering to be worn while addressing guests and visitors.
- Provide and require employees to use cleaning/disinfecting supplies for touched surfaces before/after each guest has been accommodated. Provide and require employees to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or

- 70% isopropyl alcohol before/after accommodating guests.
- Make hand sanitizer stations available throughout work and public places. Stations should also be placed in convenient locations, such as at entrances, exits, near elevators, and restrooms. Touchfree hand sanitizer dispensers should be installed where possible.
- If physical distancing is not possible for front desk personnel or other employees, then partitions should be considered between employee desks and the public.
- Disinfect all surfaces and commonly touched equipment (e.g., check-in tablets) every hour.
- Consider eliminating shared common areas for snacks, beverages (i.e. water, coffee).
- Streamline credit card processing and all transactions with guests whenever possible to limit contact.
- Remove all paper vouchers, tickets, brochures, etc. from common areas such as lobby, front desk, etc.
- Ensure Guest Arrival Document is completed at the beginning of each check-in process.
- If a guest is sick or has been around someone who is positive for COVID-19, notify management, discontinue the service, and ask the guest to wait outside or in an isolated area until management can address the issue.
- Disinfect all accommodation keys returned by guests. Do not return keys to another department.

Ventilation

- Provide natural ventilation by opening windows and doors whenever possible to increase air flow.
 If windows and doors cannot remain open, provide good indoor air quality by:
 - Keeping HVAC system operational to maintain thermal comfort and maximize outdoor air based on system design.



- Maintaining the relative humidity at 40-60%.
- Limiting the use of portable pedestal or overhead ceiling fans.
- If you need assistance on HVAC issues, ask an HVAC professional and see the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' (ASHRAE) <u>COVID-19</u> (<u>Coronavirus</u>) <u>Preparedness Resources</u> updates for more information.
 - AIHA Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) Science Professionals and industrial hygienists are also well versed in general dilution ventilation. AIHA has a <u>consultants list</u> of such qualified professionals.

Lobby and Other Public Restrooms (<u>NOTE: See Supplement guidance on use of air dryers</u>)

- Post signage limiting restroom occupancy to allow for proper physical distancing and to remind employees and guests to wash hands before and after using the restroom.
- Minimize touchpoints entering and existing restrooms, if possible.
- If the door cannot be opened without touching the handle, provide paper towels and a trash can by the door so a paper towel can be used when touching the handle and then discarded.
 - Consider controlling access to bathrooms with a key so disinfection measures can be better managed. If a key is used, consider disinfecting it after each use.
- Doors to multi-stall restrooms should be able to be opened and closed without touching handles if possible.
- Place signs indicating that toilet lids (if present) should be closed before and after flushing.
- Use no-touch faucets, towel dispensers, soap dispensers, and waste receptacles when possible.

- Hand soap should be readily available for use by occupants.
- Provide paper towels and air dryers in restrooms.¹
 - The WHO and CDC currently state that hands can be dried using a paper towel or hand dryer.
 - Due to current uncertainties surrounding the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, care should be taken when using a hand dryer or paper towel.
 - The use of touch or push hand dryers is discouraged due to possible surface contamination. If hand dryers are used, consider touchless devices.
- Businesses and employers should work with HVAC professionals to ensure that bathrooms are well ventilated, and if filtration is used, that proper filtration practices are being followed.
- Increase frequency and efforts to keep bathrooms clean and properly disinfected and maintain a record of sanitary work practices.
- Common restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected frequently during the day and at closing.
- Clean and disinfect all HVAC intakes and returns daily.

Housekeeping and Maintenance

- Establish safe entry into a guest room, ensure no one is in the room upon entry, if possible.
- Select appropriate disinfectants consider effectiveness and safety.
 - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a <u>list of products</u> that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2.
 - Do not mix different EPA registered chemicals together. The combination could be toxic by inhalation. Be particularly careful when using any products containing ammonia, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), or hydrogen peroxide.

¹NOTE VERSION CHANGE: In version 1 of this guidance document, in the section titled "Restrooms" it stated to disconnect or tape off the hand dryer. NOTE: See <u>Supplement guidance on use of air dryers</u>.



- Review product labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and follow manufacturer specifications for cleaning/disinfecting.
- Consider consulting an Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) Science Professional or Industrial Hygiene expert if additional advice is needed. AIHA has a consultants list of such qualified professionals.
- Establish a disinfection routine.
 - Ensure disinfection protocols follow product instructions for application and contact time. All items should be allowed to dry thoroughly after cleaning.
 - Use disposable wipes or rags when available. If not available, ensure rags are maintained, handled, and cleaned per product instructions.
- Consider developing a standard operating procedure, a checklist, or audit system to consistently train employees on enhanced cleaning/disinfecting practices or to track when and how cleaning and disinfecting is conducted. Note that this may be a requirement in some states or local jurisdictions.
- Provide Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for cleaning and disinfection products and ensure employees are aware of the hazards of use. Incorporate new hazards into existing OSHA Hazard Communications Program.
- Employees should receive, at minimum, awareness training on cleaning and disinfection products used in the workplace following OSHA Hazard Communication Standards. For employees who will use cleaning and disinfecting products, training should also include proper use, PPE, disposal, and all precautionary measures.
- Consider consulting Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) Science Professionals or industrial hygiene experts if additional advice is needed. Find a qualified industrial hygiene and OEHS professionals near you in our

Consultants Listing.

- Have processes in place for minimizing exposure to waste (trash cans, sanitary bins, etc.).
- Have process in place for bedding, linen, towels that minimize employee exposure to used/contaminated textiles, including, but not limited to: minimizing the shaking of linens; placing soiled textiles in bags; removing soiled linens and loading washing machines; and proper laundering practices. Launder bedding in accordance with established guidelines. (e.g., see <u>CDC Guidance for Cleaning</u> and <u>Disinfecting</u>).
- Take precaution when cleaning or maintaining shower, sink, and toilet (i.e. avoid creating aerosols, close toilet seat before flushing and use disposable gloves).
- Single-use items and used disinfection materials can be treated as regular waste, following regular safety guidelines.
- Any reused cloth materials should be washed and dried on the highest temperature setting allowable for the fabric.
- Deeper cleaning and disinfecting protocols should be developed and implemented in cases where confirmed cases of COVID-19 are discovered. Refer to AIHA's Workplace Cleaning for COVID-19.

Health Screening and Wellness

- Implement and inform employees of supportive workplace policies as applicable:
 - Flexible sick leave policies consistent with public health guidance. Providing paid sick leave is an important way to encourage employees to stay home when sick.
 - Consider not requiring a COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness in order to qualify for sick leave. If you do require a doctor's note from your employees to verify that they are



healthy and able to return to work, be aware that healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner. Get more information related to the <u>Americans with Disabilities Act during the COVID-19 pandemic</u>.

- Flexibility to stay home to care for a sick family member.
- Human resources policies consistent with public health guidance, and state and federal workplace laws. For more information on employer responsibilities, visit the <u>Department of Labor's</u> and the <u>Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's</u> websites.
- Employee assistance program and community resources to help employees manage stress and receive support.
- Encourage employees at increased risk for severe illness to request special accommodations to allow them to perform their job duties safely while also protecting sensitive employee health information.
- Post signs and reminders at entrances and in strategic places providing instruction on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette. This should include signs with images for non-English readers, as needed.
- Ask employees to consider the following if they commute to work using public transportation:
 - Use other forms of transportation if possible.
 - If taking public transportation, maintain physical distancing and wear a cloth or disposable face covering.
 - Change commute time to less busy times if possible.
 - Wash hands before and as soon as possible after their trip.
- Encourage those who are sick or at greater risk to stay home. This includes:

- People with underlying medical conditions.
- People who live with elderly people or those who are at risk.
- People with upper respiratory or flu-like symptoms or who live with someone with these clinical symptoms.
- People with COVID-19, people who live with someone with COVID-19, or who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Employers should educate employees to recognize the <u>symptoms of COVID-19</u> and provide instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms. At a minimum, any worker should immediately notify their supervisor, their health care provider, and the local health department, who will provide guidance on what actions need to be taken.
- Health checks and reporting requirements of individuals infected with COVID-19 should be explained to employees prior to reopening and again once operations have resumed.
- Communicate to employees the importance of being vigilant when monitoring symptoms and staying in touch with their employer or manager if or when they start to feel sick.
- Revisit your leave or sick program to allow for time off and follow all HR Policies and HIPAA/other regulatory requirements.
- Conduct employee temperature screening and wellness checks before each shift. (NOTE: be sure to comply with OSHA's Access to Employee Exposure Medical Records standard for confidentiality.)
 - Temperature screening methods can include manual (use non-contact infrared thermometers) or thermal camera meeting <u>FDA recommenda-</u> <u>tions</u>. Additional screening information/guidance can be found on the <u>CDC website</u>.
 - Assign an employee to manage and conduct the temperature screenings while following CDC



- guidelines in the above link. If this is not possible, employees can self-check their own temperature.
- Screening should be done in a manner such that the privacy of employees is respected.
- Perform a visual inspection for other signs of illness (e.g., flushed cheeks, rapid or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, extreme fussiness, cough).
- Employees who have a fever of 100.4° F (38° C) or above, or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility
- Employers can consider incorporating a wellness questionnaire with questions such as:
 - Have you, or a person you have been in close contact with, been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days? (close contact is 6 feet or less for more than 10 minutes.)
 - Have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 72 hours (to include fever, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea)?
 - Have you traveled to an international or domestic "hot spot" in the last 14 days?
 - There are a number of examples available for wellness questionnaires (see Resources below).
- Require employees who have symptoms or signs (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) or who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 to notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Sick employees should follow the CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments. Consider waiving requirements for medical documentation during the pandemic, as CDC has advised people with mild illness NOT to go to the doctor's office or emergency room.

- If employee is sick or receives positive COVID-19 test results, results should be reported to employer.
 In the case of a positive COVID-19 test result, the employee must stay home until cleared for physical return to the workplace by their medical provider, following the CDC's <u>Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings.</u>
- If an employee tests positive:
 - Follow federal, state, and local recommendations for reporting and communicating cases, while remaining compliant with regulations and guidelines pertaining to protecting private health information such as confidentiality required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). See OSHA for guidance on reporting workplace exposures to COVID-19.
 - Engage HR immediately and enforce all applicable HR rules and regulations.
 - The employee shall be isolated to the area they are in currently and removed from the work site for a minimum of 14 days.
 - Any individuals having "close contact" (within approximately 6 feet) with the sick should also be isolated from the work site for 14 days; and all other employees should continue to follow physical distancing rules. Communicate and reinforce with employees, while maintaining PII and HIPAA requirements, that they may have been exposed and to closely monitor their health, temperature, and current symptoms as identified by the CDC. Contact tracing and sharing of employee information should be done under the guidance of Human Resources due to privacy requirements of HIPAA, ADA, and EEOC. See the CDC's "Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) General Business Frequently Asked Questions".
 - Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting should be done immediately by trained personnel, who should wear face coverings and gloves, dis-



pose of gloves after use, and wash hands and face when complete. Visibly dirty surfaces shall be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water PRIOR to disinfection.

For disinfection, use only EPA-registered disinfectants on <u>List-N</u>.

What should an **Employee do** to protect themselves and the customers?

- Educate yourself with the facts of COVID-19 from credible sources.
- Employees should evaluate their health continuously; if they are sick, have a fever or symptoms, or someone at home is sick, then they should remain home. NOTE: Employer HR Policies, HIPAA guidelines and other laws should be followed at all times.
- Maintain cloth or disposable (or better if you have it) face covering, clean or replace frequently, and use at minimum when unable to maintain physical distancing of 6-feet.
- At minimum, employees should wash their hands after they have been in a public place, after touching their face covering, after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing, after using the restroom, after touching any common contact surfaces, and before eating. Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Employees should wash hands with clean, running water, apply soap, lather and scrub for at least 20 seconds, then rinse. Dry hands using a clean paper towel or air dry. When soap and water can't be used, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol. Any use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers should follow local and State guidelines.
- Maintain good hygiene practices (using disposable gloves when cleaning; washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use al-

cohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol). For more information, refer to CDC <u>Cleaning and Disinfection Guidelines</u>)

- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19:
 - Stay home and isolate until cleared for physical return to the workplace by your medical provider, following the CDC's <u>Discontinuation of Isolation</u> for Persons with COVID -19 Not in Healthcare Settings.
 - Contact your supervisor and report your results as soon as possible.
 - Notify your supervisor about others in the workplace with whom you came into contact.
- Depending on local requirements, in alignment with CDC recommendations, wear a cloth or disposable face covering whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained (indoors or outdoors). Ensure the face covering is properly maintained and cleaned. Additional information on cloth face coverings can be found on CDC's website. (NOTE: Cloth or disposable face coverings primarily protect other people. A cloth or disposable face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.)
- With the exception of children less than two, and individuals who have difficulty breathing, are unconscious, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance, CDC recommends that all people wear a cloth or disposable face covering in public settings and when around people who don't live in their household, especially when other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Non-medical cloth or disposable face coverings or cloth or disposable face coverings are NOT Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), but they do offer some protection to others and should be worn while near other people in common spaces or shared workspaces. They are not a substitute for physical dis-



- tancing, engineering controls, cleaning and disinfecting, proper hygiene, or staying home while sick.
- Remove cloth or disposable face coverings correctly and wash hands after handling or touching a used face covering.
- Wash cloth face coverings after each use. Cloth face coverings can be included with regular laundry. Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the face covering. Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry. If air drying, lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place in direct sunlight.
- Let your employer know if you have concerns about personal protective equipment (PPE) that may be provided to you and that you are properly instructed on how to use it. <u>The CDC has recommended</u> <u>sequences for donning and doffing PPE</u>.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. Immediately wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. Learn more about <u>coughing and sneezing</u> etiquette.

Worker Rights

AIHA believes that basic protections are worker rights, as well as an essential ingredient of occupational health and safety systems, and that employers must provide a safe and healthful work environment.

Guest Communication and Expectation

- During the reservation process, advise potential guests what steps you are taking to assure their health and safety and the health and safety of your employees.
- Ask if they or anyone in their household has tested positive for COVID-19.

- Confirm with them that while on your premises they are expected to follow specific rules established to protect them, other guests, and your employees from COVID-19.
- Ask guests to call 3 days before arrival and confirm that no one in their party is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Upon arrival:
 - Ask guests if they or anyone in their household has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Monitor the body temperature of every guest.
- Advise guests if anyone in the party feels ill during their stay, notify management immediately.
- Advise guests of the precautions taken on the premises and their role to protect themselves, other guests, and employees, including maintaining physical distancing (including pool, beach, etc.), washing and disinfecting hands frequently, observing signs and avoiding coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Encourage guests to wear a cloth or disposable face covering where physical distancing is not possible. (NOTE: Cloth or disposable face coverings primarily protect other people. A cloth or disposable face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.)
- Upon Departure:
 - Confirm no one in the party is sick or has a temperature.
 - Ask guests if they felt safe during their stay and if they have any suggestions how you can improve practices to assure health and safety.

Guest Services/Fitness Centers/Salons

For establishments with guest services, including salons, childcare, gyms, retail, please refer to the specific guidance documents for those industries on www.backtoworksafely.org.



Food Service/Restaurant/Bar

For establishments with food service, restaurants, cafes, bars, and/or shared dining spaces, please refer to the following guidance documents: Restaurants or Bars on www.backtoworksafely.org.

Resources

- American Hotel and Lodging Association "Safe Stay" Initiative
- CDC Health Screening <u>"Should we be screening employees for COVID-19 symptoms?" section</u> of General Business Frequently Asked Questions
- Numerous wellness questionnaire examples are available online (e.g., <u>South Dakota Department</u> of <u>Health's COVID-19</u>: <u>Employee Screening Questions and Guidelines</u>)
- The EPA has developed a <u>list of disinfectants</u> for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- ASHRAE has a list of <u>COVID resources</u> for commercial buildings.
- AlHA's Indoor Environmental Quality Committee developed these guidance documents about reopening and cleaning buildings after closures due to COVID-19: <u>Recovering from COVID-19 Building</u> <u>Closures</u> and <u>Workplace Cleaning for COVID-19</u>.
- AIHA's <u>Considerations on the Safe Use of UVC Radiation</u>
- AIHA's Focus on Construction Health: COVID-19
- AIHA's <u>Effective and Safe Practices</u>: <u>Guidance for Custodians</u>, <u>Cleaning and Maintenance Staff</u>
- AIHA's <u>Employers Guide to COVID-19 Cleaning & Disinfection in Non-Healthcare Workplaces</u>
- AIHA's <u>Reducing Risk of COVID-19 Using Engineering Controls</u>
- AIHA's PPE for SARS-CoV-2

- AIHA's <u>Use of Real Time Detection Systems</u>
- AIHA's <u>Proper Use of Respirators for Healthcare</u> <u>Workers & First Responders</u>
- AIHA's Workers Rights White Paper

AIHA®

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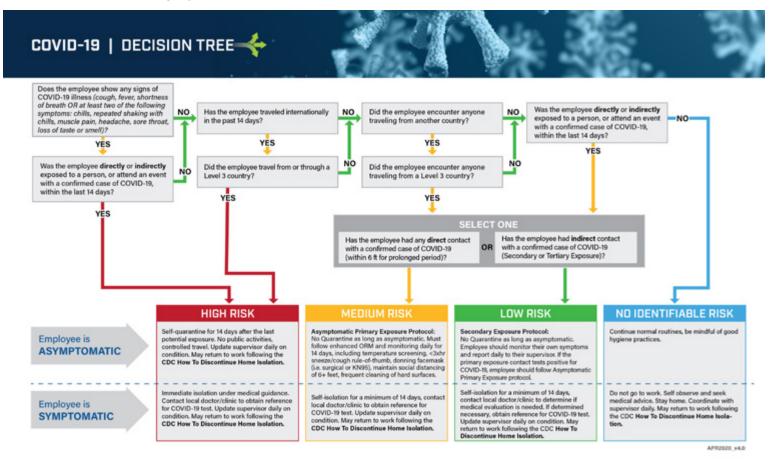
About Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Professionals

Occupational health and environmental and safety (OEHS) professionals (also known as industrial hygienists) practice the science of anticipating, recognizing, evaluating, controlling and confirming workplace conditions that may cause workers' injury or illness. Through a continuous improvement cycle of planning, doing, checking and acting, OEHS professionals make sure workplaces are healthy and safe.

- Get additional resources at AIHA's <u>Coronavirus</u> Outbreak Resource Center.
- Find a qualified industrial hygiene and OHS professionals near you in our <u>Consultants Listing</u>.



Decision Tree for Employees



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Communications

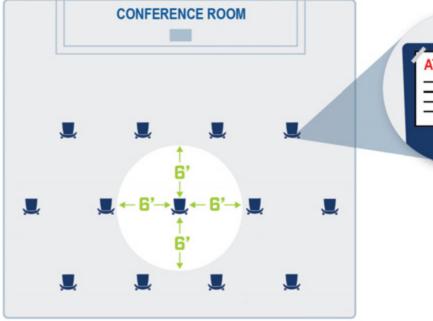
Posters that are visible through the workspace for the general public and employees.



Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.







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These guidance documents were primarily developed for those smaller business that don't have readily available occupational health and safety resources, and designed to help business owners, employers, employees and consumers implement science-backed procedures for limiting the spread of the coronavirus. They are subject to any local, state, or federal directives, laws, or orders about operating a business and should only be used if they do not conflict with any such orders.

These documents are subject to revision and shall be updated accordingly.

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