

PREPARING PUBLIC BUILDINGS FOR REOPENING

There is an abundance of information to consider in preparing to re-open your public buildings after the recent closures due to the COVID-19. This Memo is not intended to be a comprehensive in nature, but rather, a guide to the most important aspects of operating during these pandemic times.

The guiding principles in re-opening should be protection of employees, members of the public and the community at large. Employers should continue to stay up to-date on federal, state and local guidelines as the situation continues to evolve. Below are the high points to consider, and for a more thorough review of best practices related to the COVID-19 please review the Checklist for all Employers promulgated by the Texas Health and Human Services which can be found at:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/docs/opentx/AllEmployers.pdf>

These are some of the major categories of protocols put out by the CDC:

1. Reduce Transmission Among Employees:

- a. Actively encourage sick employees to stay at home.
- b. Sick employees should follow the CDC recommended steps before returning to work. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- c. Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow CDC recommend precautions. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html#precautions>

2. Maintain Healthy Business Operations:

- a. Implement flexible sick leave policies. This will include making sure policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws. See: <http://www.dol.gov/> and <http://www.eeoc.gov/>.
- b. Identify a person or group of persons that will coordinate COVID-19 issues and their impact on the workplace.

3. Maintain a Healthy Work Environment:

- a. Promote hand hygiene through the supply of soap and water and alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- b. Place posters at the entrance to your workspace that encourage hand hygiene.
- c. Train all employees on cleaning, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and social distancing guidelines.
- d. Discourage handshaking.
- e. Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection.
- f. Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after a person suspected/confirmed to have COVID-19 have been in the facility.
- g. Educate your employees regarding travel safety.

Remember to also use common sense and take into account the safety of the community while encouraging the re-opening of public buildings, including the courthouse.

Additional Resources:

Governor Greg Abbott's website:

<https://gov.texas.gov/>

Texas Department of State Health Services

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

Texas Workforce Commission

<https://twc.texas.gov/>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

<https://www.osha.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/>