

PROTECTING YOUR BUSINESS FROM COVID-19

Pandemics like COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, create a variety of unusual circumstances that you must be able to quickly adjust to. This guide can help you prepare for and react to COVID-19 impacts.

Stay informed and understand your areas of risk:

- Review the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state government websites for information on COVID-19 or current health crisis.
- Identify a resource at your company to monitor the crisis and potential impacts to business.
- Conduct a risk assessment of your operation, including such areas as staffing, business partners, supply chain, customers and potential shut-downs of suppliers, customers or transportation links.
- Identify potential cash-flow and financing requirement to sustain your business.

Plan your response:

1. Staff, Visitor and Travel Policies:

- Review employee leave policies and modify them as necessary to support extended sick or home quarantine periods.
- Consider paid leave for these periods to encourage appropriate use.
- Consider flexible working arrangements for staff including working on-line from home.
- Review your visitor access policies and be prepared to limit visitors.
- Consider replacing in-person meetings with on-line alternatives. Test online meeting tools prior to use.
- Limit staff business travel to impacted areas; consult the [CDC Travel Health Notice](#) site for updates.

2. Help Employees Stay Healthy:

- Maintain and enhance facility cleaning plans and consider providing hand-sanitizing locations on-site.
- Provide [illness prevention](#) training and education to staff, encouraging to practice these habits at home and work.
- Identify which staff and visitors need access to which areas of your facility, limit if possible.
- Consider screening, home-quarantine and other policies as appropriate.
- Consider a policy that supervisors must notify HR immediately if they become aware of diagnosed employee.
- Implement social distancing guidelines if recommended by public health officials.

3. Communication Plan:

- Develop an internal employee communication plan regarding the company's response plan providing regular (at least weekly) updates and provide opportunities for questions and feedback.
- Communicate to external business partners with updates on your response plan and impacts to them.
- Plan and act based on facts and anticipate employee fear, anxiety, rumors and misinformation and plan communications accordingly.
- Coordinate your response plan with local and state officials as needed.

Original Source: The Center for Industrial Research and Service, www.ciras.iastate.edu.