

Protocols for Office Worksites: Appendix D

Effective Date: 12:01am on Monday, April 5, 2021

Recent Updates: (Changes are highlighted in yellow)

4/2/21: Updates protocol for Orange Tier to allow non-essential offices to reopen at 50% occupancy, although telework is strongly encouraged.

COVID-19 case rates, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to fall, but community spread still remains moderate. COVID-19 continues to pose a high risk to communities and requires all people and businesses to take precautions and modify operations and activities to reduce the risk of spread.

Due to Los Angeles County entering the “Orange Tier” of the State’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy framework, this protocol has been updated to lift some local activity-specific restrictions. Office Worksites should proceed with caution and adhere to the requirements in this protocol to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19 within their business operations.

This protocol outlines public health modifications to assist office worksites to remain in compliance with the County of Los Angeles Health Officer Order. The following issues are critical and must be addressed to ensure that workers and consumers remain reduce the risk of spread as we transition to a more open phase:

- (1) Protecting and supporting employee and customer health
- (2) Ensuring appropriate physical distancing
- (3) Ensuring proper infection control
- (4) Communicating with the public
- (5) Ensuring equitable access to services

These five key areas must be addressed as your facility develops any reopening protocols.

Note that Office-Based Worksites that operate retail establishments, restaurants or gyms and fitness establishments should adhere to the following protocols, as appropriate:

- DPH Protocols for [Retail Establishments](#)
- DPH Protocols for [Restaurants](#)
- DPH Protocols for [Gyms and Fitness Establishments](#)

All businesses covered by this guidance must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable to the business.

Business name:

Facility Address:

**Maximum Occupancy,
per Building Code:**

**Approximate total square footage
of space open to the public:**

Date Posted:

**A. WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT EMPLOYEE HEALTH
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO THE FACILITY)**

- Everyone who can carry out their work duties from home has been directed to do so.
- Vulnerable staff (those above age 65, those who are pregnant, and those with chronic health conditions) are assigned work that can be done from home whenever possible and should discuss any concerns with their healthcare provider or occupational health services to make appropriate decisions on returning to the workplace.
- Work processes are reconfigured to the extent possible to increase opportunities for employees to work from home.
- Alternate, staggered or shift schedules have been instituted to maximize physical distancing.
- Additional protections like shifts in job duty that allow employees that are vulnerable to work from home have been provided whenever possible.
- All employees have been told not to come to work if sick, or if they are exposed to a person who has COVID-19. Employees understand to follow DPH guidance for self-isolation and quarantine, if applicable. Workplace leave policies have been reviewed and modified to ensure that employees are not penalized when they stay home due to illness.
- Entry screenings are conducted before employees, vendors, delivery personnel, and other visitors may enter the workspace, in compliance with LACDPH [Entry Screening Guidance](#). Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done upon the employees' arrival or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entry of the facility stating that employees with these symptoms must not enter the premises. A temperature check should also be done at the worksite if feasible.
 - **Negative Screen (Cleared).** If the person has no symptom(s) and no contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter and work for that day.
 - **Positive Screen (Not Cleared):**
 - If the person was not fully vaccinated¹ against COVID-19 and had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine.
 - If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter or work in the field and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation.
- Workers are provided information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#).
- Upon being informed that one or more employees test positive for, or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (case), the employer has a plan or protocol in place to have the case(s) isolate themselves at home and require the immediate self-quarantine of all employees that had a workplace exposure to the case(s). The employer's plan should consider a protocol for all quarantined employees to have access to or be tested for COVID-19 in order to determine whether there have been additional workplace exposures, which may require additional COVID-19 control measures. See the public health guidance on [responding to COVID-19 in the workplace](#).

¹ People are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two (2) weeks or more after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (e.g., Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or two (2) weeks or more after they have received a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).

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- In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer must report this cluster to the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821 or on-line at www.redcap.link/covidreport. If a cluster is identified at a worksite, the Department of Public Health will initiate a cluster response which includes providing infection control guidance and recommendations, technical support and site-specific control measures. A public health case manager will be assigned to the cluster investigation to help guide the facility response. The Department of Public Health will need the facility's immediate cooperation to determine whether the cluster of cases constitutes an outbreak of COVID-19.
- Employees who have contact with others are offered, at no cost, an appropriate face mask that covers the nose and mouth. For more information, see LAC DPH COVID-19 Mask webpage at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/masks>. The face mask is to be worn by the employee at all times during the workday when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Employees who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face mask must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. All employees must wear face masks at all times except when working alone in private offices with closed doors or when eating or drinking. The exception made previously for employees working in cubicles with solid partitions exceeding the height of the employee while standing is overridden until further notice.
- To ensure that masks are worn consistently and correctly, employees are discouraged from eating or drinking except during their breaks when they are able to safely remove their masks and physically distance from others. At all times when eating or drinking, employees must maintain at least a six-foot distance from others. When eating or drinking, it is preferred to do so outdoors and away from others, if possible. Eating or drinking at a cubicle or workstation is preferred to eating in a breakroom if eating in a cubicle or workstation provides greater distance from and barriers between workers.
- Occupancy is reduced and space between employees is maximized in any room or area used employees for meals and/or breaks. This has been achieved by:
 - Posting a maximum occupancy that is consistent with enabling a distance of at least six feet between individuals in rooms or areas used for breaks; and
 - Staggering break or mealtimes to reduce occupancy in rooms or areas used for meals and breaks; and
 - Placing tables at least eight feet apart and assuring six feet between seats, removing or taping seats to reduce occupancy, placing markings on floors to assure distancing, and arranging seating in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact. Use of partitions is encouraged to further prevent spread but should not be considered a substitute for reducing occupancy and maintaining physical distancing.
- Employees are instructed to wash, if applicable, or replace their face masks daily.
- All occupied desks, individual workstations or individuals on production lines are separated by at least six feet unless there are extenuating circumstances that require closer contact for brief periods of time.
- All employees, vendors and delivery personnel have been provided instructions regarding maintaining physical distancing and the use face masks when around others.
- Break rooms, restrooms and other common areas are disinfected hourly, on the following schedule:
 - Break rooms _____
 - Restrooms _____
 - Other _____

- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to employees at the following location(s):

- Hand sanitizer effective against COVID-19 is available to all employees at the following location(s):

- Soap and water are available to all employees at the following location(s):

- Employees are allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands.
- Workers are provided time during their shifts to implement cleaning practices. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties.
- Each worker is assigned their own tools, equipment and defined workspace whenever possible. Sharing of workspaces and held items is minimized or eliminated. Where items must be shared, they are disinfected between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment such as copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, surfaces in reception areas, shared work stations, etc. with a cleaner appropriate for the surface.
- Copies of this Protocol have been distributed to all employees.
- Optional—Describe other measures:

B. MEASURES TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Office-based businesses that must open indoors for business operations that cannot be done remotely must limit indoor occupancy as follows. Unless staff at all office-based businesses are fully vaccinated² against COVID-19, the number of employees in the office-based business worksite is limited at any one time such that employees can easily maintain at least a six-foot distance from one another at all practicable times but in no case more than 50% of the maximum occupancy of the office-based business worksite.
Maximum number of customers in the facility limited to: _____
Maximum number of employees in facility per floor is limited to: _____
- Essential office-based businesses that are open for indoor essential operations that cannot be done remotely must limit indoor capacity to 75% of maximum occupancy.
- Tape or other markings have been placed at least six feet apart anywhere where individuals may have to line up, both inside the workplace and outside its public entrances, with signs directing employees and visitors to use the markings to maintain distance.
- Employees have been instructed to maintain at least six feet distance from customers, guests and from each other; employees may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services, or as otherwise necessary.
- Elevator capacity is limited to the number of people that can be accommodated while maintaining a 6-foot physical distance between riders; during peak building entry and exit times, this number can be adjusted to 4 individuals or fewer at a time for any elevator that does not allow for 6-foot physical distance between riders. All riders are required to wear face masks. Consider elevator sizes, number of building floors, and daily number of employees and visitors to establish physical distancing guidelines appropriate for elevator riders.

² People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 2 weeks or more after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (e.g. Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or 2 weeks or more after they have received a single-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson and Johnson [J&J/Janssen].)

- To ease elevator traffic, stairwells have been opened for “up” or “down” traffic with increased cleaning of stairwells.
- Furniture in areas that are open to the public (e.g., lobby, reception areas, or waiting rooms) is separated to support physical distancing.
- Customer service windows or reception counters have been separated by 6 feet to allow for physical distancing.
- Workspaces, cubicles, etc. are redesigned to ensure for six feet between employees.
- Common areas (e.g., break rooms and kitchenettes) are closed or restricted, using barriers, or by increasing physical distance between tables/chairs in breakrooms and kitchenettes where personnel are likely to congregate and interact.
- Employees are discouraged from congregating in any area, but especially common areas or high traffic areas such as break rooms, bathrooms, hallways and stairwells.
- To the extent possible, flow of traffic within the workplace is modified to minimize contacts (e.g., doors for entry or exit only; directional hallways or passageways have been established for foot traffic in a way that prevents employees from passing by one another).
- Employees have been instructed to discontinue handshakes or other forms of greeting that break physical distance.
- In-person meetings are strongly discouraged in favor of virtual meetings. If in-person meetings are absolutely necessary, these meetings must be limited to 15 or fewer participants and all participants must wear cloth face masks, no eating or drinking during the meeting, and the meeting must be held in a room that is large enough for participants to easily maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or greater from other participants.
- Nonessential travel is discontinued.

C. MEASURES FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- The HVAC system is in good, working order; to the maximum extent possible, ventilation has been increased. Effective ventilation is one of the most important ways to control small aerosol transmission. Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building’s air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices and other spaces. See California Department of Public Health [Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#) for detailed information.
 - Please Note: Ventilation and other indoor air quality improvements are an addition to, and not a replacement for, mandatory protections including wearing face masks (except in certain high-risk environments that require using proper respiratory protection), maintaining at least six feet of distance between people, washing hands frequently, and limiting activities that bring together people from different households.
- [Entry screening](#) is conducted before visitors may enter any of the establishment’s indoor or outdoor areas. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing and fever or chills, and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. (See County [Entry Screening](#) guidance.) These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems or through [signage](#) posted at the entrance of a facility stating that visitors with these symptoms should not enter the premises.
 - Negative Screen (Cleared). If the person has no symptom(s) and no contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days, they can be cleared to enter for that day.
 - Positive Screen (Not Cleared):

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- If the person has had contact with a known COVID-19 case in the last 14 days or is currently under quarantine orders, they may not enter and must be sent home immediately to quarantine at home. Provide them with the quarantine instructions found at ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine.
 - If the person is showing any of the symptoms noted above or is currently under isolation orders, they may not enter and must be sent home immediately to isolate at home. Provide them with the isolation instructions found at ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation.
- Visitors arriving at the establishment are reminded to wear a face mask at all times (except while eating or drinking, if applicable) while in the establishment or on the grounds of the establishment. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Individuals who have been instructed by their medical provider that they should not wear a face mask must wear a face shield with a drape on the bottom edge, to be in compliance with State directives, as long as their condition permits it. A drape that is form fitting under the chin is preferred. Masks with one-way valves must not be used. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face mask should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Shared materials or objects (e.g., staplers, three-hole punches pens, coffee mugs etc.) have been eliminated, to the greatest extent possible.
- [Enhanced cleaning](#) of entire office space is completed on a regular basis.
- To the extent possible, doors, trash cans, etc. are contactless.
- Common areas and frequently touched object such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, elevator switches and buttons, touch screens, printers/copiers, and handrails are disinfected hourly using EPA approved disinfectants and following the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to all employees at the following location(s):

- Contactless payment systems are in place or, if not feasible, payment systems are sanitized hourly. Describe:

- If possible, customer service or reception areas have plastic barriers installed to limit contact between employees and visitors.
- To the extent possible, visitors to the worksite are by appointment only and are pre-registered in a visitor log that includes a visitor's name, phone number and email address. Visitors are instructed to come to their appointments alone. If a visitor must be accompanied by another person (e.g., for translation assistance, or because the visitor is a minor, or has minor children) their information is captured in the visitor log.
- To the extent possible, movement of visitors to the worksite is limited to designated areas such as the reception or lobby area, customer service area, conference or meeting rooms, and public rest rooms.
- If necessary, staff are available to direct guests to meeting rooms upon entry to office space rather than congregating in lobbies or common areas.
- Visitors arriving at the worksite with children must ensure that their children stay next to a parent, avoid touching any other person or any item that does not belong to them, and are masked if age permits.
- Restrooms normally open to the public remain open to the public if the public can enter the facility.
- Hand sanitizer, soap and water, tissues and trash cans are available to the public at or near the entrance of the facility, at reception, and anywhere else inside the workplace or immediately outside where people have direct interactions.
- Use of digital files rather than paper formats (e.g., documentation, invoices, inspections, forms, agendas) is encouraged.

- Break rooms, restrooms, and other common areas are being disinfected hourly, on the following schedule:
 - Break rooms: _____
 - Restrooms: _____
 - Other: _____
- Building infrastructure that supports bike commuting is open and capacity for bike storage increased if possible.
- Sharing of communal food is prohibited.
- Optional - Describe other measures (e.g. providing senior-only hours, incentivizing non-peak sales):

D. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- A copy of this protocol, or if applicable, the facility's printed Los Angeles County COVID-19 Safety Compliance Certificate is posted at all public entrances to the facility. For more information or to complete the COVID-19 Safety Compliance self-certification program, visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/covid19cert.htm>. Facilities must keep a copy of the Protocols onsite at the facility for review, upon request.
- Signage has been posted to provide clear guidance to the public about how to maintain safety within the facility (e.g., maintaining physical distance, wear face mask, etc.). See the County DPH COVID-19 Guidance: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/guidances.htm#business> for additional resources and examples of signage that can be used by businesses.
- Signage is posted at each public entrance of the facility to inform all employees and visitors that they should: Avoid entering the facility if they have a cough or fever.
- Online outlets of the workplace (website, social media, etc.) provide clear information about hours, required use of face masks, policies in regard to making appointments, and other relevant issues.

E. MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES

- Services that are critical to the customers/clients have been prioritized.
- Transactions or services that can be offered remotely have been moved on-line.
- Measures are instituted to assure access to goods and services for customers who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.

Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the business should attach to this document.

You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:

Business Contact Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Last Revised: _____