

# Back to Work Toolkit

## Your Plan to Re-Open Safely

COVID-19 has changed the landscape of your business, and now that employees can begin returning to work, the transition is going to be challenging. The workplace is not going to go back to how it was before. Instead, employees will need to get used to a new normal, and business owners need to be prepared to reopen in a safe and timely manner.

We've put together this comprehensive tool kit to help business owners prepare their HR and Payroll departments, middle management, and employees for returning to the workplace amidst coronavirus and post-coronavirus. This kit should answer all questions you have about CDC recommendations and the legal notices to post in your designated workspaces, as well as a checklist to make sure you're prepared from the top down.

## Return to Work Toolkit

### Postings and Policies

Post the Families First Coronavirus Response Act poster in a space visible to all employees. If any of your employees are going to be working from home still, send them the poster in an email or post to your company Intranet or other places your employees have digital access to.

### Review Your Current Staffing Levels and HR Hiring Policies

Before you begin to communicate with any of your employees, it is important to review HR policies and hiring procedures. You will also need to assess your current needs with the capabilities of your operation under COVID-19 Phase restrictions. Here are some questions to ask yourself and policies you should review.

- What are your current staffing levels?
- Do you have hiring or staffing needs that must be addressed prior to reopening?
- Is your pay or benefits package competitive with similar businesses in your area?
- Can you use remote interviewing and onboarding?
- Update your interviewing and onboarding policies if you are able to move interviewing and onboarding to a digital platform.
- Review your company policies for recalling furloughed or laid-off workers so that you are in compliance with company and legal guidelines.





## Review and Revise Company Attendance and Leave Guidelines

Some of your employees may not be ready or want to come back to work when your business is ready to begin reopening and there are federal guidelines to follow if you have employees that are not ready to return. There are also a few things you can do from an employer standpoint when it comes to making the return to work much easier for employees who may still be dealing with the effects of Coronavirus.

- Ensure you understand how the FFCRA affects your current policies and guidelines.
- Review and consider revising guidelines on PTO and vacation time policies.
- Review and consider revising company policy on bereavement leave.
- Review and consider revising company policies on attendance and late arrival, schedule change requests, day-off requests, and changes in availability.
- Ensure that all employees receive copies of any new policies that affect their benefits and leave.

## Review and Revise Work from Home Policies

Working from home has proven to be a very efficient and profitable way for employers to conduct business during the pandemic of

COVID-19. Some major offices and employers are even opting to continue their work from home policies for many employees. If your interested in keeping your work-from-home force operating at full efficiency, now may be the time to invest in software upgrades or new hardware.



- Review and revise if necessary, policies on work-from-home
- Determine which of your employees' job functions can be efficiently done at home.
- Review the profits and losses related to employees working from home.
- Consider software and hardware upgrades for employees working at home.



## Review and Revise Child Care Policies

If your company offers child care or childcare assistance, these policies may need to change permanently as your employees return to work, or stay home. Some larger offices have onsite daycare facilities that have been closed during the pandemic. Ask yourself these questions while considering your employer provided childcare options.

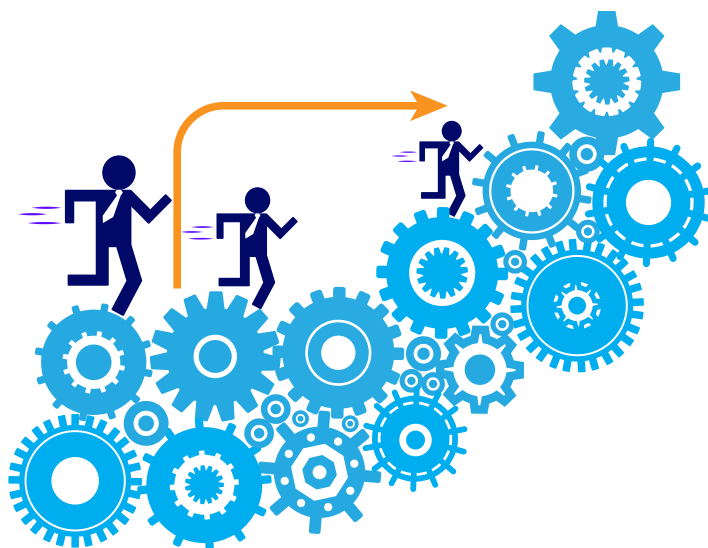
- How many employees are you bringing back to the office that use or will use the childcare facilities?
- What are your current staffing needs for the daycare center?
- Consider whether you will provide daycare services for your employees that work from home.
- Have a plan in place to comply with social distancing, masks, and other federal guidelines.
- Weigh the benefit to your employees vs. the cost to the company for this expenditure.

## Review Company Travel Policies

In many industries travel is an essential part of the job duties. Some of your employees who frequently traveled out of state may have been restricted from doing so during the pandemic. You may also have had restrictions on employees traveling together, carpooling, or holding conferences, meetings, and team building activities.

You'll need to consider many options when determining your travel policies during the reopening phases.

- Has your governor implemented or lifted travel restrictions?
- Review and consider revising policies that relate to the amount of travel required for employees, overnight accommodations, and personal protective equipment while traveling.
- Will your company be providing PPE for employees traveling including facemasks, hand sanitizer and gloves?
- Consider any future group meetings, conferences, or team building activities that are scheduled for the rest of 2020 and determine if it is in the best interest of your company and employees to keep them on the schedule.





## Review Your Company Health and Benefits Eligibility

Health insurance has never been easy to navigate but you may find that your insurance company is changing their policies and procedures to help deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. You might see changes in premiums, copays, and more than will affect your employees. You should also visit your benefits package offerings and see how you can make it easier for employees to come back to their position while still retaining the benefits they had when they were furloughed or laid-off.

- What are your company policies for benefits as they relate to rehiring employees or recalling them from furlough?
- Have they accumulated vacation time or paid time off while laid off or furloughed?
- Do health insurance benefits need to be reinstated?
- Will seniority remain the same?
- Ensure that all new policies and benefits enrollment information is distributed physically and electronically to employees.

- Review policies and CDC recommendations for health and safety in the workplace
- Educate employees through visible postings and direct communication on company policy related to disinfection, cleanings, personal protective equipment usage, and travel.
- Encourage and educate employees on following the CDC recommended guidelines in their private lives outside of the workplace.
- Also be prepared to send employees home who show any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive. These employees must stay home in accordance with CDC recommendations.



## Health and Safety Check List

The health and safety of your employees, customers, and clients will be at the forefront of your mind while getting your business ready to reopen. Providing a safe, clean, and sanitary workplace is the only way to try to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the office.

## Promote and Set Up the Office for Social Distancing

Your office workers and employees might be used to working in close quarters and having desks sitting right next to each other, but social distancing rules may mean a change to your



workplace setting and limitations to how many people can be in the office at one time. There are a few things you can consider doing to prepare for these new guidelines.



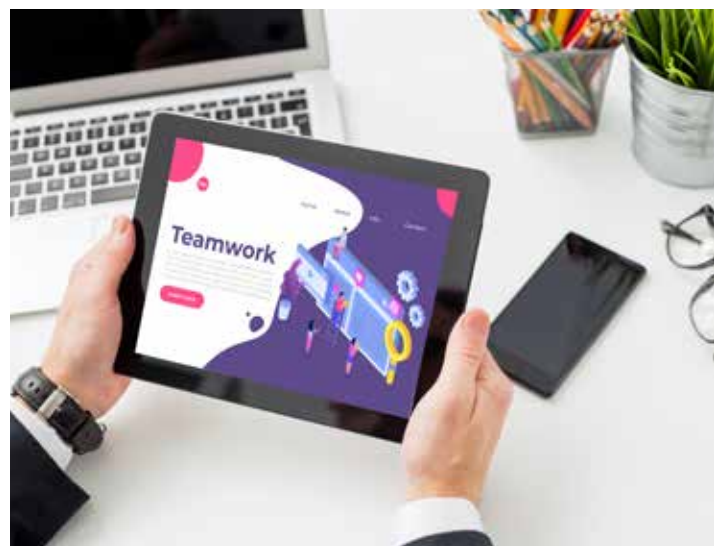
- Can you keep some of your employees working from home?
- Can employees work in rotating shifts with some employees working certain days and the others on opposite days? Can you bring employees part time and ask them to work morning or afternoon shifts so that less employees are interacting in the office?
- Space desks 6 feet apart
- Utilize Zoom or other platforms to meet digitally or via conference call rather than in person.
- Provide disinfectant wipes so that employees can wipe down surfaces they've interacted with, their workstations, and computer equipment.

- Provide PPE, such as face coverings and gloves for employees.
- Discourage handshaking, hugging, and any personal contact between employees.
- Place posters throughout the workspaces, breakrooms, and bathrooms that promote social distancing and hygiene guidelines.

## Best Practices

While every industry is different, there are some best practices that apply to almost every business owner who is trying to reopen their offices and storefront amidst the pandemic.

- Review your local and state news briefings daily to check for changes in lawful policies and procedures.
- Ensure your commercial cleaning company is scheduled and perhaps scheduled more frequently.





## More Best Practices

- Have you communicated with your cleaning company to ensure they are following recommended guidelines on cleaning and disinfection?
- Always communicate clearly with all of your employees on changes taking place.
- Have recall or new-offer letters ready to be sent by HR.
- Be as flexible as possible and encourage flexibility amongst your employees
- Be prepared for changes and sudden shifts in workload.
- Make sure HR is trained to investigate and stop discriminatory practices in the workplace.
- Consider offering an Employee Assistance Program. There are EAPs your company can partner with to offer services such as counseling, financial assistance, and more.
- Develop a COVID response team and designate employees to be a part of this program. You'll also need a captain for this team that is a go-to person for answering questions and implementing policy.
- Make sure emergency communication plans are implemented and ready to enact.
- Develop a plan for a COVID-19 outbreak in your workplace.
- Cross train employees to be skilled at multiple positions.



## Frequently Asked Questions

You've probably got some specific questions on returning to work that other people in your position are also trying to figure out. We've got some of the answers for you, but you should always make sure to cross reference with our local and state guidelines.

### 1. CAN EMPLOYEES BE SCREENED FOR COVID-19 BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK?

Under almost any other circumstance requiring your employees be screened for a specific illness or disease would be illegal; however, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has made COVID-19 screening an exception to this rule. The EEOC has stated that employers are permitted to ask about COVID-19 related symptoms, require



employees to self-report symptoms and test results, or take an employee's temperature before allowing them to enter the workspace.

If you decide to implement COVID-19 screening procedures, make sure you add this policy to your employee handbook, and you update every employee employed and furloughed. Keep in mind that if you screen one employee you must screen all to avoid claims of discrimination, so have a plan ready for proper implementation of screening for every employee.

## **2. CAN I CHOOSE WHICH EMPLOYEES I WANT TO BRING BACK TO WORK?**

You do have some flexibility in which employees you can bring back; however you do have to ensure that no one can accuse you of playing favorites or discriminating against certain employees.

If you are bringing back some employees and not others, make sure to document the reasons. You'll need to make sure that you also have specific criteria used when determining which employees you are recalling. Some criteria such as seniority, position, performance, and other skillsets are all valid and can be defended if someone challenges you.

## **3. CAN EMPLOYEES WHO DO NOT WANT TO RETURN TO WORK BE TERMINATED?**

While you want to be flexible with your employees, there will be a time where your

business can open fully, and all employees can be recalled. You might have some employees who are still not comfortable coming into work.

Under normal circumstances employees cannot refuse to work based on a general fear of getting sick; however, employers must use caution during times of pandemics. If your state has shelter in place orders in effect, or you have high-risk category employees, you should take even more caution before terminating an employee who is afraid to return to work.

Ensuring you are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, OSHA, and the FFCRA is extremely important and making reasonable accommodations for your employees by allowing them to work from home or have unpaid leave after they use their benefits.





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We specialize in working with software and technology vendors, equipment & construction vendors, manufacturers, law firms and healthcare, providing financing to your clients for a variety of equipment, technology and software.

in 2019, Dimension Funding expanded its financing operations to companies across South America.

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- Established in 1978, we have over 40 years of providing financing to businesses across the United States and Canada.
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- The majority of our sales team has been with us for over 20 years.
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- Most of our clients have been with us for many years - some for decades.

Our Goal is your Success

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