

**“SAFE START:”**  
COVID-19 Procedures and Protocols for  
Returning to Work

## INTRODUCTION

Governor Inslee has implemented the “*Safe Start*” program, which will gradually, through four phases, re-open Washington State and our local communities from the restrictions placed on all Washington citizens and businesses in the Governor’s *Stay Home-Stay Healthy* Proclamation issued in March, 2020, in response to the coronavirus pandemic (“COVID-19”). COVID-19 has disrupted lives globally, and even as of June 2020, COVID-19 continues to threaten Washington communities, and it is expected to continue to do so through this next year. As a result, Governor Inslee, has implemented his *Safe Start* proclamation to ensure employers have taken the necessary and preventative steps to protect their employees, clients, vendors, and guests, from exposure to COVID-19, upon their return to the workplace.

The Governor’s office collaborated with the Washington’s Department of Health in compiling the requirements and restrictions that employers and employees are required to follow during each phase. The Department of Labor & Industries (“L&I”) will govern the education and enforcement of the procedures in *Safe Start*.

We are committed to taking all necessary steps to protect its employees, clients, and vendors from contracting COVID-19. Before we can re-open the office, we must ensure social distancing is in place; there are locations for employees to frequently and adequately wash their hands; and procedures are set in place for handling sick employees. Employers are also required to provide basic workplace hazard education about COVID-19, and how to prevent its transmission. Providing you a copy of this COVID-19 Procedures and Protocols, is the first necessary and critical step. It is imperative that you take the time to review and follow each of the procedures set forth herein.

With so much uncertainty, remember this situation is temporary. Even as COVID-19 alters parts of our life, we are all adjusting to the “new normal” and we will continue to adjust, adapt, survive, and thrive. We thank you for your continued commitment to the company, your co-workers and our customers.

## Four Phases Toward Re-opening Washington Businesses

Washington businesses and employers must strictly comply to each respective phase guidelines or face potential fines and shutting down of the business until procedures are met. L&I is responsible for enforcement of the procedures.

**Phase I:** Only essential businesses could be open and when the businesses were open they operated under specific and restrictive policies.

**Modified Phase I –** On June 5, 2020, Governor Inslee placed King County in a Modified Phase I. Under the modified phase, professional services (law firms, accounting offices, etc...) can have a limited workforce return to the office of no more than 25% of an establishment's occupancy. The State defines an establishment's occupancy as identified by the fire code. The intent is to limit business operations to a level that allows for social distancing and limits close interactions. Additionally, businesses must take steps to reduce face-to-face indoor operations with clients to thirty minutes. Teleworking remains strongly encouraged.

**Phase II:** Under Phase II, for personal and social business, employers should continue to operate as they did under the modified phase. Telework remains strongly encouraged. Essential travel and limited nonessential travel for Phase I and II permissible activities.

**Phase III:** Under Phase III, non-essential travel resumes. Gatherings are limited to no more than 50 people.

**Phase IV:** Under Phase IV, all non-essential travel continues. There is also unrestricted staffing at worksite so long as public distancing remains.

## What Is COVID-19?

The 2019 novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) causes respiratory illness and is easily spread from person-person. Unlike other viruses, a person who is asymptomatic may just as easily spread the virus as a person who is sick with COVID-19. Since COVID-19 is so contagious, everyone has a risk of contracting COVID-19, including children. Older adults and people with serious underlying medical conditions are at a higher risk for experiencing more severe symptoms, or death.

COVID-19 spreads by coming into close contact (less than 6 feet apart) with a person who has COVID-19. You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. You can also become infected by touching it on a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth.

Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. Therefore, the best way to protect against COVID-19 is to avoid being exposed to the virus by staying home to avoid others, wearing a cloth face covering that covers nose and mouth in public settings; buying groceries and banking online; avoiding public transportation; and staying home if you are sick.

## What do I need to do if I think I may becoming sick with COVID-19?

**Stay home!** Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and are able to recover at home without medical care. At home, it is important that you self-isolate from the other members of your family. If you must be around people in the home wear a facemask.

It is also very important that you monitor your symptoms. The common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) and cough. If you have trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in chest, confusion, bluish lips or face, or other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you, you must get medical attention immediately.

If sick with the virus, cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze, throw the used tissues in a lined trashcan, immediately wash your hands with soap and water, and use hand sanitizer. You should also avoid sharing personal household items and clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day.

When feeling better and you have been home isolating to determine if you are still contagious you can end self-isolation when you have had no fever for at least 72 hours (and without the assistance of medication), AND other symptoms have improved, AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

If you will be tested to determine if you are still contagious you can end self-isolation when you no longer have a fever, AND other symptoms have improved, AND you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

Where you may have been potentially exposed or you feel sick then you, should stay home for at least three days without a fever and do not develop other symptoms. If symptoms develop then you should remain home for at least seven days from the initial onset of symptoms and three days without a fever and improvement in respiratory symptoms.

## **SAFETY PRACTICES: Control Measures**

Prior to re-opening the office, we are responsible for developing and posting a comprehensible COVID-19 exposure control, mitigation and recovery plan as outlined in Governor Inslee's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" and "Safe Start" Proclamation to ensure the protection of our employees, clients, vendors, and outside parties. To ensure compliance with the safety practices, [EMPLOYEE NAME] will be the centralized contact. When you have a question about COVID-19 and/or these policies and procedures please see [EMPLOYEE NAME(s)].

### **Face Coverings**

In accordance with State law and regulations, all employees, unless working alone in an office, are required to wear face coverings at all times. Face coverings must cover both the employee's mouth and nose. While face coverings should be worn at all times while working, they are particularly critical in restrooms, elevators, external and internal hallways, and other small spaces where social distancing may be difficult, and in the presence of customers, staff, and visitors.

All customers, vendors and visitors will be required to wear face coverings at all times in our office space. All employees are encouraged to bring a mask from home. We will have masks available for those who forgot to bring one to the office and for clients, visitors, and vendors who will be in the office for more than a minute or two. Should you or a third party need a mask, please contact [EMPLOYEE NAME].

**Attached as an addendum is guidance on how to properly wear your face covering.**

### **Other Personal Protective Equipment**

In addition to face coverings, employees are required to wear other common Personal Protective Equipment ("PPE") as appropriate. PPE is helpful when social distancing and other preventative measures are a challenge. PPE that would be used in an office setting is when workstations are within six feet of each other and/or workstations are facing each other.

### **Mandatory "Social Distancing"**

It is mandatory that all employees keep at least six feet of distance between themselves and others. We recognize that this requirement can be challenging for a number of reasons but asks employees for their best efforts in giving others space. This may be particularly so in "choke points" and "high risk areas" of the office where people tend to congregate and where there is cross-traffic. In an effort to remedy these specific areas, avoid conversations in these tight-fitting areas and be aware of your surroundings. [In addition, the building has issued its own requirements for social distancing, including the presence of only two people in an elevator at the time. ]

[Other measures we will be taking or are under consideration are as follows:

- Move workstations farther apart
- Remove chairs from breakroom and conference rooms so an individual can safely be 6 feet apart from another individual.
- Control the number of people entering the building or office.
- Gatherings of any size must be prevented so breaks and lunches will be separated so there are either no individuals in the break room or at the most two people. We have a responsibility to control the number of people entering the break room and the supply room

- Use dividers or floor markings in the public areas (front lobby, break room, supply room) to distinguish appropriate spacing for people in these locations.
- Potentially staggering work schedules for staff so not everyone shows up to the entrance at the same time.
- Employees are strongly encouraged to continue to hold internal and external meetings via telephone or video conference regardless of where the employee may be located.
- While face coverings are required in public spaces in the office, the coverings are not required in your own private office. However, if there is more than one other person attending the meeting in the office, or the office space is too small to ensure two people can be comfortably 6 feet apart, then the wearing of face coverings will be required. Further, if an employee is more comfortable with everyone wearing masks in their office, even if six feet apart will not be an issue, the attorney's request should be respected.
- Employees are encouraged to continue to telework to assist the office stay within the limited capacity authorized by the Governor.
- Employees should limit in-person meetings with external clients for the duration of the coronavirus restrictions. Until then, the office is significantly restricted as to how many people may be in the space and first priority will remain with our employees. ]

## Hygiene

Employees are required to wash their hands frequently for twenty seconds with warm water and soap. If hand washing is not available or convenient, employees should apply hand sanitizer frequently and avoid touching their face. All employees are encouraged to use a “gel in, gel out” method for touching commonly used surfaces, such as doorknobs or handles, elevator buttons, handrails, kitchen appliances, or other commonly used office property. Under this method, the employee uses hand sanitizer both immediately before and immediately after touching a commonly used surface.

[We will provide hand sanitizer and will have them placed throughout the office.]

[We will place handwashing signs and instructions in the restrooms as a guide of how to properly wash your hands to prevent the exposure to COVID-19. ]

**Attached as an addendum is a handwashing instruction guide.**

## Sanitation

Safe Start requires that business and employers operate with increased sanitation protocols. These protocols include a daily increase in the number of times high touch surfaces are wiped down, and there is a focus on more frequent general cleaning.

We strongly encourage employees to use disinfectant throughout the day in areas of high-touch surfaces. Employees are also encouraged to wipe down their desk and computers on a daily basis. If you see that the top of a counter or table has been frequently touched and has not been wiped down, please take a minute to wipe down the surface. In communal areas everyone needs to work together to ensure that the areas are clean and sanitary throughout the day.

## Daily Screening

### 1. Screening of Employees

Safe Start requires all employers to establish procedures to both prevent COVID-19 from entering into the workplace and procedures to address employees who become sick with COVID-19 and potentially exposed others with the virus. One preventative measure authorized and strongly encouraged by the State is a pre-shift screening.

During all phases of the pandemic, before any employee will be allowed to enter the office you will undergo, on a **daily** basis, a COVID-19 screening, which will be conducted by [EMPLOYEE NAME], and/or another designated person. Upon your arrival to work, you will be required to enter the lobby one person at a time for that screening. Under no circumstances do you go beyond the lobby until you have been approved to do so. The screening will take place in lobby and will consist of responding to a series of questions and certifying that to your knowledge you are not sick with COVID-19, and have not recently been exposed to someone who is sick with COVID-19.

Every employee will be responsible for taking their own temperature at home prior to coming to work. In addition, there will be a touchless thermometer at the front desk. The Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) and the World Health Organization (“WHO”) state that a **temperature of 100.4 degrees F (37.6 degrees C) or higher consists of a fever**. If an employee has a temperature of 100.4 degrees F (37.6 degrees C), regardless of whether the employee is symptomatic, the employee will not be allowed to enter the office and will be asked to return home until fever-free.

The screening will consist of [EMPLOYEE NAME], or another designated person, asking a set of questions and making a visual inspection for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks or fatigue. You will then be asked whether in the past 24 hours you have experienced the primary symptoms of COVID-19, including but not limited to: fever, fatigue, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, new loss of taste or smell, of if any household member has experienced any of these symptoms and if so, has the household member tested positive for COVID-19.

If an employee reports any of the above symptoms or conditions, or does not know whether the sick family member has COVID-19, or otherwise been exposed, the screener will take the employee’s temperature with a contact-less thermometer, and/or send the individual home at our discretion. If while at work, any symptoms develop, you must immediately report the symptoms to [EMPLOYEE NAME]

**Attached as an addendum is the COVID-19 Pre-Shift Screening Questionnaire.**

### 2. Screening of Vendors, Clients, and Other Outside People.

During this pandemic, protecting employees is our highest priority. To do our part in preventing the spread of COVID-19 we are restricting access to the office to anyone who exhibits any of the signs of COVID-19, or may have been potentially exposed. To this extent, all vendors, customers, and other visitors will also undergo a screening before being allowed access to the office.

**Attached as an addendum is the Third Party Screening Questionnaire.**

## Procedures to Address Sick Employees

Should you become ill, it is very important that you contact [EMPLOYEE NAME] to report that you are sick and will not be coming into the office. Should you have similar symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, shortness of breath, loss of taste and smell, to name a few) and those symptoms progress you should have a COVID-19 test conducted by your local medical provider and report the results to [EMPLOYEE NAME]. If the results are positive for COVID-19 you will need to be prepared to identify the employees you may have potentially exposed within the last 48 hours prior to showing symptoms.

We will take all necessary precautions to protect your privacy and will not disclose the COVID-19 diagnosis to anyone who was not potentially exposed. For those individuals that we will be required to talk to for contact tracing purposes, they will be told that the identity cannot be disclosed for privacy purposes but it has been confirmed that you have been identified as someone who worked closely with the infected person prior to exhibiting symptoms. Those individuals will then proceed with getting tested to confirm whether they have COVID-19.

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, we will notify the necessary parties, including the building management and other authorities. The notification will not identify the person with COVID-19 and explain it is for privacy purposes. The notification will explain that the people who were in contact with this individual over the past 48 hours have been notified and are in the process of being tested. The notice will state whether or not the office will be closed and for how many days for deep cleaning and disinfecting of the affected areas. All employees will be expected to work remotely while the office is closed.

The infected employee must stay home in self-isolation until 72 hours after the fever is gone (without medication) and symptoms have improved. If you are tested to determine if you are still contagious you can end self-isolation when you no longer have a fever, AND other symptoms have improved, AND you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

Should you become sick while at work, it is critical that you immediately report this. You will be immediately sent home. If you cannot leave work immediately because transportation arrangements are not available, or other personal circumstances, you will then be separated from the other employees until you can go home.

Please remember when you sneeze or cough to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue, or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available. Do not sneeze or cough into your hand as this is a very quick way to spread the virus and other germs.

If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 but do not show symptoms, you are still to self-quarantine yourself for 14 days, and monitor whether you have the symptoms of fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or any of the other symptoms. The alternative is to be tested for COVID-19. If the test is negative then you may return to work.

## COVID-19 Benefits

Should you become ill or have to quarantine due to potential exposure you may be eligible to receive paid benefits under our sick leave and family leave policies. Please contact [EMPLOYEE NAME] should you have any questions related to these benefits.

## Training

*Safe Start* requires that all employees receive basic workplace hazard education related to COVID-19. More information as to the training date will follow. For all new employees who start their employment after the initial training will be required to watch the training as part of their onboarding. The topics covered by the training are as follows:

- The signs, symptoms, and risk factors associated with COVID-19 illness.
- How to prevent the spread of coronavirus at work and steps being taken.
- Social Distancing
- Importance of hand washing.
- Proper respiratory etiquette
- How to properly wear a face mask
- What steps to take if you have been exposed to COVID-19
- What steps to take if you are feeling sick and showing symptoms of COVID-19
- Self-isolation and for how long
- Is the new “normal” our new reality? How long will this last?

## High Risk Employees

Washington State has declared special protections for “high risk employees” as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”). A high risk employee may be an individual:

- Over 65 years old;
- Living in a nursing home or long-term care facility;
- With chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
- With serious heart conditions;
- Who is immunocompromised;
- Who is severely obese;
- With diabetes;
- With chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; or
- With liver disease.

If you are a high-risk employee as defined above who needs an accommodation, an alternative work assignment, alternative or remote work locations, reassignment, social distancing measure adjustment, or any other consideration related to COVID-19, please contact [EMPLOYEE NAME].

## **SAFETY PRACTICES: Operational Protocol**

Below is a summary of the operational requirements that must be in place for the re-opening of the office. The protocols described below are in effect throughout all four phases.

### **Vehicles**

For work related travel, only one person may ride in a vehicle at a time except in cases of emergency. Members of the same family may travel together to work and are an exception to this restriction.

### **HVAC**

Business owners are required to increase the frequency of HVAC system filter changing.

### **Elevators**

We do not have any authority over the elevators as that is a building management responsibility. Face coverings are mandatory in all common areas, including the lobby and in elevators.

### **Access**

We are required to restrict access where unauthorized visitors may enter. Due to this restriction, for a limited time, all access to the office must only be through the main entrance. There will be no access to the office through other doors.

A notice will be posted for our guests regarding access to the facility. The notice will direct the guest to call the person they are visiting. If there is no response or service is not available, the walk-up guest then may enter the lobby but will be required to answer COVID-19 health questions.

### **Restrooms**

We may post directives related to restroom capacity. All employees must follow the posted rules. In addition to the building management's posted rules, we encourage employees to social distance while in the restroom and if that is not feasible then the next person in line should wait their turn outside of the restroom. Face coverings are required at all times while using the restroom.

### **Postings**

We will post signs around the office that provide safety information and protocol requirements. We will, if necessary, provide floor markings in some common areas (ie., break room, front lobby, and supply room) to help promote social distancing.

### **Occupancy**

We will monitor the guest occupancy of the suite to ensure that occupancy meets state and local regulations. This will mean that employees will be returning to the office at the same time. In Phase II and III the occupancy is at 50% of capacity but that is still only half of the employees. Due to this capacity issue those employees who want to continue to work from home may do so, and if we have a need to have others work from home we will first approach the attorneys to volunteer.

## **Re-evaluation**

We will continue to reevaluate this plan on a monthly basis in order to refine protocols to further reduce the spread of the virus.

## **WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION**

It is against the law for any employer to take any adverse action such as firing, demotion, or otherwise retaliate against a worker they suspect of exercising his/her rights such as raising safety and health concerns to their employer, participating in union activities concerning safety and health matters, filing a safety and health complaint, or participating in a Department of Safety and Health ("DOSH") investigation. If any employee believes they have faced adverse action for raising concerns related to these policies and procedures, that employee has 30 days to file a complaint with L&I DOSH and/or Federal/OSHA from the date of the adverse action.

## **ADDENDUM**

**Pre-Shift Employee COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire**

**Third Party Screening**

**Handwashing**

**“Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings”  
Center for Disease Control**

**“Please Protect One Another From COVID-19”  
Public Health Seattle & King County**

## PRE-SHIFT EMPLOYEE COVID-19 SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Ask employees to take their own temperature either before coming to the workplace. Upon their arrival, stand at least 6 feet away from the employee and:

- 1) Ask employees the questions below; and
- 2) Make a visual inspection of the employee for signs of illness, which could include flushed cheeks or fatigue.
- 3) If employee forgot to take temperature or forgot the temperature reading then let the employee know that you will have to take the temperature with a no contact thermometer.

In the past 24 hours, have you experienced:

Fever:

- Yes
- No

Fatigue:

- Yes
- No

Cough:

- Yes
- No

Sneezing:

- Yes
- No

Muscle Aches and Pains:

- Yes
- No

Sore throat:

- Yes
- No

Diarrhea

- Yes
- No

Headaches

- Yes
- No

Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing:

- Yes
- No

New Loss of Smell and/or Taste:

- Yes
- No

Chills

- Yes
- No

Have you recently been in close contact with anyone who has exhibited any symptoms of COVID-19?

- Yes
- No

Have you recently been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19

- Yes
- No

Please provide the reading of your self-administered temperature screening taken within the last 12 hours.

Time:\_\_\_\_\_ Temperature:\_\_\_\_\_

**I attest that the foregoing information is true and correct.**

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_

## THIRD PARTY SCREENING

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community and workplace, we are restricting access to this office for anyone who may have recently been exposed to the virus.

Please review.

**By entering this office, you are affirming and attesting that:**

- (1) You have not in the last 14 days had any close contact with anyone is either confirmed or suspected of being infected with COVID-19, including anyone who was experiencing or displaying any of the known symptoms of COVID-19 (which are listed below); AND
- (2) You have not in the last month traveled to a restricted area that is under a Level 2, 3, or 4 Travel Advisory according to the U.S. State Department (including China Italy, Iran and most of Europe); AND
- (3) You do not currently experience or display, and you have not in the last 14 days experienced or displayed, any of the following symptoms:
  - Elevated temperature or fever of 100.4 F or higher;
  - Cough;
  - Shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing;
  - Loss of smell and/or taste;
  - Fatigue, muscle aches, chills, shaking, or
  - Persistent headaches.

If you answered **YES** to any of the above statements, **you may NOT enter this office.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

# 7 STEPS TO HANDWASHING



1 Rub palms together



2 Rub the back of both hands



3 Interlace fingers and rub hands together



4 Interlock fingers and rub the back of fingers of both hands



5 Rub thumb in a rotating manner followed by the area between index finger and thumb for both hands



6 Rub fingertips on palm for both hands



7 Rub both wrists in a rotating manner.

# PLEASE PROTECT ONE ANOTHER FROM COVID-19



**Please wear protective face coverings and keep  
6 feet from others while you are visiting us.**

## CLOTH FACE COVERINGS SHOULD:



**Fit snugly but  
comfortably against  
the side of the face**



**Be secured with  
ties or ear loops**



**Include multiple  
layers of fabric**



**Allow for  
breathing without  
restriction**



**Be able to be  
laundered without  
damage**



**Be worn by children  
over age 2**

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**Public Health**   
Seattle & King County

# PLEASE PROTECT YOURSELF AND COWORKERS FROM COVID-19



Public Health  
Seattle & King County 

Stay home if you have any of these symptoms:

fever **OR** shortness of breath **OR** cough **Other symptoms:**

- chills
- muscle pain
- sore throat
- loss of taste or smell



Wash your hands often for 20 seconds.

This is about as long as singing the "Happy Birthday Song" twice.



**DO wear a fabric mask safely.**



Tighten the loops or ties so it's snug around your face, without gaps.

Mask should cover from just under the bridge of your nose to under your chin.

- ✓ Always wash your hands before and after wearing a mask.
- ✓ Use the ties or loops to put your mask on and pull it off.
- ✓ Don't touch the front of the mask, especially when you take it off.
- ✓ Put on and remove your mask while inside your home. Public transportation, elevators and stairwells can be high-contamination areas.
- ✓ Wash and dry your cloth mask daily and keep it in a clean, dry place.
- ✓ Remember that masks offer only limited protection and work best in combination with hand washing and physical distancing.



**DON'T:** Wear the mask below your nose.

**DON'T:** Leave your chin exposed.

**DON'T:** Wear your mask loosely with gaps on the sides.

**DON'T:** Wear your mask so it covers just the tip of your nose.

**DON'T:** Push your mask under your chin to rest on your neck.

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