



Prepare Your Organization to Minimize COVID-19 Risk

A California Reference Guide &
Checklist from Seasoned HR Leaders

Use these 10 Tips to Create or Update Your COVID-19 Operational Plan for Your Organization

1. If employees have traveled to an identified high-risk zone (China, Iran, Italy, or South Korea, Venezuela), we ask that you follow the advice of local authorities and self-quarantine or work at home for 14 days.
2. Review business operations, to minimize gatherings of groups of people, and [OSHA guidelines](#) regarding workplace preparation for COVID-19. Check with [state or local](#) county requirements to ensure compliance with state or local health department recommendations on the definition of large groups.
 - a) Minimize in-person meetings or conduct meetings in a large, well-ventilated area. Avoid non-essential travel.
 - b) Confirm and identify jobs that do not require onsite presence. If possible, establish telecommute options for staff.

- c) For work that cannot be done remotely, consider adjusting schedule start/stop times, increasing physical space between work areas, and establishing a schedule for disinfecting shared or high-touch areas throughout the workday.
 - d) Be prepared to change your business practices, if needed, to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations, if needed).
3. Encourage all employees to continue healthy workplace habits such as hand washing, covering coughs, and staying home if sick. If any employee – or a member of their family - exhibits flu-like symptoms, such as respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, ask them to err on the side of caution and self-quarantine at home for 14 days (or until they are cleared by a healthcare provider to return to work).
4. Provide resources (e.g. disinfectants, soap, hand sanitizers, bleach, paper towels) to maintain a clean and healthy work area. Put up posters for good hand washing techniques near sinks, send emails reminding them to:
- a) Frequently and thoroughly clean hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water;
 - b) When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands;
 - c) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
 - d) Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever or cough.
5. Create a response and communication plan:
- a) Identify the conditions under which the business will decide if it will temporarily adjust or suspend operations. In the event of an adjustment or temporary closure, determine when a follow-up review will be conducted.
 - b) Determine who has the authority to make the shutdown/re-open decisions and how quickly these decisions must be made.
 - c) Establish communication protocols to notify staff, clients, and the community of a change in business operations, temporary closure, or re-opening. Share protocols with employees.
 - d) Identify individuals authorized to speak on behalf of the business.
 - e) Create a calling tree for each area/team/function of your organization.
 - f) Ask employees to update and maintain emergency contacts with their managers.
 - g) Have managers pass on information “up the line” to senior management and the internal communications team.

6. Train supervisors on how to handle a sick employee, as well as concerns from co-workers. Cross-train employees to perform essential, documented functions so that the workplace is able to operate even if key staff members are absent.
7. Review attendance and sick leave policies to actively encourage sick employees to stay home until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), there are no signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Temporarily adjust policies if necessary. Determine when an extended absence will be reviewed for possible State Disability Insurance or Leave of Absence eligibility.
8. Review pay policies for impact on staff, especially for non-exempt employees. Determine how the business will address pay in the event of an extended emergency:
 - a) Staff furloughs
 - b) Workshare
9. Check workers' compensation insurance policy for coverage, limits, and exclusions in the event of a workplace outbreak.
10. Designate an area onsite for sick employees, away from other employees. Reach out to emergency contacts, if necessary, to take sick employees home.

Need assistance formulating your plan, or working with employees? Pendolino Group can help. We're a full-service HR consultancy in the Bay Area, CA, specializing in providing a full suite of human resources, benefits, compensation, and strategic business consulting to a myriad of companies – from startups to established enterprises.

WE HAVE MORE INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE, INCLUDING A FULL REFERENCE GUIDE FOR CALIFORNIA WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS:

[VIEW THE REFERENCE GUIDE](#)

Want more information? [VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#), or [MAKE AN APPOINTMENT](#) to talk directly with a senior HR professional.

