

JAY INSLEE  
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
Office of the Governor  
MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Local Government Officials

**FROM:** Governor Jay Inslee

**DATE:** June 19, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Safe Start Reopening Guide

As we continue to make progress in our fight against COVID-19, I want to update you on our latest thinking regarding the safe return to work for government employees. Last week, the state of Washington published a [Safe Start Reopening Guide](#) for state agencies. This guide was developed with input from the Department of Labor & Industries, the Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Office of Financial Management. It describes how agencies will prioritize services, prepare facilities, screen employees and visitors, and use face coverings and other personal protective equipment and supplies. We also have included guidance on how agencies can best communicate with and train employees through this transition.

Local governments play a critical role in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in your communities. I encourage you to use this guidance as a resource when developing your own Safe Start plans, as well as consider the following guiding principles:

- Make sure employee and customer safety comes first.
- Use the best public health and safety practices.
- Provide timely and equitable public service.

As we work to implement a consistent statewide approach to reopening the economy, we will continue to use data and science to inform our decisions and will update the Safe Start guide as necessary.

All local government entities have a general obligation to provide employees a safe and healthy work site in accordance with state and federal law and safety and health rules. This includes addressing hazards associated with COVID-19. Please refer to the [Department of Labor & Industries' COVID-19 Workplace Safety and Health Requirements](#) and [Safe Start Guidance for all Employers](#) for more information. In addition, the [COVID-19 Reopening Guidance for Businesses and Workers](#) and the [Washington State Department of Health](#) website contain industry-specific requirements and recommendations, which may apply to certain local government programs or services. I encourage you to reach out to state agencies for assistance to help your own employees return to work in a safe and responsible way.

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Further, our experience with COVID-19 has revealed the ongoing reality of injustice and systemic racism in our communities and world. The past few weeks have shown us how deeply that pain persists in our communities, and how much work we have left to do as public officials. As we work to implement a “safe start” plan for government operations, we must pay attention to our work culture and address issues of discrimination and provide space for everyone to do their best work. Those expectations are embedded in the approach the state will take to reopen worksites, and I encourage local governments to consider these factors as well.

We all have shared responsibility as we take these steps, for our behavior, its impact on others, the systems we create, and the services we provide. Public service employees make a difference in people’s lives every day. Most of our essential services never stopped when COVID-19 hit because we stayed committed to the needs of the people we serve.

Thank you for your cooperation and partnership as we continue in a thoughtful and strategic way that keeps the public safe and healthy, so that we can continue doing our work on behalf of the people of Washington.



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2020

# Safe Start Guide

Phased reopening of Washington state agencies

Version 2

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**Introduction**

This guide provides clarity and describes the requirements and guidelines agencies need to take as the state reopens, and is consistent with Gov. Jay Inslee’s Safe Start direction to all Washington businesses and organizations.

We will model the way by slowly turning the dial, and using data and science in how we implement our safety practices for the ultimate goal of COVID-19 prevention.

Our guiding principles:

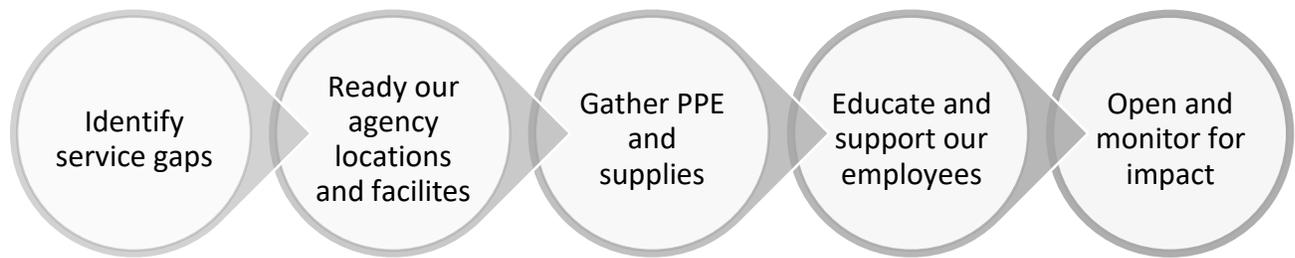
- Make sure employee and customer safety comes first.
- Use the best public health and safety practices.
- Provide timely and equitable public service.

To apply these principles, we need to implement agency requirements and guidelines that allow adaptability in a safe and responsible manner. Our main goal is to keep our employees and customers safe and healthy while we continue the work of government and minimize the spread of COVID-19.

This includes requiring employees to comply with all safety and health practices and standards that the employer establishes. Employees will contribute to a healthy workplace. This includes not knowingly exposing co-workers and the public to conditions that would jeopardize their health or the health of others.

The Washington State DOH, L&I, and OFM State Human Resources/Governor’s Office partnered with agency leaders to create this guide. The guide does not take the place of general health and safety requirements issued by these agencies or other authorizing sources. It is designed to provide clarity for state agencies in applying COVID-19 related requirements.

This guide lays out the key parts to our reopening strategy and how we can maintain state agency worksites:



### **How to prioritize and open services**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we work. While we have learned a great deal about our capacity to perform many of our functions through telework and technology, we need to keep prioritizing that approach when it makes business sense *and* when it helps us minimize the spread of COVID-19.

To safely reopen, your Safe Start plan must include ongoing support of a workforce that can continue to accomplish business outcomes through telework, while identifying the work employees must do on premise worksites, and/or a hybrid of the two.

You must identify service delivery needs or gaps to determine what part of the workforce needs to be maintained and/or returned to worksites. You also need to implement safety measures on how to prepare employees, customers, equipment, supplies, and facilities.

### **Requirements and Guidelines**

#### **Assess what business objectives are being met through telework and technology**

- Continue to provide services where teleworking employees meet service and performance expectations.
- Maximize the use of telework and technology to meet business needs. If an employer or business partner doesn't need to be at a state worksite to perform all or some of their duties, support them achieving their work objectives at their telework site.
- Follow OFM State HR guidelines for the use of telework when an employee who is required to be on site is temporarily unable to work onsite due to COVID-19 symptoms, exposure, or infection. This will occur when the person feels healthy enough to achieve assigned work objectives.

#### **Determine what services the agency is not providing beyond the COVID-19 emergency response**

- Prioritize which service gaps to close based on agency mission and objectives.
- Determine which service gaps you close through expanded telework and technology solutions.
- Establish a plan to close those gaps.
- Determine which service gaps require an employee to be onsite to close.

- Determine which employees must perform some or all of their work on site to achieve those services.
- Establish a staged approach, for employees to return to worksites, that allows the agency to meet reopening requirements outlined in this guide.
  - Make sure the plan considers the agency's need for and access to face coverings, equipment or other personal protective equipment to meet expectations.

### **How reopening guidelines change by county**

- Each county may differ in how far along it is in the reopening process. Some counties are more open than others (based on a county's Safe Start application variance process). In many cases, this guide is aligned with those variances.
- If you have worksites or operations in a **more restrictive county**, follow local public health guidelines, updated direction from DOH, L&I, OFM, or the Office of the Governor, and consult with your assigned assistant attorney general.
- If you have worksites or operations in a **less restrictive county**, you may proceed with your plan to reopen those sites as long as you follow the requirements in this guide. The phases in the governor's Safe Start plan act as a minimum standard for how counties can reopen. As state organizations, we will take a cautious approach to the phases because each phase has unique aspects to consider. Businesses and organizations in counties may open at a faster pace than the field offices or agencies as we take the appropriate steps to safely return employees back to worksites and provide services to Washingtonians.

### **Resources**

#### *Sample re-entry documents*

- [Department of Retirement Systems Re-entry Plan](#)
- [Department of Labor and Industries Re-entry Strategy](#)
- [Department of Labor and Industries Re-entry Plan](#)
- [Department of Health Re-entry Plan](#)

### **How to prepare your facility**

Occupancy, physical layout, staggering shifts, the flow of people, and sanitation of the worksite are all important components of a staged reopening and maintenance plan to keep people safe and productive.

### **Requirements and Guidelines**

Make sure to complete cleaning, sanitation, HVAC system preparation and maintenance, and physical layout preparation before employees return to specific worksites and facilities.

### **Co-located agencies**

When agencies are co-located in a facility, agency leaders must coordinate to align practices for access and entry points, shared space/common areas, and PPE for employee, customer, and business partner health and safety.

### **Mandatory social distancing**

Employers must make sure all employees keep at least six feet away from co-workers and the public, when feasible. Other prevention measures are required such as using barriers to block sneezes and coughs and improving ventilation. This could include enhancing ventilation in common areas, increasing the amount of outdoor air coming into the building, and running the system longer than normal when social distancing isn't feasible.

- Prevent gatherings of any size by taking shifts to eat meals, perform activities, or take a break. When two or more people must meet, they must have at least six feet between them.
- Place face shields or sneeze guards throughout the worksite at all places of potential interaction between service providers and clients.
- Apply methods that could include:
  - Reducing the number of employees, customers, and business partners in or at the worksite at a given time.
  - Controlling movement through choke points, elevators, stairwells, and other limited space areas to maintain social distancing standards or determine adequate PPE.
  - Using expectations for common areas such as bathrooms, kitchens, etc.

### **Occupancy**

Be strategic and deliberate about the number of people present in a worksite. Introduce mandatory social distancing protocol at workstations, common areas, points of entry and exit, and potential "choke" points where physical space gets smaller as people pass through an area and the risk of close contact increases.

While there are fewer concerns for more remote and outdoor worksites, you must still apply applicable occupancy or distancing requirements to commonly used areas and locations where contact is more likely to happen.

### **Frequent and adequate handwashing**

Employees must frequently and adequately hand wash. You must provide and maintain adequate handwashing supplies. Employees must use single-use disposable gloves, where safe and applicable, to prevent transmission on equipment and items that are shared, and discard after a single use.

- Each worksite needs soap and running water for frequent handwashing. Encourage employees to leave their workstations and wash their hands regularly, before and after all client interactions,

before and after going to the bathroom, before and after eating, and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose. Worksites that don't have fixed bathrooms must supply portable handwashing stations and supplies.

- Agencies must distribute hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol throughout the office location. Increase the number of hand sanitizing stations throughout the facility or worksite. Replenish cleaning supplies frequently. Make sure you also provide hand cleansing supplies in vehicles.

### **Routine and frequent cleaning**

- Establish a housekeeping schedule that increases the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing with a particular emphasis on commonly touched surfaces.
- Frequently clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces at locations and in offices, such as shared tools, machines, vehicles and other equipment, handrails, doorknobs, and restrooms. You must provide sanitation workers appropriate PPE for these tasks and train them on work expectations. If these areas cannot be cleaned and disinfected frequently, you must shut down these locations until your worksite can achieve and maintain these measures.
- In areas visible to all employees and clients, you must post the required hygienic practices. These practices include:
  - Don't touch your face with unwashed hands or with gloves.
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Frequently clean and disinfect touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, machines, shared tools, elevator control buttons, and doorknobs.
  - Cover the mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, as well as other hygienic recommendations by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.
- Make sure to frequently and appropriately clean and disinfect restrooms throughout the day.
- Tissues and trash cans must be made available throughout the worksite.
- Establish protocol to safely clean equipment and supplies that employees transport to and from work consistent with health standards (laptops, etc.).

### **Establish protocols to address sick employees**

Employers must establish procedures that:

- Require sick workers to stay home or go home if they feel or appear sick.
- Screen employees for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 at the start of the work shift. Identify and isolate workers who exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19 illness.

- Temporarily close off all areas where a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 illness sick employee worked or could have touched until you have completed cleaning and disinfection guidelines set by the CDC.
- Keep workers away from areas being deep-cleaned.

### **Educate employees**

Provide employees who will return to a worksite with an orientation and training. Agencies must provide basic workplace hazard education about coronavirus. Make sure employees know:

- The signs, symptoms and risk factors associated with COVID-19 illness.
- How to prevent the spread of the coronavirus at work. This includes taking steps in the workplace to establish social distancing, frequent handwashing and other precautions.
- The importance of hand washing and how to effectively wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Proper respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes and not touching eyes, noses, or mouths with unwashed hands or gloves.

The orientation should also include information that helps the employee understand what to expect when they return to the worksite. This includes:

- Screening requirements.
- Safe entrance and exit to the worksite.
- Changes to work station or site protocol.
- Their responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and ensure a respectful workplace culture.
- Additional training, support resources, and contact information to assist in successful return to work.
- Information unique to the successful operation of the worksite or position.

### **Resources**

- Additional ideas from L&I for agencies to use for facility preparation: [General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces](#)
- CDC guidance on disinfecting facilities: [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- Communication and language access tools from DOH: [Communication Access Tools](#) (midway down the page)
- Employee Return to Worksite Coronavirus Education available through the [LMS](#). Employees will be tasked with confirming their review of the following:
  - [Washington State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](#)
  - [Signs and symptoms](#) of COVID-19 illness
  - COVID-19 illness [risk factors](#)
  - [Preventing the spread of the coronavirus](#)

- Effective [hand washing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- [Proper hygiene practices](#), including covering coughs and sneezes and not touching eyes, noses, or mouths with unwashed hands or gloves
- Additional online learning resources regarding support during extraordinary times, workplace culture, and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for employees through DES: [Resources for Workforce Development](#)

- A resource document on how to keep people front of mind during return to worksite and longterm teleworking efforts: [Talking Safety and Well-Being with Employees](#)

## Screening

This section represents **additional** DOH guidance to Washington state agencies.

When work and service delivery requires contact with people outside the places we live or telework, screening is a critical part of minimizing the spread of COVID-19. When employees and customers are accounting for symptoms and quarantine to avoid contact with others, the state can more quickly and safely expand service delivery and reopen. Screening exists to keep people safe and healthy by maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.

Screening can be a stressful process for those involved. Developing tools and processes that help to mitigate the stress, increase trust, and connect people to the benefits of health and safety are helpful in creating a more successful screening process.

It is also important to remember that employees are expected to contribute to a healthy workplace by complying with all safety and health practices that the employer establishes. This includes not knowingly exposing co-workers and the public to conditions that would jeopardize their health or the health of others.

Our ability to reduce the impact of COVID-19 — given the number of employees, business partners, and customers involved — warrants us taking a more cautious screening approach that aids safety and health.

## Requirements and Guidelines

### When is screening required?

- Screening is required for all employees who report to an out-of-home work location where they may be within six feet or less of other people, or in shared space that other people access (bathrooms, dining/kitchen areas, vehicles, etc.).
- Screening must be conducted at the start of the work shift and before the employee, customer, or business partner enters the worksite or state property (vehicle, facility, etc.).
- You do not need to screen employees who are teleworking and not accessing an out-of-home worksite.

### What is required during screening?

All screening practices must require employees, customers, and business partners to answer questions related to each singular symptom of COVID-19 (outlined in DOH guidance). This will help

- determine if the person is experiencing any signs of those symptoms that cannot be attributed to another health condition. Limit questions to those that are related to the job/visit and consistent with business necessity and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. As with all practices, employers must avoid disparate treatment of employees during screening based on nationality, race, sex, or any other protected characteristics.
- Agencies may combine certain symptoms as outlined by DOH (the “two or more” section) to use in screening if they have trained health care professionals assist in the screening to make that medical determination.
- Agency must consistently apply standard screening tools to each area of business. This means each person who responds the same way to the same questions will lead to the same results (denied or granted access, secondary screening where applicable, return-to-work process).
- Agencies must write and present their questions related to a 14-day symptom/exposure timeframe, or the current period of time that DOH identified. In the absence of DOH information, please follow CDC information.
- We strongly encourage agencies to document daily employee screenings as an initial part of implementation. This helps employees adapt to the new behavior and get in the practice of checking for each symptom, which includes monitoring their temperature. While each identified symptom needs to be checked by the employee or a screener, the documentation does not require information about each specific symptom. The documenter can record a simple ‘yes’ to indicate the presence of symptoms or exposure so appropriate action can be taken.
- The agency or worksite must maintain a log where visitors and customers are required to participate in the screening. Encourage visitors/customers to provide their name and limited contact information so that we can aid others in contact tracing, if needed. This is not intended to override or interfere with any other log practices or requirements an agency follows.

### **Using a screener**

- When an agency determines the need to have a person conduct the screening process for employees or others wanting to gain access to the facility, the screener must be trained in the process, screening tool, and equipment.
- You must provide the screener with necessary PPE and sanitation supplies to minimize their exposure. If the screener is required to check temperatures of people in the screening process, you must provide the screener with a no-touch infrared thermometer.
- If temperatures are taken by the person being screened, all thermometers and related equipment must be sanitized between uses. Disposable thermometer covers are an option to consider, if available.

### **Choosing a screener**

- Clearly identify who will perform screening. There is not a specific classification identified for this work. In some cases, onsite security personnel or contracted personnel are conducting entrance screening.

If the screener is not a supervisor or manager, consider having a supervisor or manager available for the screener to contact if they have questions or need support.

- Ensure the screener is trained in the screening process and use of PPE and supplies before conducting the screening process.

### **Secondary screening**

- The state requires a secondary screening for high-contact, mandatory coverage, high-risk worksites, such as 24/7 facilities.
- A trained medical professional must conduct a secondary screening.
- A secondary screening helps us further assess an employee who has confirmed symptoms that might indicate COVID-19 or another infectious disease. The result may be to screen “in” an employee who initially indicated a COVID-19 symptom.

### **What happens when a person passes a screen or is screened out of the workplace?**

- When an employee, customer, or business partner has affirmed, through the screening process, that they have no symptoms, they are granted access consistent with the facility or property standards for social distancing, face coverings, PPE, and other safety measures.
- When an employee, customer, or business partner has affirmed they have experienced a qualifying symptom(s) as identified in the screening process, they will be denied access to the facility or property. This step may involve secondary screening for high-contact, highrisk worksites such as 24/7 facilities.

### **What happens when an employee is denied access?**

- The employer should handle these scenarios on a case-by-case basis. The employer should engage in a conversation with the employee being denied access to determine if telework options are available or to inform leave status (see leave guidance below). Telework options should be the priority. If the employee is denied access based on screening, the employer will exhaust all options for teleworking for the employee. These options could include having work packets or mobile work stations ready to check out.

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- If telework options are available and the employee can perform those duties, the employer should send the employee home with telework until they are cleared to return to the worksite based on the criteria in, “When can an employee return to work?” below.
- If there are no telework options, consult with your HR team and refer to OFM SHR leave guidance for screening on how to proceed. If the employee is subsequently diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, the agency should advise the employee about other state and federal leave options that are available, depending on the circumstances.

- If the employee provides a statement from a medical professional stating that the employee does not have a contagious illness and the symptoms the employee exhibited are not because of COVID-19, the employer will grant the employee access to the worksite.

### **When can an employee return to work?**

- An employee may return to work when:
  - They are without a fever (100.4 or above) for at least 72 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
  - Their symptom(s) has improved; and
  - There has been at least 10 days since the symptom(s) first appeared; or in the case of close contact or exposure
  - Be at or beyond the 14-day quarantine period if there was suspected exposure to COVID-19, or at the point the suspected case's test came back negative.
- If the employee provides a statement from a medical professional stating that the employee does not have a contagious illness and the symptoms the employee exhibited are not because of COVID-19, the employer will grant the employee access to the worksite.

### **What happens when someone refuses to be screened?**

- If an employee, customer, or business partner refuses to participate in the screening process, they will not be allowed access to the worksite/property.
- Each agency has unique circumstances in managing this situation. Make sure you have protocol in place to respond to this situation and ask your assigned AAG to review the protocol before it is finalized. Include notice of refusal in communications to employees, customers and business partners.

### **Does an agency need to report cases of COVID-19?**

- Agencies must notify the local health jurisdiction within 24 hours if the employer suspects COVID-19 is spreading in the agency's workplace, or if the agency is aware of two or more employees who develop confirmed or suspected COVID-19 within a 14-day period. Notification is provided to the local public health jurisdiction where the employees work.
- Suspected cases are when an employee doesn't have a positive test or confirmed case of COVID19, but they are getting tested, isolating, or quarantining because of possible exposure to someone who has COVID-19. These cases include when employees who have been at the worksite report a positive test result and other employees or customers may have been exposed to the virus. If the employer becomes aware of this circumstance and it is not an individual case

- or where workplace exposure may have occurred with an individual, the local public health jurisdiction will be notified.

Agencies will work with their local health jurisdictions to establish the best reporting protocol for reporting cases or suspected cases. This will include who provides the notification.

- Agencies will tell the involved employee(s) about the notification and what information the agency has shared.

### **Documentation and records**

- You must maintain all documented screening assessments and results consistent with state records and retention laws and policy. This includes following any requirements to safeguard confidential information under other laws, such as HIPAA and the ADA.
- Screening records have the primary purpose of ensuring a safe workplace for agency employees. Categorize these records as Entry/Exit Logs – Facilities (DAN GS 25007) for retention purposes. (See “[Using records retention schedules](#)” on the Secretary of State website under “COVID-19 Screening Records Advice” for more information.)
- If the employer receives a public records request or a request from a union for employee records related to COVID-19, seek advice from your assigned AAG.

### **Employee notification and orientation**

- You must provide employees with the screening tool and process as a part of their orientation before they return to work for the first time, *and* when the tool or practices have changed. The orientation will include information about the level of confidentiality in the screening process and any related documentation.

### **Customer and business partner notification**

- Customers and business partners can review information about the screening tool and process before screening. Agencies are required to provide meaningful language assistance and communication access services about the process.
- The information will include the screening process’ level of confidentiality and any related documentation.

### **Data collection and measurement**

- We will establish additional statewide data collection and measurement as we learn more about implementation and can create efficient systems for tracking important indicators of success.

- Each agency will report the status of their Safe Start reopening plan and include how they continue to prioritize telework options. These reports will be periodically added to statewide leadership meetings with agency directors, deputy directors and HR managers.

## Resources

- Examples of screening tools as of June 2020. Screening tools will require the addition of new symptoms added by DOH on July 2, 2020.
  - In person, documented screening example: [COVID-19 Staff Screening Form](#)
  - Verbal screening example: [Employee, Vendor, and Worksite Visitor Screening Questionnaire](#)
    - Washington State Department of Transportation: [COVID-19 Symptoms Check Form](#)
    - DOH's updated [24/7 Screening Guidelines](#)
- Communication and language access tools from DOH: [Communication Access Tools](#)
- Sample County COVID-19 Case Reporting Process (process may vary by county): [Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 to Thurston County Public Health & Social Services](#)
- [What to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms but have not been around anyone diagnosed with COVID-19](#) from the Department of Health

## Personal protective equipment and safety equipment

### Requirements and Guidelines

We require personal protective equipment and other safety equipment in certain circumstances.

### Employees and contracted service providers

- Provide PPE such as gloves, goggles, face shields and face masks (when appropriate or required) to employees. At a minimum, you must provide cloth face coverings for employees (when appropriate or required). An employee may choose to use their own cloth face covering if it meets L&I and DOH standards.
- Every employee who doesn't work alone must wear a cloth or equivalent facial covering on the jobsite unless their exposure dictates a higher level of protection under L&I safety and health rules and guidance. Refer to [Coronavirus Facial Covering and Mask Requirements](#) for additional details. You also can visit the DOH website to read more about [cloth facial coverings](#).
- Someone is considered to be working alone when they're isolated from interaction with other people and have little or no expectation of in-person interruption. How often a worker can work alone throughout the day may vary.

**Examples of working alone include:**

- - A lone worker inside the enclosed cab of a crane or other heavy equipment, vehicle, or harvester.
  - A person by themselves inside an office with four walls and a door.

- A lone worker inside of a cubicle with 4 walls (one with an opening for an entryway) that are above the head of the seated or standing desk cubicle worker, and whose work activity will not require anyone to come inside of the cubicle.
- A worker by themselves outside in an agricultural field, the woods or other open area with no anticipated contact with others.

**For cubicles, 'alone' means:**

- The employee's face below the height of the panels, typically while seated. The furniture panels act as a barrier to virus aerosols and droplets expelled if an employee is speaking, coughing, or sneezing.
  - When an employee's face is above furniture panel height and there are other people in the area, a face covering shall be worn. This includes when the employee leaves the cubicle space.
- Some employees might not be able to wear masks or certain types of PPE due to disabilities or medical reasons. If so — and if the employee requests reasonable accommodation — employers must try to accommodate unless it poses an undue hardship. Accommodation could include allowing telework, leave, temporary change in work duties, modified work schedule or work space, enhanced PPE, etc. Work with your HR team and L&P AAGs when needed.
  - If an employee refuses to wear required PPE or face coverings and the supervisor has worked with HR to determine there is no reasonable accommodation, consult with your HR Team and with your assigned L&P AAG, as needed.
  - Service providers that contract with state agencies must follow the same employee PPE standards unless L&I or DOH requirements state otherwise. Agencies must amend contracts as needed to address these expectations, which include informing their employees or involved business partners.
  - Employees working with deaf or hard of hearing peers or clients may temporarily remove masks during communicating to accommodate facial expression and lip reading.
  - You must provide and maintain adequate supplies to support frequent and adequate hand washing. Use single-use disposable gloves, where safe and applicable, to prevent transmission on equipment and items that are shared, and discard after a single use.

**Customers and visitors are required to wear face coverings and may be required to use other PPE**

- Customers and visitors are required to wear face coverings. This is outlined in DOH Secretary, John Wiesman's [Order of the Secretary of Health 20-03](#), and the governor's [proclamation 2025.6](#).
- In some cases, customers may be required to use other PPE. This requirement helps prevent the spread of virus to employees and other customers and visitors.

- Agencies will make sure social distancing requirements or barriers are in place to minimize close contact and identify areas where close contact is still happening. This can help agencies determine if other PPE is required.
- The CDC and DOH define close contact as someone who was within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes.
- Agencies will follow the best practices outlined by the Office of the Governor in the [Overview of COVID-19 Statewide Face Covering Requirements](#).

### **Implementing face covering requirements for customers and visitors**

If a customer or visitor is not wearing a face covering, agencies should take the following steps:

- An agency representative or employee should politely educate the customer or visitor about the public health requirement to wear a mask or face covering. Agencies may choose to keep a supply of disposable masks to offer customers who do not have one.
- If the individual still declines to wear a mask or face covering, the agency representative or employee should politely ask if the person has a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing a mask. Agencies **cannot** ask about the details about a person's specific medical condition or disability and **cannot** ask for proof or documentation.
- For customers who are unable to wear a face covering, agencies are encouraged to offer some kind of accommodation for the customer such as curbside pickup, delivery or a scheduled appointment when physical distancing and/or other barriers can protect employees and other customers and visitors.
- If a customer or individual refuses to wear a face covering but does not have a medical condition or disability that prevents them from wearing a mask, the agency representative or employee must politely say that the agency cannot serve them and that they need to leave the premises. Under no circumstances should the agency representative or employee attempt to physically block an individual from entering or physically remove them from the premises unless directly associated with the authority and expectation of their position (i.e., law enforcement).
- If the individual refuses to leave, the agency representative or employee should follow whatever procedures they normally follow if an individual refuses to leave the establishment when asked to do so (this includes contacting local law enforcement to indicate that the individual is trespassing).
- Agencies will make this part of their reopening and maintenance planning and consult with their assigned L&P and program AAGs in developing and implementing their policy and protocols. Agencies must post signs and information so customers are aware of the expectations and how their efforts help to keep everyone healthy and safe. When practical, agencies will give this information to customers before the customers attend appointments or come to a worksite for services.

## Accessing PPE and cloth face coverings

- The Department of Enterprise Services and the State Emergency Operations Center created a system to help agencies secure PPE, cloth face coverings and COVID-19-related cleaning supplies. The DES website outlines the process and we linked it as a resource below.
- The Department of Corrections Correctional Industries will also provide access to some PPE, cloth face coverings, and cleaning supplies. The DOC website outlines the process and we linked to it below.

## Resources

- Department of Labor and Industries FAQs on masks: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Common Questions Regarding Worker Face Covering and Mask Requirements](#)
- CDC instructions on how to make your own cloth face mask: [How to make cloth face coverings.](#)
- CDC guidance for agencies on obtaining and maintaining PPE supply: [Strategies to Optimize the Supply of PPE and Equipment.](#)
- Information from DES regarding the contracting and purchasing of PPE: [Acquiring PPE and Supplies for Your Agency.](#)
- For PPE and face covering supplies at DOC Correctional Industries, visit [washingtonci.com](http://washingtonci.com) (see Safety Products).
- Workplace guidance on [“Which mask for the task”](#).
- [Resources](#) for [June 23 order](#) for cloth face coverings in most areas. Effective June 26.
- EEOC guidance on COVID-19 and the ADA: [What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws](#)
- [Overview of COVID-19 Statewide Face Covering Requirements](#) from the Office of the Governor

## Where these requirements come from

### General authorizing sources

- Washington State Coronavirus Response Website: [Safe Start Plans and Guidance for Reopening](#)
- [L&I Workplace Safety and Health Guidance](#)
- [U.S. Department of Labor Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- [DOH Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) and [Opening Up America Again](#)
- [What to do if you have symptoms but have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19](#)

- [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- [CDC guidance document](#) for case investigation and contact tracing

#### **Authorizing sources for prioritizing services**

- Additional ideas from L&I for agencies to use for facility preparation: [General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces](#)

#### **Authorizing sources for facility preparations**

- L&I and DOH standards for Washington business requirements: All businesses have a general, legal obligation to keep a safe and healthy worksite for a variety of workplace hazards. In addition, they must comply with the following COVID-19 worksite-specific safety practices outlined in the Governor’s ‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ [proclamation](#), L&I’s [General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces](#), and DOH’s [Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations](#).
- [State of Washington’s COVID-19 Reopening Guidance for Businesses and Workers](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Business and Employers](#)
- CDC Cleaning Guidelines: [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)

#### **Authorizing sources for screening**

- Department of Health’s Employee Screening Guidelines: [Guidance for Daily COVID-19 Screening of Staff and Visitors](#)
- Secretary of State’s COVID-19 Screening Records Advice: [See Using Records Retention Schedules](#) • Gov. Inslee’s proclamation 20-25.6: [reporting COVID-19 cases](#)

#### **Authorizing sources for personal protective equipment and safety equipment**

- [Gov. Inslee’s proclamation 20-25.6](#)
- [L&I Guidelines for Workplace Safety and Health](#)
- DOH, Secretary Wiesman’s Order on Face Coverings: [Order of the Secretary of Health 20-03](#)
- [CDC Guidance on PPE Usage](#)
- [Washington Coronavirus Hazard Considerations for Employers \(except hospitals/clinics\)](#): Face coverings, masks, and respirator choices.