Office of Administration

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Returning to Work guide for supervisors

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# Introduction

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On March 6, 2020, pursuant to Section 7301(c) of Pennsylvania’s Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa.C.S. § 7301(c), Governor Tom Wolf issued a Proclamation of Disaster Emergency (“Proclamation”) related to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak. On March 13, 2020, President Trump declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

On April 22, 2020, Governor Tom Wolf presented a plan for reopening the commonwealth. The following guidance will be in place to support public health best practices to avoid negative impacts and adapt to the changing nature of the pandemic. This guidance will be in place for approved activities until further notice.

As the commonwealth moves through the phases of the reopening plan, it is important to follow these basic tenets:

**Safety First**: Follow all guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH); use the provided check lists and guidance to ensure compliance with the Secretary of Health’s [Worker Safety Order](https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/20200415-SOH-worker-safety-order.pdf).

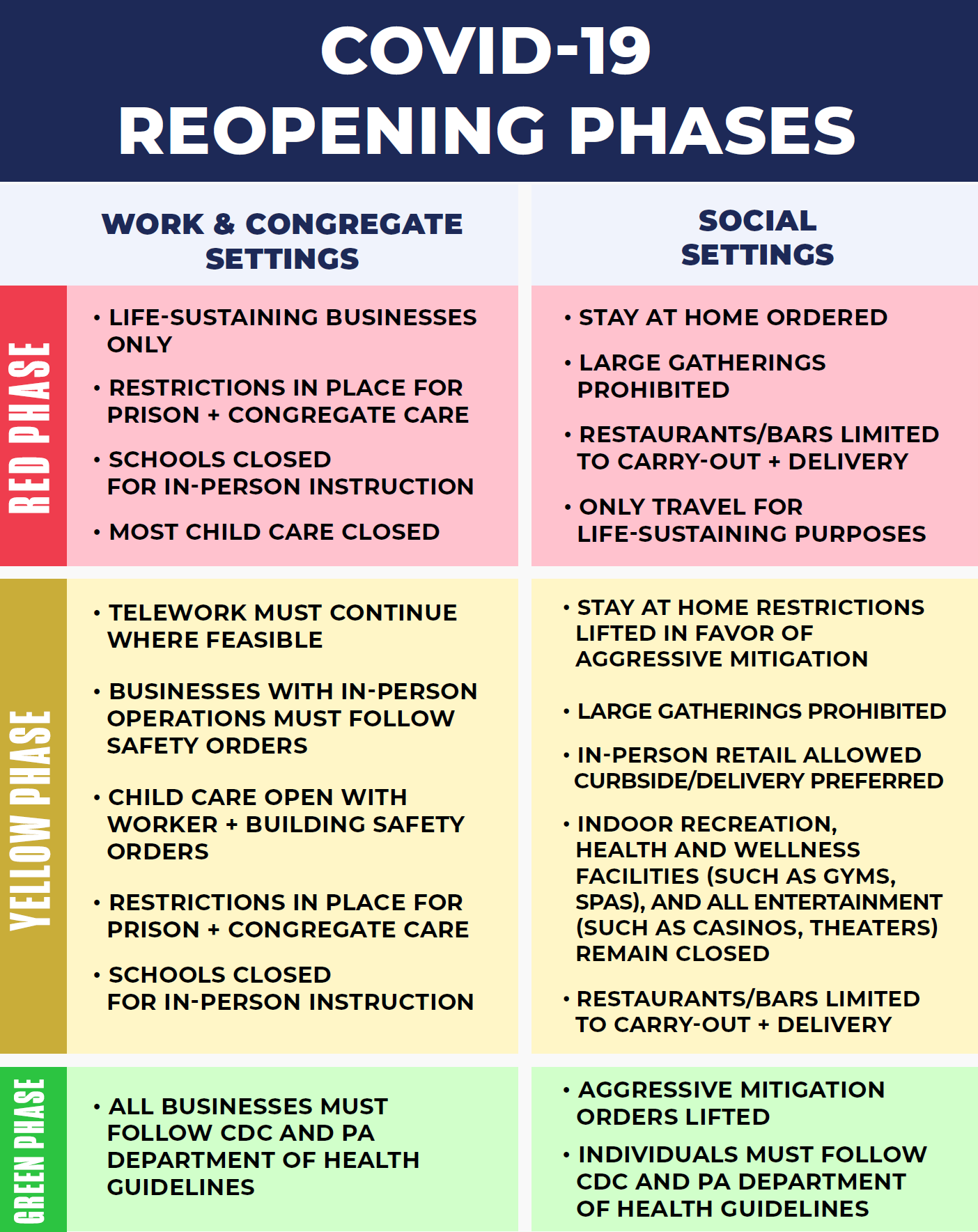
**Telework First:** All employees that are able to telework should continue to do so unless told otherwise by their agency (all employees reporting to a work site should continue to so do unless told otherwise by their agency).

**Personal Responsibility:** We are all in this together, and everyone plays a role by following the CDC and DOH guidelines for handwashing, social distancing, wearing masks, and staying home if you are sick.

***Employees of the LCB, Attorney General, PGCB, Auditor General and all other agencies not under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local HR office for assistance.***

*Please note the following guidance may differ for 24/7 operations including correctional facilities, state hospitals and centers, veterans’ homes, and youth development centers, as well as those agencies following CISA’s guidance for critical infrastructure workers.* ***Employees within such operations should continue to follow the guidance issued by their agency.***

*In cases where a provision of an approved labor agreement or side letter cannot be reconciled with this policy, the labor agreement or side letter will control.*



# Returning to the Worksite

## Determining Who Returns to the Worksite

While employees that can telework should continue to do so, operational demands may require some or all of these employees to return to the worksite. Prior to opening any worksite, the Governor’s Office, Department of General Services, Department of Health and your agency leadership must ensure that your worksite is able to follow these basic tenets:

**Safety First**: Follow all guidance from CDC and DOH; use the provided checklists and guidance to ensure compliance with the Secretary of Health’s [Worker Safety Order](https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/20200415-SOH-worker-safety-order.pdf).

**Telework First:** All employees that are able to telework should continue to do so unless told otherwise by their agency.

**Personal Responsibility:** We are all in this together, and everyone plays a role by following the CDC and DOH guidelines for handwashing, social distancing, wearing masks, and staying home if you are sick.

If the number of employees required to return to the worksite is less than those currently teleworking or on leave, the worksite should contact their HR Office and Employee Relations Representative to discuss the manner of selecting those required to return to the worksite, which will involve dialogue with the employees’ union representative (if appropriate.)

If more than five employees are returning to a worksite, agency management must notify building/facility management as soon as possible, or at least two business days prior.  Notice details should include agency, section or unit with building floors or area the employees will be operating in and schedule hours.

## Supplies for Reopening

The central agency leadership will be responsible for ordering supplies for each worksite that is opening.  Please note, that supply orders will be limited to individuals who are returning to worksites; supplies will not be ordered for teleworkers.  Worksites should not be ordering their own supplies through various suppliers.

**Ordering Masks**

Pennsylvania Correctional Industries (PCI) is a source for nonmedical masks. Questions should be directed to agency Procurement Officers.

# Staying Safe at Work—Personal Safety

We must all do our part to protect our personal health and safety, as well as the health and safety of others, both at work and outside of work.

## Wearing a Mask

Nonmedical masks or bandanas must be worn by all employees on the jobsite or in the worksite, until such time that the Secretary of Health’s order requiring them is lifted. Wearing a mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected. Remember this saying: "My mask protects you; your mask protects me." Also note, wearing a mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

The commonwealth will provide worksites with the appropriate CDC-recommended masks based on the work environment.  Employees have the option to wear their own mask, provided it meets the [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html). As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to ensure that masks do not display images that are inappropriate for the worksite. You have the discretion to require an employee to remove a mask if you deem it to be inappropriate and direct the employee to use an alternative mask. 

When in the worksite, nonmedical masks:

* Must be worn when in a vehicle with another individual and when using drive-through services.
* Must always be worn around others, even if social distancing can be maintained.
* May be removed if it impedes vision, if an employee has a medical condition, or if it would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.
* May be removed to eat or drink during breaks and lunch periods, however, at those times, social distancing should be practiced.
* May be removed when driving alone or when isolated in a closed personal office.
* Must be worn by all customers when conducting business.
* Must be worn by employees when conducting business at the worksites of other entities.

You should provide a mask to any visitors that do not have their own. If they refuse to wear a mask, you should ask them to return at another time, or determine if you can assist them while maintaining social distancing. Employee and visitor safety should be the first priority in considering how to handle the situation. If social distancing is not possible, agencies may tell the individual that in-person service will only be provided to individuals wearing a mask and direct the individual to leave the premises.

**How to Wear a Mask**

A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated

* Before putting on a mask, clean hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
* Make sure the mask fits snugly around the mouth and nose; if the mask has a metal wire, it should fit snuggly to the bridge of the nose.
* Avoid touching the mask while wearing it.
* Cloth masks should be washed frequently, ideally after each use.
* Medical masks should not be worn unless required by job function, in which case, follow [CDC guidance on Optimizing PPE.](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/index.html)
* A mask should not be worn if it is damp or when wet from saliva or mucus.
* Remove the mask from behind, being careful not to touch the front.
* Immediately wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing the mask.

**Instructions to Make a Homemade Mask**

* [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.htm)
* [PA Department of Health](https://pagov.sharepoint.com/sites/OA-HRM/COVID19/Re-Opening%20the%20Commonwealth/•%09https:/www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx)

Best practices for homemade masks (fabric or cloth):

* Consider buying materials online to avoid exposure in public places.
* Purchase masks made by small businesses in order to save medical masks for health care workers.
* Masks should
* be made out of two layers of tightly woven 100% cotton fabric
* 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 and machine dried without damage or change to the shape

## Mask Cleaning Guidance

Masks should be washed after every use. Sanitize nonmedical masks per the manufacturer’s recommendation prior to each use.  

**Machine Washing**

Step 1: Wash in hot water and regular laundry detergent. Bleach can also be used.

Step 2: Machine dry on high heat until no longer damp.

**Handwashing**

Step 1: Wash in warm soapy water.

Step 2: Rinse thoroughly with water on both sides and straps.

Step 3: Air dry fully. Hanging is preferred to allow both sides to dry fully.

**Breaks While Wearing Masks**

Depending upon the nature of an employee’s duties and their immediate work environment, some employees may need additional respites from wearing a mask.  If necessary, employees in this situation will be permitted reasonable time away from their work areas so that they may remove their mask for this purpose.

**Medical Exceptions for Masks**

If an employee has a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a mask, you should consider alternatives, such as social distancing. If needed, contact your [Disabilities Services Coordinator](https://www.hrm.oa.pa.gov/workplace-support/disability-svcs/Documents/disability-coordinators.xlsx). Additional information is available from the [Job Accommodation Network](https://askjan.org/blogs/jan/2020/03/the-ada-and-managing-reasonable-accommodation-requests-from-employees-with-disabilities-in-response-to-covid-19.cfm).

**Work Exceptions for Masks**

If you have an employee work assignment where a mask may be considered a safety issue, you will need to develop an alternative solution prior to returning the employee to the worksite. An employee does not need to wear a mask if it impedes their vision, if they have a medical condition, or would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task If a work assignment safety issue was not identified prior to returning to work, an employee is required to notify you before removing their mask. If a mask cannot be worn, social distancing shall be maintained using alternative solutions.

## Gloves

Gloves should only be provided to employees who require them to perform certain job functions, such as handling mail, custodial work, certain trades, and groundskeeping. For the vast majority of employees, gloves are not recommended for general protective use for the following reasons: 

* Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection.
* Gloves often create a false sense of security for the individuals wearing them; people are more likely to touch contaminated surfaces because they feel protected from the virus.
* When wearing gloves, people are less inclined to wash their hands, even though handwashing is the number-one defense against any virus.
* Proper removal of gloves takes training. If contaminated gloves are not removed properly, employees are exposed to greater risk.

Employees who use cleaning chemicals are required to use disposable gloves. Other personal protective equipment may also be required by the chemical manufacturer. Check chemical warning labels and safety data sheets for appropriate personal protective equipment. Disposable gloves are required to be worn when cleaning, including trash removal, after a known or suspected exposure to an individual with COVID-19. These items shall be disposed of immediately after cleaning.

**Mail Handling**

Employees who handle and process mail should attempt to complete processing activities in well-ventilated areas. They should avoid touching mouth, eyes, or face when handling mail. If employees choose to wear gloves while handling mail, gloves should be made of breathable material and should be changed when grossly dirty or when perforated.  Gloves should be removed when not completing mail processing activities, and frequent handwashing and sanitization is strongly encouraged.

## Social Distancing

Social distancing is a simple and very effective way to prevent the potential the spread of infection. In practice this means: 

* Staying six feet away from others as a normal practice.
* Eliminating physical contact with others, such as handshakes or embracing coworkers, visitors, or friends.
* Avoiding touching surfaces that are touched by others as much as possible.
* Avoiding anyone who appears to be sick or is coughing or sneezing.

Locations where social distancing should be practiced include, but are not limited to, production lines, cafeterias, common areas, entrance/exit areas of work sites, and offices.

**Social Distancing through Telework**

Subject to operational needs and the ability of employees to continue their full job duties, employees may be permitted to continue temporary telework to maintain social distancing.  Supervisors should discuss plans with their local HR office for employees who can continue to telework. You may have worksites where some employees can telework, while others cannot. Each position should be considered individually on its own merit. Guidance can be found at [Temporary Telework](https://www.oa.pa.gov/telework/Pages/default.aspx).

Contact your agency’s information technology for help desk for assistance with technology needed for employees to telework.

**Social Distancing at Shift Changes**

Shift changes must be managed thoughtfully to reduce infection risk and to leverage the opportunity they present to ensure optimal disinfection of the worksite.  Where operationally feasible, worksites should implement staggered shifts as discussed below. You will need to work with your HR office and Employee Relations Representative to determine if you can accommodate staggered schedules and how to assign employees to different schedules.

Start and end times must be staggered by at least 15 minutes. If employee start and end times are already staggered, you should review to ensure adequate separation exists, with the ultimate goal of avoiding groups of employees waiting in a particular area.

In consultation with the HR office, Time Advisor, and local Employee Relations Representative, supervisors will discuss any necessary work schedule changes that are required until such time as the state of emergency has ceased.

Supervisors can then discuss work schedule changes with employees and their union representatives (if applicable) to reach an agreeable alternative until such time as the state of emergency has ceased.

The various [collective bargaining agreements](https://www.hrm.oa.pa.gov/employee-relations/cba-md/Pages/default.aspx) covering employees often contain provisions for the minimum amount of advance notice an employee and their union (if applicable) must receive prior to a work schedule change in nonemergency circumstances.  Supervisors who are staggering shifts to achieve social distancing should consult with their Employee Relations Representative to ensure that they are enacting changes in a manner consistent with the agreements.

Recommendations for shift changes:

* Employees are to enter and exit through designated areas. Worksites with multiple entrances may consider designating employees to specific entrances.
* Example work schedule start times
* Group 1 – 7:00 to 7:15 a.m.
* Group 2 – 7:30 to 7:45 a.m.
* Group 3 – 8:00 to 8:15 a.m.
* End of shift times should be scheduled to release the employees in the order they arrived.

Staggered work schedules will vary by worksite and operational needs.  Please consult with your employees to determine if there are concerns with carpools, mass transit, or other factors that may impact their work schedule. To the extent possible, these factors should be considered in any schedule changes.

During start/end of shift, employees should:

* Avoid gathering when entering and exiting the worksite.
* Remain in their cars until their scheduled window of start time.
* Maintain six feet of space between each person while waiting in line to enter the worksite.
* Supervisors can use tape on floors to mark off six feet for employees to stand apart.
* Not touch the time clock or entry door handle with an exposed finger(s) or hand (if possible).
* Not touch their face before they have had a chance to wash their hands.
* Be patient with staff conducting health screeening checks.  Employees will not be required to submit leave if they are tardy due to screening procedures.
* Remain in their car if there are long lines or inclement weather.
* Wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol upon arrival and prior to departure.

**Social Distancing Between Floors**

Employees who are physically able are encouraged to use the stairwells.  If they must use the elevator, no more than three individuals should be in an elevator at one time.  This may vary depending on the size of the elevator and employees are encouraged to use their discretion to maintain social distancing.  Posters to encourage use of stairs are available on the [Returning to Work website](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Pages/default.aspx). Supervisors are encouraged to post these where able.  For owned and leased buildings, please check with your building manager before posting.

**Social Distancing in Meetings** 

Conduct future workplace meetings using the commonwealth’s Skype for Business platform to avoid holding in-person meetings whenever possible.   If an in-person meeting is deemed absolutely necessary, the following protocols apply:

* In-person meetings will be limited to 10 persons even when the meeting area is large enough to accommodate prescribed social distancing measures; and
* Meeting rooms must accommodate a social distancing requirement of six feet of separation for everyone in attendance.

Employees should work with their IT staff to ensure that proper software and technology are available to accommodate social distancing requirements.  In the event than an employee requests an accommodation, the supervisor should work with the employee to identify personal needs.  Accommodations may include advance copies of documents, an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, computer-assisted real-time captioning (CART), extra time to review information, alternative virtual software platforms, etc.  The supervisor should contact the Disability Services Coordinator to discuss any additional requests, as necessary.

**Social Distancing at Workstations** 

* Whenever possible, workstations should be arranged to allow separation of six feet and consideration should be given to arranging seating so that employees are not directly facing each other. If this condition cannot be met, you should consider alternative measures to mitigate potential exposure such as the following:
* Staggered work shifts
* Face masks
* Face shields
* Body orientation
* Physical barriers may also be installed where practical; the barriers must be cleaned multiple times a shift
* Meeting rooms may be converted to workstations
* Employees should be strongly encouraged to disinfect their own workspace multiple times a day, giving special attention to frequently touched surfaces, such as computer keyboards, phones, and desktop.
* Employees should be reminded to avoid touching their faces and to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water several times during their shift to reduce the risk of potential person-to-person infections.
* Employees at worksites that serve the public should be permitted reasonable time each hour to wash their hands.

**Social Distancing During Restroom Breaks** 

Social distancing guidelines for restroom breaks include the following:

* Occupy alternate urinals and restroom stalls to maintain separation of six feet.
* Avoid congregating in the restroom.  Be courteous and aware of others’ need to use the restroom.
* To the extent possible, do not touch doorknobs, faucets, paper towel dispensers, etc. with clean, bare hands.  See the [CDC guidance on handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html) for proper precautions and hand washing techniques when using the restroom.

Facilities management will be increasing the frequency of cleaning of all restroom facilities.

**Social Distancing with Visitors** 

Some worksites or work requirements include interaction with the public in order to perform business functions. Your agency will determine when public facing operations will resume.

If the determination has been made that normal business operations for the public will resume, follow these guidelines:

* When able, conduct business by appointment only.  If appointments are not feasible, limit building occupancy to 50% of the total occupancy.
* Designate specific times for high-risk and elderly people to obtain services at least once a week.
* Require all visitors to wear masks. If the individual refuses, employees should consider whether services can be provided to the individual using appropriate social distancing.  If social distancing is not possible, you may tell the individual that in-person service will only be provided to individuals wearing a mask and direct the individual to leave the premises.
* At all times, social distancing of six feet shall be maintained by arranging points of service to comply and posting signage to remind employees and visitors of social distancing requirements.
* Lobby areas should clearly designate where visitors can sit. If able, remove extra chairs to reinforce the maintenance of six feet.
* Use red floor tape to indicate where visitors can stand for lines. Consider both the inside and outside of the worksite.
* In situations where social distancing cannot be maintained; shields or other barriers shall be installed to help prevent exposure.

**Other Infection Prevention Protocols**

Employees should also use hand sanitizer, wipes ,and tissues to prevent potential infection. , For more information on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 please refer to [Help Stop the Spread](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx).

Take a moment and watch the video below for information on how to protect yourself from COVID – 19.

[](https://www.youtube.com/embed/uynN1urM9H8?feature=oembed)

**Noncompliance with Personal Safety Guidelines**

In the event that an employee refuses to comply with the guidelines, you should contact your Employee Relations Representative and meet with the employee to discuss their concerns. Employees should understand that if they do not comply with the guidelines outlined herein, they will be subject to corrective action up to and including removal from employment.

## Break and Meal Protocols

**Social Distancing During Breaks and Meal Periods**

Employee breaks and meal periods should be staggered, when operationally feasible to limit the number of employees in communal spaces at one time.  You should work with your HR office to develop a staggered schedule for meal periods and breaks to accommodate social distancing. If you have employees with medical conditions that require specific break times, you should make every reasonable attempt to accommodate their request. In addition to existing break rooms, you should encourage employees to consider alternate sites for breaks which may include their workstation, unoccupied meeting rooms, car, or outside space (if available and weather permitting).

The various [collective bargaining agreements](https://www.hrm.oa.pa.gov/employee-relations/cba-md/Pages/default.aspx) covering employees often contain provisions for the timing of meal periods and breaks.  Supervisors who are staggering meal periods and breaks to achieve social distancing should consult with their Employee Relations Representative to ensure that they are enacting such changes in a manner consistent with the agreements.

**Seating and Capacity**

* Make sure employees sit six feet apart during breaks. Consider removing chairs or designating seats that can be used.
* Make sure occupancy limits are not exceeded in communal areas, including around vending and ATM machines.
* Make sure employees begin and end breaks at designated times.

**Break Times**

* Provide wipes in break rooms and communal areas.
* Encourage employees to wipe tables, seats, all surfaces, refrigerators, vending machines, coffee pots and microwave ovens before and after each use.

**Communal Spaces**

Employees should avoid direct contact with hard surfaces in communal areas, including refrigerators, microwaves, coffee pots, water coolers/fountains, chairs, tables, etc.  Employees are encouraged to use paper towels to touch any surface and use wipes to disinfect before and after every use.

Communal spaces should be cleaned throughout the day, with twice per shift as the minimum.

## Cleaning Personal Workspace

Employees should regularly clean frequently touched areas in their personal workspaces—including table, desktop, light switch, phone, keyboard and mouse.

The CDC recommends [cleaning appropriate surfaces](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html) with soap and water, if dirty, followed by a disinfectant.  This [CDC graphic](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/ReOpening_America_Cleaning_Disinfection_Decision_Tool.pdf) will assist supervisors develop, implement and maintain a cleaning plan. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for a period of time or wearing gloves when using, so it is important to follow the instructions on the product label.

Specifically, for electronics, remove visible contamination if present.  If manufacturer guidance for cleaning is unavailable, consider cleaning these surfaces with alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70 percent alcohol. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids. Sprays should be applied to paper towel prior to disinfecting electronics.

# Worksite Safety

## Worksite Visitors and Screening Guidance

Non-essential visitors will be prohibited from entering the worksite unless otherwise approved by your agency leadership.  Meetings should take place virtually to ensure the protection of employees, clients, customers, and other visitors.

If critical in-person visits must occur, they should be scheduled in advance by appointment where feasible and must follow the social distancing guidance provided in this guide.

All visitors must wear a [mask](https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#UniversalMasking).  The meeting organizer must inform visitors of this requirement in advance.  If needed, meeting organizers should provide links or other informational resources on how visitors can make a mask.  If a visitor does not have a mask:

* An unused or sanitized mask should be provided, if available.
* The meeting could be rescheduled to allow the visitor to obtain a mask and [mask making informational resources](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx) can be provided.
* Entrance to the worksite shall be denied and alternate arrangements to serve the visitor shall be made.
* Ask if the visitor has a medical condition (including children under the age of 2 years per [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-faq.html)) that does not allow them to wear a mask. Documentation of the medical condition is not required.

Meeting organizers must ensure visits and contractor work are conducted in a manner that limits exposure to employees to the extent feasible by:

* Ensuring visitors and contractors take a direct route to the meeting or work areas and do not unnecessarily interact with employees.
* Practicing [social distancing](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx) themselves at all times and instructing visitors regarding expectations to follow social distancing.
* Following expected [hygiene practices](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Stop-the-Spread.aspx) and instructing visitors regarding expectations that they follow this guidance.
* Using dedicated meeting rooms where possible and ensuring that common surfaces are disinfected between meetings.  Visitor service areas will be closed for cleaning no less than once per hour.

The meeting organizer must meet the visitor inside the entrance to the building unless the building has implemented a centralized visitor screening process. Meeting organizers are responsible for screening visitors prior to admission to the meeting.

* The screening should be conducted [using the visitors and contractors screening script](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/screening-script.docx).
* Although the meeting organizer is responsible to ensure that visitor screening occurs, the completion of the verbal screening can be delegated to another employee.

## Worksite Signage

To help maintain employee mindfulness about proper COVID-19 safety precautions, the Department of General Services (DGS) has the following worksite posters:

* Employee Reminder for Masking
* Visitor Reminder for Masking
* Building Closed to Public
* Building Opened for Limited Access; Visitor Masks Required
* Secretary Levine’s Daily Tips
* COVID-19 Symptoms
* Reminder for Employees to Disinfect Personal Items/Surfaces
* Social Distancing (conference rooms, breakrooms, etc.)
* Take the Stairs
* Handwashing
* Elevator Capacity of 3

[Electronic versions of the worksite posters for self printing are available on the DGS website](https://www.dgs.pa.gov/about/pages/covid-19.aspx).

## Worksite Exposure Protocols

With the reopening of commonwealth operations comes the possibility of individuals entering the worksite with having had exposure to COVID-19. The guidance below addresses how a worksite should respond in the event of exposure to a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. (A person is considered to have a probable case of COVID-19 if they have [symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell) and exposure to a high-risk situation (e.g., sharing a household with a COVID-19 diagnosed person), or if the person has a positive antibody test and either symptoms or high-risk exposure.)

Per DOH guidance, worksite health screening should be implemented ***after*** there has been a confirmed exposure to COVID-19 within the worksite.  DOH also recommends that health screening checks continue as a matter of routine for worksites located in areas with high positive case numbers.

Note: Please note the following guidance may differ for 24/7 operations including correctional facilities, state hospitals and centers, veterans’ homes, and youth development centers, as well as those agencies following CISA’s guidance for critical infrastructure workers. **Employees within such operations should continue to follow the guidance issued by their agency.**

**Responding to a Worksite Exposure**

If it is determined an individual that has been in the worksite is a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19, the following steps should be taken:

1. If the individual with the probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 is still in the workplace, they should be sent home and told to contact their health care provider immediately. If they do not have a health care provider, they should be referred to their local health department or 1-877-PA-HEALTH.
   1. Individuals (employee or contracted staff) should be provided a copy of the [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Employees](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-employee.docx) or [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Contractor](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-contractor.docx) and [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx).
   2. Individuals should not return to work until they have submitted their [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx) and spoken with their supervisor about a return to work date.
2. There is no need to close the entire office/worksite. Staff may remain at work if they did not have close contact with the individual diagnosed with COVID-19. (See #5 below)
3. Close off and ventilate areas of exposure, if possible – including common areas likely frequented by the individual with the probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.
4. Work with DGS to arrange for enhanced cleaning and disinfection of impacted area within the worksite, including common areas.
5. Wait a minimum of 24 hours, or as long as practical, before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
6. DGS or contracted cleaning staff shall be responsible for cleaning office areas, restrooms, and common areas. Soft surface cleaning may be limited depending on the contract specifications.
7. Agency staff shall be responsible for cleaning desk surfaces, electronic equipment, and soft surfaces not cleaned by DGS or the contracted cleaning staff.
8. There is no need to close an entire office for cleaning. Cleaning and disinfection should be limited to the area where the individual worked as well as common areas. Management should consult with DGS if unsure if cleaning the office will require employees to vacate the premises.
9. See the Post Worksite Exposure Cleaning and Disinfecting section for more information.
10. Identify and notify employees and contracted staff who came in close contact with the probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.
11. Maintain confidentiality – Do not reveal the COVID-19 probable/positive individual’s identity.
12. Ask the individual with the probable or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis who they had close contact with prior to leaving the worksite.
13. Close contact is defined as being within six feet for 10 minutes or more.  This includes individuals that had close contact from the period of 48 hours before symptom onset to the time the employee was isolated.
14. An individual that has had close contact with someone with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 should be informed and **should quarantine at home for 14 days**.  They should also be told to contact their health care provider immediately. (If they do not have a health care provider, they should be referred to their local health department or 1-877-PA-HEALTH.)
    * Provide the [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Employees](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-employee.docx) or [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Contractor](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-contractor.docx) and [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx).  These forms provide instructions to employees on the medical documentation needed to return to work and how to obtain guidance on the proper leave to use.
15. Inform employees at the worksite that there has been an exposure and that appropriate action has been taken, including notification to impacted employees and enhanced cleaning and disinfection of the impacted areas. Also let staff know that management will continue to carefully monitor the situation and will inform staff of pertinent updates. Remember: Maintain confidentiality – do not reveal the impacted individual’s identity.
16. Implement health screening to ensure every employee or contracted staff person entering the worksite undergoes a health screening. (See Below: Post-Exposure Health Screening)

**Guidance for Employees Diagnosed with COVID-19**

An employee that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 should follow [the guidance provided by the CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html). The employee should not be permitted to return to the worksite until the CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with the employee’s health care provider.

Additional support services for commonwealth employees are available 24/7 from the State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP) at 1-800-692-7459, or visit the [Live and Work Well website](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/content/en/member.html) (To browse as a guest, use access code: Pennsylvania)

## Post-Exposure Health Screening

Health screening is to be implemented for all employees and contracted staff (not visitors) entering the worksite upon discovery that the worksite has been exposed to a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. Health screening is intended to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and lower the risk of further exposure for the worksite. Health screening is only required ***after*** a person with a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 has been in the worksite. Health screenings should continue for at least 14 days after an exposure. (DOH recommends that health screenings continue as a matter of routine for worksites located in areas with high positive case numbers.)

General Considerations:

* Worksites should review entrances to determine the most appropriate location(s) to conduct health screenings and inform individuals which entrances they are to use.
* Health screenings should occur prior to entering the worksite.
* Social distancing is required as individuals wait to be tested and they should be wearing masks.
* Health screening stations should be staffed by supervisors or managers, or other designated staff.
* Staff assigned to screening stations should consult with their HR Office on the disposition of completed screening forms. **Forms and their content are to be kept strictly confidential.**
* For individuals that pass the screening, worksites should consider instituting a day of the week/color dot or wristband, which can be handed to the individual and affixed to their badge or around their wrist. These individuals will then be allowed to enter and re-enter the building for the remainder of that day.
* Individuals that do not pass the health screening may not enter the worksite.
* Individuals should not return to work until they have submitted their [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx) and spoken with their supervisor about a return to work date.
* Employees who had their health screened at one worksite at the start of their shift are not required to have their health screened again if they travel to another location.
* If health screening does not occur during all hours of operation, supervisors need to maintain awareness of their employees’ schedules and inform health screening staff if an employee is arriving at a later time of day so that arrangements can be made for the employee’s health to be screened before entering the worksite.
* Health screening stations should be staffed, equipped and ready for operation prior to employees starting their shifts.

**Note**: Having not passed a health screening does not equate to a probable or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. Management should not follow the Worksite Exposure protocol outlined above unless: 1. The individual receives a diagnosis of COVID-19, or 2. The individual is a probable case of COVID-19 (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell) and exposure to a high-risk situation (e.g., sharing a household with a COVID-19 diagnosed person), or if the person has a positive antibody test and either symptoms or high-risk exposure.

Process

* Every individual that intends to enter the worksite will undergo a health screening.
* Ensure individuals are wearing masks and practicing social distancing while waiting for health screening.
* Health screening staff should not have direct contact with the employee, and social distancing measures should be in place (e.g., standing six feet apart, wearing a face covering, etc.).
* Individuals that pass the health screening are permitted to enter the worksite and given the day of the week/color dot or wristband to be affixed to their badge or around their wrist
* In those instances where an individual does not pass the health screening:
  + Screening staff should complete a [COVID-19 Screening Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/screening-form-template.pdf).
  + Commonwealth employees should be provided a copy of the [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Commonwealth Employee](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-employee.docx) and a [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx). (Contractors should be provided a copy of the [Referral to Medical Services Notice – Contractor](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/physician-referral-contractor.docx) and a [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx).)
  + The individual should be directed to return home and contact their health care provider for further assistance. They should also contact their supervisor as soon as possible to report their absence from work and obtain guidance on the appropriate leave to use. (Questions about leave may be directed to the HR Service Center – FMLA Services at 866-377-2672. See [COVID-19 Leave Information website](https://www.oa.pa.gov/covidleave/Pages/default.aspx).) (If they do not have a medical provider, they should be referred to their local health department or 1-877-PA-HEALTH.)
  + Screening staff forward the [COVID-19 Screening Forms](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/screening-form-template.pdf) to the appropriate parties based on the direction established with the local HR Office. COVID-19 Screening Forms completed for contractors should be forwarded to the contractor’s agency contact.
* When an employee does not pass the health screening and they refuse to leave the worksite, a fitness for duty evaluation should be completed by a previously designated supervisor or manager and established procedures followed to remove the employee from the premises. ([See M505.3 Amended, State Employee Assistance Program](https://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/Documents/m505_3.pdf))
* An employee that does not pass the health screening may not return to work until they have been cleared by their health care provider (who has completed the [Return to Work Status Form](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/return-to-work-status-form.docx)) and spoken with their supervisor about a return to work date. Completed forms should be returned to the HR Service Center – FMLA Services (Fax: 717-425-5389 or email: [ra-spfabsence@pa.gov](mailto:ra-spfabsence@pa.gov)).

## Post-Worksite Exposure Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfection must occur to ensure protection for employees at worksites. Although transmission of COVID-19 occurs primarily through respiratory droplets, it is believed that transmission could occur through materials such as furniture, utensils, and soft surfaces. Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces after a suspected or confirmed positive exposure to COVID-19 shall occur in compliance with current [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html). If more than seven days have passed since the person with the suspected or confirmed COVID-19 visited or used the worksite, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.

**Responsibilities**

* + DGS or contracted cleaning staff shall be responsible for cleaning office areas, restrooms, and common areas. Soft surface cleaning may be limited depending on the contract specifications.
  + Agency staff shall be responsible for cleaning desk surfaces, electronic equipment, and soft surfaces not cleaned by DGS or the contracted cleaning staff.

**Procedure for Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Refer to guidance from CDC on [How to Clean and Disinfect](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html). Disinfection shall occur using an [EPA-registered disinfectant](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2) for COVID-19.

**Cleaning Staff Protection**

Cleaning staff shall:

* + Wear disposable gloves for all tasks associated with the cleaning process, including trash removal.
  + Wash their hands thoroughly immediately after all cleaning activities.
  + Share the [COVID-19 Sanitation and Chemical Exposure Safety](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/cleaning-safety-talk.docx) information sheet with employees prior to all cleaning activities.

**Vehicle Cleaning**

Follow [CDC guidelines for disinfecting work vehicles](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html) used to transport a probable or confirmed case from the worksite.

**Sanitation and Chemical Exposure Safety**

It is important to remember that while cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to prevent the spread of COVID-19, employees should also be protecting themselves and others from exposure to the chemicals they are using.

Chemical exposure can result in irritation to the skin, eyes, nose, throat, and respiratory system – especially if the exposure is prolonged or frequent.  The CDC suggests the following safety tips for preventing chemical exposure while cleaning:

* + Maintain a current safety data sheet (SDS) for each cleaning chemical used on site. All employees should be familiar with SDSs of products they are using which detail personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements and first aid measures for exposure.
  + Employ the use of PPE to at least the level required by the SDS or more protection if required by your supervisor.
  + Ensure areas being cleaned are well ventilated with a fan or open window, if possible.
  + Keep cleaning products in their original, labeled containers. If transferring to a secondary container, the new container must be labeled with the common name of the chemical and appropriate hazard warnings.
  + Do not mix cleaning products or any other chemicals unless specifically directed to by a supervisor.
  + Only use cleaning products as directed.
  + Avoid contacting your skin with cleaning chemicals.
  + Dispose of gloves and wash hands thoroughly with soap and water when cleaning is complete, and gloves have been removed.
  + Do not spray cleaning chemicals on or near others while cleaning.
  + Be mindful when cleaning of others in the area, who may be sensitive to aspects of certain cleaning products, including smells.
  + If a large area needs to be cleaned or harsh chemicals used, discuss cleaning options to determine best times to complete these tasks and whether other employees can be present.
  + If an exposure occurs, contact your supervisor and call 911 for emergencies. If possible, get the SDS for the chemical that was being used at the time for transport to the emergency room or doctor to assist medical personnel with treatment options.

# Leave Policy

On April 1, 2020, the commonwealth issued [HR Policy 2020-WS002, Emergency Paid Sick and Expanded Family and Medical Leave](https://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/hr/Pages/default.aspx). This policy was issued to set forth commonwealth-wide guidance on the use of leave pursuant to the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) and the Emergency Family and Medical leave Extension Act (EFMLEA).

More information about the application of this policy, as well as other information about administering leave during the COVID-19 pandemic, is available on the commonwealth’s [COVID-19 Leave Information](https://www.oa.pa.gov/covidleave/Pages/default.aspx) website.

If an employee is calling off sick, use the [Call Off Script for COVID-19](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/call-off-script.docx).

# Travel Guidance

[Refer to the CDC’s website for a full list of travel precautions](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html).

## Traveling by Vehicle

Employees should ride alone in vehicles where operationally feasible if travel is required for work.  Employees who normally have multiple employees in the vehicle due to safety or work standards should follow their agency-specific protocols when traveling in vehicles. If the driver is alone throughout the trip, a mask is needed only when interacting with others, such as at a tollbooth or other drive through window. If more than one person is in the vehicle, all occupants should wear masks.  An employee does not need to wear a mask if it impedes their vision, if they have a medical condition, or if it would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

It is recommended that employees limit stops when traveling between their home and their worksite.

Upon arrival at the worksite and prior to departing, employees should wash their hands as recommended.

## Traveling to Multiple Worksites

DOH recommends that health screenings be conducted, particularly in those areas of the commonwealth with high positive case numbers. Health screenings of employees need only occur at their primary worksite and additional screenings are not required for employees who subsequently travel to other worksites during their shift.  

## Traveling on Mass Transit

Transit riders should wear masks unless there is a medical reason that prevents them from wearing a mask, or unless they are unable to provide themselves with a mask or a suitable option (bandanna, scarf, etc.) because of economic reasons.  Employees must not use buses if they suspect they are sick or if they have [symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) such as fever, cough or shortness of breath.

## Cleaning Work Vehicles

Commonwealth employees who require the use of a rental car through our contracted provider, Enterprise, may review additional safety procedures in place [on the Enterprise Car Rental website](https://www.enterprise.com/en/car-rental/on-call-for-all.html).

[DGS vehicle cleaning guidance](https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Documents/Vehicle%20Forms/How%20To%20-%20FAQ%20-%20Policies%20-%20Procedures/Cleaning%20of%20State%20vehicles%20as%20of%204.27.2020.pdf)

[PennDOT vehicle cleaning guidance](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/vehicle-cleaning-dot.pdf)

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

FAQs have been developed as an additional resource to help both supervisors and employees prepare for the reopening of commonwealth worksites. The FAQs are located on the Office of Administration’s [Returning to Work website](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Pages/default.aspx). Please click on the appropriate links below:

[Returning to Work – Supervisor FAQs](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/supervisor-returning-work-guide.pdf)

[Returning to Work – Employee FAQs](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Documents/employee-faq-returning-work.pdf)

# Resources

## “Returning to Work” Website

The Office of Administration has launched a website containing resources for supervisors as well as employees. Please visit the [Returning to Work website](https://www.oa.pa.gov/returningtowork/Pages/default.aspx) to explore the tools available to help you prepare for the reopening of your worksite.

## SEAP Resources for You and Your Family

As we all work hard to continue serving Pennsylvanians during this challenging time, it is also important to ​focus on our own well-being.

The State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP) is free and available to serve you, members of your family and anyone living in your household with a variety of services during this time and year-round.  These services can help with everything from having trouble sleeping or stress to financial, legal, work or relationship concerns and more.

SEAP also offers you the option of Virtual Visits, where you can talk with and see a counselor from the privacy and comfort of your own home.  Counselors are available 24/7. Call SEAP and learn more at 1-800-692-7459 (TTY 711).

There are also a variety of mindfulness tools and resources available that can help you to better cope with stress and feelings of uncertainty. Visit [www.liveandworkwell.com](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/content/en/public.html) (Access Code: Pennsylvania) for more information.

Also, our partner Optum Health has made a variety of tools available to help you and your family navigate through these difficult times. Visit Optum Health for facts and resources about COVID-19 and tips for keeping you educated, healthy and engaged.  These resources include free access to the mental health app *Sanvello*, which offers a variety of resources for managing factors like anxiety and stress.