

## CHECKLIST:

# Reopening Your Small Business After the Coronavirus Shutdown

Cities around the nation are beginning to lift their COVID-19-related restrictions. For businesses that closed their brick-and-mortar locations, the following steps will help you plan for reopening while protecting customers and employees.

### EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Stay abreast of current federal, state and local COVID-19 guidelines for businesses, as well as industry-specific guidelines. Sign up for updates from the [Centers for Disease Control](#), [the SBA](#), state and local health departments, and relevant industry associations.
- If you have multiple locations, be aware of COVID-19 related laws in each locale.
- Designate a COVID-19 team of one or more employees to oversee your COVID-19 response and reopening plan.

### ASSESS YOUR FINANCES

- Create a [cash flow forecast](#) including optimistic, pessimistic and realistic models.
- Look for ways to cut expenses and add new revenue streams.
- Estimate increased costs for retrofitting space, deep cleaning, ongoing sanitation, etc.
- Keep updated on financial assistance available from lenders and government sources.
- Communicate with landlords, creditors, vendors and lenders to negotiate payments.
- Ask your insurance agent about appropriate coverage to protect against lawsuits from customers or employees after reopening.

### ADJUST YOUR BUSINESS MODEL

- If your business pivoted during closure (for example, adding tele-appointments, ecommerce, delivery service, curbside pickup, new products or services, working remotely), decide which elements to continue. Consider surveying customers to get their opinions.
- Decide if you will reopen in stages or all at once.
- Determine if you need to adjust business hours to allow for limited numbers of customers or provide extra time for cleaning.
- Ensure you have adequate sources of equipment, inventory and supplies needed to run your business, as well as backup sources if your primary vendors can't fulfill your orders.

### PLAN YOUR STAFFING

- Identify staffing needs for each stage of reopening.
- Understand how [COVID-19 related employment laws](#) affect your decisions. A [SCORE mentor](#) or local employment attorney can help.
- Update your [operations handbook](#) and [employee handbook](#) to reflect new policies and procedures consistent with public health guidelines.
- Contact employees to discuss their needs. Create a plan to help at-risk employees, parents or caregivers who may need special accommodations to return to work.
- Create a [business continuity plan](#) and a [crisis communications plan](#) in case an outbreak of COVID-19 occurs at your business.
- Train employees on new procedures including cleaning, social distancing and health screenings.
- Cross-train employees so you have backup in place if some workers are absent.

## KEEP YOUR WORKPLACE CLEAN

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- Develop procedures for [cleaning and disinfecting workspaces](#), surfaces and shared tools regularly and educate employees on them.
- Provide soap, tissue, trash cans, hand sanitizer and [EPA-approved disinfecting wipes](#) throughout your workplace.
- Put up [signage](#) directing employees on workplace sanitation, hand-washing, hygiene, social distancing habits and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Depending on local and industry regulations, provide masks and gloves for employees or allow them to bring their own.
- Provide more frequent breaks for employees to wash their hands.
- Secure sources (including backup sources) for regular supply of cleaners, disinfectants and personal protective equipment (PPE).

## IMPLEMENT SOCIAL DISTANCING

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- Move employee workstations at least 6 feet apart. Install acrylic barriers or use cubicle walls to further limit contact.
- Eliminate shared workstations if possible; if not, provide disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer and disposable gloves at each shared space.
- Use videoconferencing or conference call technology to avoid in-person meetings with clients, customers and partners.
- Stagger schedules so fewer employees are in the workspace at one time.
- Allow remote work when possible; provide [necessary equipment](#) for employees to work securely.
- Limit employee travel, including travel between multiple locations of your business.
- Provide PPE for customers or other visitors or require them to bring their own.
- Develop a plan for handling customers, visitors and employees who refuse to follow your health and safety guidelines.

## SET UP HEALTH SCREENING

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- Educate employees about COVID-19 symptoms and the need to stay home when sick.
- Develop a policy for screening employees (for example, with touch thermometers) or having employees self-screen before coming to work.
- Plan what to do if an employee, customer or visitor develops symptoms at work, including notifying employees and customers and [cleaning and disinfecting](#) the workplace.

## MARKET YOUR BUSINESS

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- Keep your website, Google My Business and other local search listings updated with current information and hours of operation.
- Develop a [marketing plan](#) for your grand re-opening via emails, social media, chats, etc.
- Hang signage in your physical business windows notifying customers of your plans.
- Create messaging to explain how you are keeping customers and employees safe.

## RESOURCES

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- Centers for Disease Control [COVID-19 Resources for Business & Workplaces](#)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [Coronavirus and COVID-19 guidance](#)
- [SCORE Coronavirus Small Business Resource Hub](#)
- [State resources on COVID-19](#)
- Small Business Administration [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)