

# COVID-19 MANUFACTURING WORKPLACE READINESS

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**An Interactive Guide to  
Best Practices for  
Staying Safe *and*  
Staying Open for  
Business**

DECEMBER 17, 2021

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**Version3**



**MANUFACTURERS**  
ASSOCIATION



# Note to Rhode Island Manufacturers

To our fellow Manufacturing Leaders,

Polaris MEP and the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association (RIMA) developed this “playbook” in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic to support manufacturers as they maintain safe operations and/or recover or ramp up production.

Key points about the recommendations within:

- ✦ Guidelines are practical, based upon best practices already implemented by Rhode Island businesses.
- ✦ Recommendations are not one-size fits all. If you need a customized plan, please reach out to Polaris MEP's team of project managers.
- ✦ Ideas are aligned with RIMA's COVID-19 Response guidelines as well as with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, and the Rhode Island Department of Health.

Rhode Island's manufacturing community has been praised repeatedly for its leadership in COVID-19 response. We'd like to keep sharing best practices from RI's manufacturers. Please send your tips and stories to [info@polarismep.org](mailto:info@polarismep.org).

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to your employees, neighbors throughout the state and our industry.

Dave Chenevert  
Executive Director, RIMA

&






Kathie Mahoney  
Center Director, Polaris MEP

# Revision History

Guidance is continually evolving as our understanding of COVID-19 advances, vaccines are introduced / updated, and regulations change. Some of the specific recommendations in this playbook may not apply to individuals or organizations based on vaccine status.

Please visit <https://covid.ri.gov/> for the most up-to-date guidance.

## Significant changes reflected in V3:

-  Web Link for reporting cases to the RI Department of Health is now <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/83232059c83d49eea6cf5670f5bee9a>
-  RIMA Designated Internal Auditor
-  Resources for masks/ppe
-  OSHA “Pandemic Control Plan”
-  Expanded guidelines on common spaces

NOTE: This “playbook” is interactive. Click on the headers at the top of any page to jump to the topic that is most important to you. Or, click on a topic in the table of contents and you’ll jump within the document.

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## About Rhode Island Manufacturers Association

The mission of the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association is to be the unified voice of the Ocean State's 1,600 manufacturers. We advocate at the federal, state, and local levels for sensible policy solutions that strengthen manufacturing and serve as a bridge connecting our members with the resources they need to compete and grow.








[www.RIManufacturers.com](http://www.RIManufacturers.com)

## About Polaris MEP

The Polaris MEP is *YOUR* state-based Manufacturing Extension Partnership. Rhode Island Manufacturers trust us to provide local, proven support and to access the resources of our national and global networks.

A non-profit, we support the competitiveness and growth of Rhode Island's manufacturers with training and programs for your topline, bottom line and pipeline.

Services include:

-  Growth and strategy consulting
-  Lean Manufacturing training, and consulting
-  Quality Management Systems implementation and certifications
-  Facility layout
-  Cybersecurity
-  Technology acceleration
-  Workforce development, training

[www.PolarisMEP.org](http://www.PolarisMEP.org)

## Disclaimer – Legal Statement

The purpose of this document is to suggest ideas to consider as Rhode Island's manufacturing industry and your business work to stay 100% "fully functioning" throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is no *one size fits all* scenario. These are guidelines, not requirements.

Before you chose to implement any of the ideas suggested in this document you must evaluate and determine, with the assistance of your legal counsel, accounting and human resource teams, the legality and effectiveness of the potential application captured in this document.

The overall intent of this document is to provide suggested ideas for your independent consideration only. The Rhode Island Manufacturers Association (RIMA) and Polaris MEP accept no responsibility for any result or circumstance arising from or related to your decision to use or not use any idea submitted herein.

This is to be considered a 'living' document which is subject to revision or further developments as they arise.

Updated copies of this document will be maintained on the Polaris MEP website: <https://polarismep.org/ri-manufacturing-readiness-playbook/>.

# Workplace Readiness – Control Plan

The state of Rhode Island is requiring all businesses to have a “COVID-19 Control Plan.” The following checklists can serve as a starter for your company's plan. For further guidance / a generic business template:

<https://reopeningri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Control-Plan-Fillable-Template-Final-5.13.20.pdf>.

## COVID-19 Response Leader(s)

- ☐ Select an individual or team to take proactive responsibility for COVID-19 response, monitoring
- ☐ Share the name of the Leader / Designated Internal Auditor with RIMA (<https://bit.ly/2II1CQ1i>)
- ☐ Ensure response team has clearly set responsibilities for monitoring state COVID-19 guidance updates and for reporting to the state, as needed



## Manufacturing Worker Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Training provided (in-person, written and remote) of protocols for masks and self-distancing, including carpools and off-hours
  - Stay informed of changing state guidelines related to masks and vaccinations, as your protocols may have to change as well
- ☐ Workers advised on self-screening policies, screening app downloaded
- ☐ Protocols reviewed related to active screening, employee attendance, Isolation Response, self-quarantining and returning to work
- ☐ Masks, PPE secured and distributed to workers as needed
- ☐ Stable Employee Groups created as appropriate
- ☐ Signage, checklists posted to reinforce new protocols



## Plant/Site Access Checklist

- ☐ Protocols established for safety and health checks, building reception, shipping/receiving, elevators, visitor policies
  - Stay informed of and reflect changing state guidelines
- ☐ Entry points controlled, including deliveries
- ☐ Gathering and lobby areas reconfigured for social distancing
- ☐ Plexiglass shields installed at entry points as appropriate
- ☐ Sanitizer, wipes and PPE (as appropriate) provided
- ☐ Building protocols clearly communicated through signage and floor markings
- ☐ Visitors or employees not allowed to enter without masks

## Building Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Cleaning conducted on all common work surfaces, offices, conference room
- ☐ Cleaning conducted in break areas (dispensers, vending machines, etc.)
- ☐ Cleaning conducted in all company vehicles and equipment
- ☐ Cleaning conducted on floors, walls, multi-use areas, and restrooms
- ☐ HVAC filters cleaned, disinfected or replaced
- ☐ Cleaning Crew received training about the disinfection method and frequency
- ☐ Exit and Entry points dedicated if possible
- ☐ Signage and floor markings in place, directional arrows to control people flow and assist social distancing

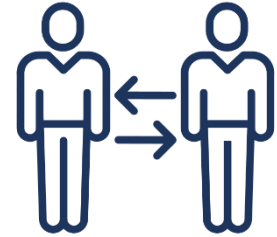
## Cleaning and Hygiene Checklist

- ☐ Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices maintained
- ☐ 10% chlorine bleach solution (sodium hypochlorite solution) made daily, used when appropriate
- ☐ Disinfectants supplied near workstations and throughout the plant
- ☐ Designated storage areas for personal items
- ☐ Self-service food/beverages eliminated
- ☐ Hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and other personal cleaning products provided; additional handwashing stations created, if possible
- ☐ Low-touch or no-touch solutions such as washing stations, light switches, doors, etc. implemented
- ☐ High-touch shared tools such as whiteboard markers removed/duplicated when possible



## Distancing Checklist

- ☐ Plan to support safe (6-foot) distance
  - Spaces, workstations redesigned
  - Seating assignments specified or “team colors” assigned to ensure staff adhere to minimum contact guidelines
  - Floor tape and signage to establish distances, create one-way paths
  - Capacity of spaces reduced
- ☐ Panels added between workstations that are within safe distance
- ☐ Density reduced through staggered arrival / departure times
- ☐ In person meetings limited
- ☐ Behavior monitored and reinforced



## Response Checklist

- ☐ Designated Isolation Area for workers identifying with symptoms
- ☐ Representative identified to work with RIDOH in case of positive COVID-19 case(s)
- ☐ Representative aware of/trained in procedures to report positive COVID-19 case(s) to RIDOH [using this survey link](#)
- ☐ Employees understand sick leave policies, understand not to come to work if they feel ill

# Objectives

All businesses “must prepare and implement a COVID-19 Control Plan in accordance with emergency regulations drafted by the Rhode Island Department of Health, and found here: <http://www.reopeningri.com/>.”

This playbook was created provided to assist manufacturers in developing a written plan that meets the requirements outlined in those regulations, with two key objectives:

1. Ensure the Health and Safety of each employee and visitor.
2. Set guidelines for employee and employer behaviors that will help mitigate risk at and away from work.

The state of Rhode Island has provided a template for the required written COVID-19 Control Plan at: <http://www.reopeningri.com/>. This plan does not need to be submitted to a state agency for approval but must be made available to the Department of Health in the event of an inspection or outbreak.

OSHA also now requires Pandemic Control Plans. Please contact [kviveiros@PolarisMEP.org](mailto:kviveiros@PolarisMEP.org) to schedule an 8-hour on-site training to create a control plan that satisfies both the regulators and your specific company needs.

## Response Lead/RIMA “Internal Auditor”

Businesses must have a minimum of one representative (to be determined by the business) appointed to work with RIDOH.





RIMA introduced a “Designated Internal Auditor” program to help manufacturers maintain their COVID response. This initiative could reduce downtime due to coronavirus outbreaks.

RIMA’s plan encourages each manufacturer to appoint one team member as the lead in implementing and monitoring safety protocols.

To learn more about the program and to register your Response Lead / Internal Auditor, go to <https://bit.ly/2IICQ1j>.

While the Internal Auditor is proactively monitoring and sustaining protocols, in to properly write your plan, it is in the best interest of the company to establish a COVID-19 response team. This team has authority to make decisions in the best interest of workers and the company.

Response team duties would include (but are not limited to)

-  establishing disinfection protocols
-  securing and placing signage about preventative measures
-  managing shift changes
-  communicating with employees

The Lear Corporation “Safe Work Playbook” shared with RIMA by Taco Comfort Solutions suggests organizing the response team as follows:



If desired, Polaris MEP offers funded training programs for response teams and designated leads, including:

- 🔧 PPE / safety courses
- 🔧 COVID Internal Auditor training
- 🔧 OSHA “Pandemic Control Plan Workshop”

# Preparing the Workforce

Put a contingency plan into place and determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who need to stay home to watch their children if dismissed from childcare programs and K-12 schools.

- Prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies.
  - Employers operating office facilities remain strongly encouraged to continue telecommuting practices.
  - Offices that continue to operate must comply with industry guidance and Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) standards. Social distancing, employee and visitor screening, cloth masks for personnel, and a strict cleaning regimen will be required.
  - Make sure every employee receives the message to stay home if sick.
  - The RI Department of Labor & Training stands ready to assist with questions about Paid Sick and Safe Leave or other programs and resources available to help workers stay home if sick. (<https://dlt.ri.gov/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>)
- Stay current on guidance to monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace.
- Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.

# Controlling Plant Access

WHAT: The Best Way to Control Illness is to Prevent Exposure

RIDOH requires at a minimum, employers must screen employees for self-reported symptoms consistent with COVID-19 upon entering the building.

Exclude people with symptoms that cannot be explained by allergies or another non-infectious cause: sweating, chills, body aches, temperature above 100.4°F, cough, congestion, sore throat, shortness of breath, or diarrhea. [Click here for the most recent list of symptoms identified by the CDC.](#)

Employers may also choose to supplement screening questions with temperature checks.

It is suggested you limit entrances and exits to control site traffic and flow of visitors and to make screening easier.

Add new site access procedures to your emergency response plan. (An emergency response and preparedness plan is required for ISO certification and is generally a smart practice for any manufacturer.)



## HOW: Active Screening Protocols

Case studies suggest active screening is an effective tool for keeping sick employees home.

Active screening goes beyond simply posting a symptom poster.

Active screening means individuals are observed or required to attest (verbally or in writing) they have not had COVID-related symptoms within the past 72 hours.

To the extent possible, create a wellness station that all employees and visitors must pass through to enter the facility.

- It is recommended that all alternate building entrances be locked to require employees to use the main entrance.
- Provide space, ground markings and signage for queue so that workers can maintain physical distancing while passing through the wellness station.
- Provide shelter from direct sunlight, extreme temperature, and precipitation. The shelter will need to be heated in cooler months.
- Provide a plexiglass shield or PPE for temperature scanning personnel.



Employees and visitors should self-screen *daily* prior to entering the wellness station using a tech-enabled screening tool such as CRUSH COVID RI (see below) to check their own symptoms.



Designate a staff member or members to review each employee's tech screening results and perform temperature scanning.

- If it is not feasible to keep the wellness station staffed during the full workday, assign a call number for use by late-arriving employees and visitors.
- Define an isolation area and designate a staff member or members to respond to an employee or visitor who does not pass screening.
- If using the CRUSH COVID RI app, the staff member should confirm the name, date, and the presence of a green smiley face on the main screen.

Employees and visitors must pass *both* the self-screening and temperature check to be allowed entry.

## HOW: Questionnaires and Screening Tools

Do not allow anyone to enter if they do not pass screening. People who are identified as ill in response to screening questions or who show visible signs of illness must be denied entrance and instructed to self-isolate.

- Screenings can be conducted verbally, by app (see *next page*), by phone, or by another method of the employer's choosing.
- It is recommended to screen people outside the facility if possible, before someone enters your workspace. The CRUSH COVID RI app, phone or online surveys can streamline screening.
- If you are not using the CRUSH COVID RI app and screening occurs on site, ask all screening questions verbally, observing safe distance, to prevent contact with paper.
- Use a checklist to ensure all questions are asked, of every employee, every time.
- Only record responses if the employee fails the screening.

The State has several RI COVID-19 Screening Tools which include questions about symptoms and risk factors such as travel. It is available online:

- English – [https://reopeningri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19\\_Screening\\_Tool\\_English-NEW.pdf](https://reopeningri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19_Screening_Tool_English-NEW.pdf)
- Spanish - [https://reopeningri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19\\_Screening\\_Tool\\_Spanish-NEW.pdf](https://reopeningri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19_Screening_Tool_Spanish-NEW.pdf)

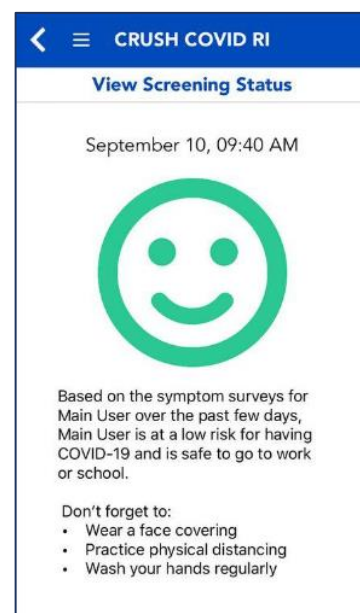
### CRUSH COVID RI App

The state's free CRUSH COVID RI app includes a symptom screening tool that displays either a green smile face or a red frowning face, depending on the results of the employee's *daily* self-screen.

It can be used to provide employers with a quick visual check upon arrival at the workplace.

If the visual is the red frowning face, or if the answer to any screening questions is "YES", employers should send the employee home and take actions described below, in accordance with current RIDOH guidance.

The app is available for FREE download Apple App Store and in Google Play.



## Visitor Policies



The Polaris MEP website has a downloadable visitor policy template that can be personalized for your company:

[https://polarismep.org/wp-content/uploads/Graphics\\_Photos/Polaris-MEP-Suggested-Visitor-Policy.031620.docx](https://polarismep.org/wp-content/uploads/Graphics_Photos/Polaris-MEP-Suggested-Visitor-Policy.031620.docx)

## Temperature Monitoring

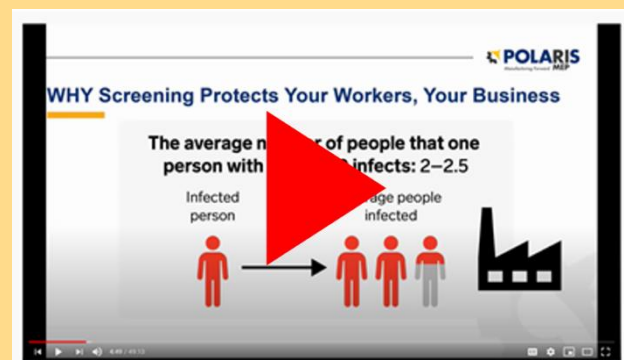
According to Dr. James McDonald of RIDOH, temperatures are not the best indicator of COVID-19 coronavirus. CDC guidance on temperature checks can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>

If your team chooses to monitor employee temperatures,

- 🦋 Use no-touch thermometers
- 🦋 Take temperatures outside the facility, before team members enter
- 🦋 Disinfect monitoring tools after each measurement
- 🦋 Use screening questions in conjunction with temperature data

Learn more with tips from industry leaders, experts in this **ON-DEMAND WEBINAR:** COVID-19 Screening Guidance for Manufacturers

<https://bit.ly/38RUVou>



# Hygiene, Disinfection & Ventilation

Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Although not designed to kill germs but instead remove them from a surface, most cleaning products can "kill" coronaviruses by removing the fatty outer layer they use to infect cells.

Disinfecting refers to using a chemical designed to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing any remaining germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

The CDC recommends cleaning surfaces with soap and then applying disinfectant.



Employer guidelines:

- Document procedures for enhanced cleaning activities; trainings of employees; and sick leave policies. Ensure employees are aware of their role implementing these protocols.
- Develop a written infection control plan outlining how your workplace will prevent the spread of COVID-19. Include an explanation for any measures that could not be implemented.
- Per *Reopening RI*:
  - Businesses must provide employees with ready access to cleaning/ disinfecting materials for wiping down commonly used surfaces.
  - Businesses must ensure that anyone on premises has ready access to handwashing stations / hand sanitizer at all times.
  - Businesses must provide employees with time to wash hands if sanitizer is not provided.

## WHY: Communicating about Hygiene & Disinfection

Employers must develop a communications plan to explain the aspects of operations to staff, visitors, vendors, community members, and other target audiences (e.g. vendors, delivery businesses) as appropriate.

Workers need to understand WHY hygiene and disinfection protocols have been put into place, or they will not faithfully implement these new procedures.

Workers will be reassured as commitment to hygiene and enhanced cleaning are demonstrations of your respect for them.

### Communication Tips:

- 🔑 Signage throughout the facilities will remind and educate employees, customers and visitors of preventative measures.
  - Locate throughout facility where they are most likely to be seen.
  - Signage samples can be found in this document.
- 🔑 Reinforce and repeat messages about the WHY of new processes – information is empowering, repetition helps new habits take hold.
- 🔑 Clearly communicate the approved protocols for your workplace.
  - Be consistent – Vendors follow the same guidelines as employees.
- 🔑 Let employees know who in management they can talk to without fear if they spot conditions that don't meet your standards.
- 🔑 Create graphics or worksheets that detail standard operating procedures and train. This will ensure the steps are taken consistently across shifts.



- ✦ Determine appropriate materials and channels for communicating information. Examples include:
  - Developing and disseminating a one-pager
  - Posting information and FAQs to your website
  - Sharing information on social media
  - Developing and sharing screening tools and signage for public buildings and businesses
  - Translate information in the languages most prevalent in your community.
- ✦ Continue to emphasize the importance of employees staying home if they are sick.

Before work begins, each employee shall be informed of the following:

- ✦ How the initial cleaning was completed
- ✦ How to protect oneself on a daily basis
- ✦ How to clean each workspace throughout the day
- ✦ Protocol for an employee testing positive for COVID-19
- ✦ Process for employees to escalate safety concerns quickly

## WHAT: Establish Protocols, Prepare

RIDOH requires cleanings of business establishments at least once daily.

RIDOH recommends enhanced cleaning in settings with regular traffic or used by multiple groups at an increased frequency, in accordance with CDC guidelines, and ideally between each use of communal areas.

Increased cleaning standards may apply to specific industries dependent on the type of work performed. Sector-specific guidance can be found at <https://reopeningri.com/>.

### Protocols to be Established

- 🔧 Disinfection measures to be put in place and implemented (either) as part of the routine – or scheduled to disinfect workplace surfaces, chairs, tables, etc. – to protect employees.
- 🔧 Scheduled complete sanitization and disinfection of facilities employing approved protocol.
- 🔧 Deep-Cleaning and Disinfection will be automatically triggered when an active employee tests positive for COVID-19 by a medical doctor.
- 🔧 What is the 'baseline of clean' which will be upheld.

### How to Prepare Building and Workforce for Hygiene and Disinfection

- 🔧 Install additional sanitizing dispensers and guidelines (signage) for frequent cleaning on overly used surfaces and common areas.
- 🔧 Manage shift changes and stagger lunch breaks to allow time to thoroughly disinfect common areas.
- 🔧 Place signage and floor markings as required throughout the facilities to remind employees of proper preventative measures.



## WHO: Decontamination Frequency Recommendations and Accountability

**Decontamination Frequency Accountability Chart**

AREA	DESIGNATED RESPONSIBLE PARTY	DECONTAMINATION AGENT	CONTACT TIME	FREQUENCY
Desk / Office	Individual Employee	Appropriate diluted bleach solution or another agent from List N	List agent corresponding time according to List N	Twice a day, prior to lunch, and end of day
Work Area	Individual Employee			Prior to breaks and lunch. At end of day
Common Areas	Cleaning Crew			Before and after occupancy (i.e., meetings, breaks, lunch)
Isolation Area	Cleaning Crew			After each occupancy

### 1. Responsibility of the Employee

- a. To understand expectations, limitations and processes for decontamination.
- b. Exercise Sanitary Practices
  - i. Limit the direct touching of objects, equipment and surfaces in common areas.
  - ii. Wear gloves in public or common areas.
  - iii. Stagger handwashing to ensure 6 ft of social distancing is maintained during to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- c. Shared Equipment
  - i. When equipment is shared, such as rolling carts, copy machines, computers, etc., the operator should properly disinfect after use.
  - ii. Prior to shift changes, the employee working should properly disinfect the workstation and equipment.
  - iii. If a dolly or hand truck is used by delivery personnel within the building, ensure that it is disinfected immediately afterwards.



d. Practice Good Personal Hygiene:

- i. Self-clean your work area before break, lunch, and end of shift.
- ii. Wash hands multiple times per day with warm water and soap for (at least) 20-seconds.
- iii. Cover coughs, maintain social distancing, clean visited areas.
- iv. Where gloves are required per FDA regulations please continue to maintain current industry standards.
- v. Ensure proper industry/FDA regulations are being followed by all employees (not touching face, nose, mouth, hair, changing gloves when soiled, etc.) to help mitigate the spread of germs.

NOTE: Employees should hear frequently and consistently from management that these are important to keep yourself and others safe.

**2. Responsibility of Company:**

- a. Train employees on decontamination expectations, including frequency, methods and safety precautions.
  - i. Treat this as any other training, with standardized Job Instruction sheets for all approved decontamination process(es).
- b. Develop protocol for decontaminating machinery/equipment, common areas, offices and other occupied areas.

- c. Capture protocol in cleaning checklists maintained at each workstation or near critical machinery.
- d. Ensure that employees, customers, and visitors have ready access to soap and water and/or hand sanitizer at all times.
- e. Ensure adequate supply of approved decontamination materials.
- f. Provide employees with ready access to cleaning/disinfecting wipes and/or cleaning materials so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use by a different person. Disinfecting products approved by EPA are preferred. Any cleaning product is acceptable.
- g. Provide employees with time to wash hands often if sanitizer is not provided.
- h. Prevent the shaking of clothes and appropriate PPE to reduce the risk of contamination.
  - i. In accordance with manufacturer's recommendations wash using warm water, drying completely and potentially use of a disinfectant from EPA's List N.
  - ii. Special consideration shall be given for certain items (i.e. flame retardant or resistant clothing).
- i. Consider improving the engineering controls using the building ventilation system.



## WHERE: Decontamination of Hard Surfaces

The company or an external professional service should clean all Hard Surfaces including – but not limited to:

Doorknobs	Water Fountains	Light Switches
Machine Switches	Tables/Chairs	Desks
Sinks	Keyboards, etc.	Phones
Counter-Tops	Towel Dispensers	Faucets/Handles
Screens	Vending Machines	Common Area Objects
Forklift/Tuggers	Handrails	Machine Controls
Time Clocks	Turnstiles	Tools

*All other high touch items*

RIDOH recommends cleaning high-touch areas and surfaces more frequently, preferably every hour if there is high traffic. Examples: restrooms, registry areas and counters, doorknobs, light switches, elevator buttons and railings.



## HOW: Guidance for Disinfection of Hard, Nonporous Surfaces

### Recommended Disinfection Solutions

A list of approved disinfectants can be found on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website: [List N: Disinfectants for the use against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#).

Solutions of properly diluted, unexpired bleach can be used if appropriate for the surface.

Suggested bleach solutions:

- ✿ One-part household bleach to ten-parts water solution (10% bleach solution)
- ✿ (5) tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water

*Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. This could cause a deadly poisonous gas.*





### Safe and Effective Application Procedures

The solution **must be made daily** and left on surfaces a minimum of (5) minutes.

- ✿ Clean the area or item with soap and water or another cleaning product. Wait until the surface is completely dry before using disinfectant.
- ✿ Follow instructions on disinfectant labels for safe and effective use of the product including precautions you should take when applying the product.
- ✿ Allow proper ventilation during and after application.
- ✿ If available, wear disposable or reusable rubber gloves for tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.

The screenshot shows the EPA Pesticide Registration website. The main heading is 'List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2'. Below this, it states 'All products on this list meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.' There are sections for 'Finding a Product', 'Using Other Products', and 'Follow the Label'. A table at the bottom lists specific products and their active ingredients.

EPA Registration Number	Active Ingredient(s)	Product Name	Follow the disinfection directions and preparation for the following virus	Contact Time (in minutes)
1045-127	Phenolic	Loquat Phenolic Disinfectant	Adenovirus	10
923-19-2	Quaternary ammonium	Alcoholphen	Herpesvirus	10
16897-108	Sodium Hypochlorite	First Bleach 6%	Ethanolvirus	5
1045-127	Sodium	2.2% Sodium	Ethanolvirus	5

-  Additional PPE might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
-  Unless the business is a medical facility, all disposable cleaning materials should be put in a sealed plastic bag and disposed in the regular trash.
-  Washcloths and reusable PPE can be washed and reused.
-  Always wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after cleaning, handling materials, or removing gloves.

While cleaning, employees or professional cleaning service should wear:

- a. Respiratory Protection ([click to see OSHA guidance](#))
- b. Eye Protection such as safety glasses or face splash shields
- c. Disposable gloves made from latex, nitrile or vinyl
- d. Disposable gowns
- e. Specialized cleaning can be added and performed by company

## WHAT: Ventilation

Outdoor activities are preferred.

Open windows or doors when possible to improve ventilation in indoor spaces. Increased use of HVAC is not recommended if outdoor airflow cannot be introduced.



While the ventilation provided by being outside is ideal for dispersing COVID particles and reducing transmission risk, not all activities can be held outside at all times. Furthermore, uncontrolled/ unfiltered outdoor air can contain pollutants, allergens, and other irritants and can make controlling the temperature of a building difficult and costly.

If an activity must take place indoors, proper ventilation can reduce the risk of COVID transmission. Air sealing and filtration are also key aspects of ensuring healthy indoor air quality.

- HVAC Filters should be cleaned, disinfected, or replaced on schedule.
- The highest-rated filter a system can accommodate should be used.
- A professional, external cleaning company is recommended for Deep Cleaning of difficult-to-reach equipment and spaces, or when an active employee tests positive for COVID-19 by a medical doctor.
- Consult an HVAC or building performance expert to ensure your HVAC system incorporates outdoor airflow and is optimized and working effectively and efficiently.

An explanation of how COVID-19 spreads through the air, and how air circulation can reduce the spread, can be found at

<https://health.ri.gov/covid/indooraircirculation/index.php>.

The screenshot shows the Rhode Island Department of Health website. The main heading is "Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 By Circulating Air in Schools and Other Buildings". Below this, it explains "How COVID-19 Spreads Through the Air", noting that the virus spreads through aerosols. It compares "Droplet transmission" (coughs and sneezes) with "Airborne transmission" (tiny particles suspended in the air). A diagram illustrates that droplets are larger than 5 microns and fall quickly, while aerosols are smaller than 5 microns and stay in the air longer. The page also discusses "Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Air" by wearing masks and ensuring good air circulation. It defines Air Changes per Hour (ACH) and provides examples for a classroom. A diagram shows air circulation with fresh air entering, recirculation, and exhaust. The page concludes that ventilation with clean outdoor air is healthier and that recirculated air should be filtered with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) of 13 or higher, or a HEPA filter.

The Rhode Island DOH has published guidance regarding Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems during the pandemic:

<https://health.ri.gov/publications/guidance/HVAC-COVID-19.pdf>.

In addition, assistance and incentives may be available for energy-efficient HVAC systems and system optimization for homes and businesses. Contact the RI Department of Health to learn about the latest programs.



Learn more with tips from industry leaders, experts in this

**ON-DEMAND WEBINAR:**

*Cleaning Guidelines for Rhode Island Manufacturers*

<https://bit.ly/2H7EdpH>

**HOW To Establish Hygiene/Disinfection Protocols**

1. Lay in supplies

2. Assign responsibility and frequency

3. Train your team

**Decontamination Frequency Accountability Chart**

DESIGNATED RESPONSIBLE PARTY	DECONTAMINATION AGENT	CONTACT TIME	FREQUENCY
Individual Employee	Appropriate diluted bleach solution or another agent from List N	List agent corresponding time according to List N	Twice a day, prior to lunch, and end of day
Common Areas	Cleaning Crew		Prior to breaks and lunch, At end of day
Isolation Area	Cleaning Crew		Before and after occupancy (i.e., meetings, breaks, lunch) After each occupancy



# Masks and Face Covering

## WHY: Communicating with Employees about Face Covering

Several times during the COVID-19 pandemic, the State of Rhode Island has put mask mandates into place. Visit <https://governor.ri.gov/> to see the latest requirements.

Workers need to understand WHY face covering protocols have been put into place. They should hear frequently and consistently from management that protocols keep everyone safe. Workers will be reassured when they learn that the protocols benefit them.



### Communication Tips:

- 🔧 Place signage throughout the facilities to remind employees of preventative measures.
- 🔧 Reinforce and repeat messages about the WHY of new processes – information is empowering, repetition helps new habits take hold.
- 🔧 Communicate clearly the approved protocols for your workplace.
- 🔧 Let employees know who in management they can talk to without fear if they spot conditions that don't meet your standards.
- 🔧 Create graphics or worksheets that detail standard operating procedures. This will ensure the steps are taken consistently across shifts.

Before work begins, each employee shall be informed of the following:

- 🔧 How to protect oneself and others throughout the day
- 🔧 Protocol for an employee testing positive for COVID-19
- 🔧 Process for employees to escalate safety concerns quickly

## HOW: Mask Sources, Best Practices

Masks should fit snugly and comfortably **over nose, mouth and chin without any gaps.**

ReopeningRI.com features the latest on mask mandates, FAQs and tips for proper face mask use.

Establish and communicate consequences for employees who frequently misplace, forget or are seen not wearing masks properly (covering mouth AND nose).

**Masks do not replace other employer- or state-established requirements such as vaccinations or safe distancing. Masks do not replace the need for handwashing.**

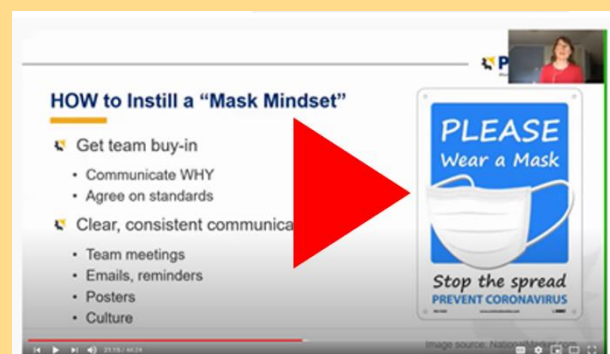


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Face Covering Tips & Resources for Manufacturers

<https://bit.ly/2UzaDwo>

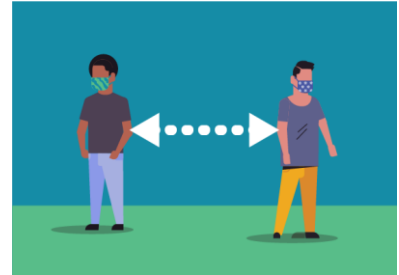


# Density and Social Distancing

## WHY: A Primary Way to Avoid Contracting Viruses

Self-Distancing, also known as Social Distancing, is one of the primary ways to avoid contracting a virus or contamination. We recognize that distancing is a unique challenge for manufacturing businesses.

All organizations should follow the general guidance from the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding gathering sizes and social distancing.



- ✦ Adhere to Gathering Size Restrictions when holding meetings, conferences, or other business gatherings.
- ✦ RIDOH has published the following requirements on gathering sizes: <https://health.ri.gov/covid/>.
- ✦ Gathering size guidance may change. Consult <https://www.reopeningri.com/> for the latest guidance.

## WHERE/WHEN of Social Distancing

Self-distancing guidelines from the CDC and other health organizations continue to recommend a minimum of 6-feet distance be maintained between employees, at all times, in all locations. Vaccination status and other protocols can have an impact on the recommended distances.

**Please see <https://covid.ri.gov/> for the latest guidance.**

## Communication Tips:

Employees should be encouraged to avoid (whether on the job or not):

- entering crowded areas,
- carpooling with others outside of your home,
- hugging,
- shaking hands,
- eating face-to-face,
- and similar activities that would put you and/or others in close proximity and increase the risk of contamination.

## HOW: Distancing/De-Densifying in the Workplace

Duties that require employees to work within safe distances of each other should be evaluated for potential health and wellness risks. This is to ensure protection for each employee.

Employers are encouraged to maintain consistent work crews and limit the number of other employees that each employee is exposed to in the workplace to the furthest extent possible.

The following ideas and best practices are suggested to help maintain proper self-distancing in the manufacturing workplace:



**Workstations:**

- Maintain required separation between yourself and the nearest co-worker at all times.
- Duties that require employees to work closely with each other or if workstations do not allow 6-feet of separation, consider:
  - Use of barriers – plexiglass, cardboard, plywood or other similar materials.
  - Minimizing time in violation of social distancing.
  - Consider Engineering Controls prior to work beginning, including the option of eliminating duties (if practical/possible), until the pandemic has subsided.
  - Redesigning jobs to allow duties to be completed by one person, introducing tools to assist with jobs that allow safe distance or configuring “work cells” allowing work to be completed while maintaining the proper distance. See *following section on work cells*.

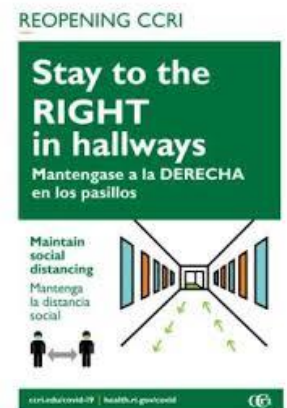
NOTE: Polaris MEP engineers can support redesigning of workstations and/or facility layout. There will be financial support available to support this work if necessary.

- If work cannot be redesigned then employees must be provided with the proper PPE that would be deemed essential to protect health of the employee.
- Immediately following duties that require work of close proximity, all employees shall properly remove PPE without touching the outside of said PPE. Then wash hands & face thoroughly for a minimum 20-seconds with soap and water.
  - NOTE: Hand Sanitizer with a 60% alcohol solution is allowable for personal hygiene; a 70% solution is needed for surfaces, equipment and tools.

- Avoid sharing equipment and tools when possible.
- Limit interaction with outside personnel – including those making deliveries (i.e. truck drivers, parcel delivery, post office) – or other individuals coming onsite. Encourage drivers to place items down and back away.

### Offices:

- Remain isolated when possible.
- Ensure that desks are not facing each other unless guarded by a cubicle wall of similar barriers.
- During training and meetings, maintain safe distances by all employees.
- Designate one-way walking paths including offices, warehouses, storage areas or similar where traffic is common.



### Common Areas – Breakrooms, Lunch Areas, Cafeterias:

- Consider closing common areas if possible. If not, instruct employees to avoid using and eating in these areas when possible.
- Avoid in-person office celebrations.
- Limit the number of people allowed in common areas at one time based on total square footage and six-foot social distancing.
- Post signs in the common area reminding employees about the three Ws:
  - **W**ear a face mask that's at least two layers thick and fits snugly but comfortably over your nose, mouth, and chin without any gaps.
  - **W**ash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or carry and use hand sanitizer that's at least 60% alcohol.
  - **W**atch your distance from others.



- Rearrange furniture, remove furniture, and/or mark spaces in common areas to ensure that people stay at least six feet apart from each other.
- Encourage employees to eat meals or take breaks outdoors or in their work spaces whenever possible and as weather permits.
- Increase air flow in common areas by opening windows and doors whenever possible.
- Discourage employees from sharing items and encourage them to limit what they touch.
  - Instruct employees not to share dishes, cups, or eating utensils.
  - Instruct employees to handle used, non-disposable food service items with gloves and to wash them with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
  - Provide recyclable plates, utensils, etc.
  - Provide disposable gloves for employee use.
  - Provide employees with supplies for cleaning shared cooking utensils, such as knives, ladles, and spatulas, and shared appliances, such as stoves, microwaves, coffee machines, and refrigerators.
  - Instruct employees to wash their hands after handling used food service items.
  - Help employees be aware of what they touch, and consider how they can reduce touch by using pens, badges or other tools for pressing buttons, etc.



- Clean common areas multiple times each day.
  - Instruct employees to clean common spaces once they are finished, and provide cleaning materials.
  - Post a cleaning schedule for all to see and follow.
- Find creative ways to reduce the number of people employees come into contact with, such as:
  - If possible, designate 'in' and 'out' doors to commons areas to control the flow of people.
  - Stagger arrival, lunch, and break times to reduce bottlenecks and the number of people using each common area at the same time.
  - When possible, create consistent pods or stable groups of employees that work together in shifts (see below).







### Restrooms:

- 🔧 Social distancing guidelines must be maintained in restrooms, including waiting in lines.
- 🔧 Limit the number of occupants.
- 🔧 All employees must properly disinfect hands when finished.
- 🔧 Restrooms should stay sanitary – dispose of paper products properly and completely flush toilets.
- 🔧 If possible, restroom doors shall remain open to avoid repeated contact by employees.
- 🔧 If possible, establish spacing and pathways that prevent close proximity of employees.





### **Shift Changes:**

-  Do not congregate in parking lots or other areas prior to or after shifts.
-  Maintain 6-feet of distance while entering or exiting facility.
-  If possible, One-Way entry and exits should be established.
-  If possible, Entry & Exit Doors should remain open during Shift Changes.
-  Avoid touching the Time Clock bare-handed, use gloves or a payroll app.
-  When shared items are at shift changes, employees must wash hands and employers should disinfect the items frequently.

## HOW: Manufacturing Work Cells => COVID-19 Safety Zones:

### **What Is A Work Cell?**

A work cell is an arrangement of resources in a manufacturing environment to improve the quality, speed and cost of the process.

### **Why Should Manufacturers Consider Converting To Work Cells?**

Work cells allow productivity to continue by keeping employees at a safe distance from each other. Output can also be easily adjusted to fit changing customer demand by improving process flow and eliminating waste.

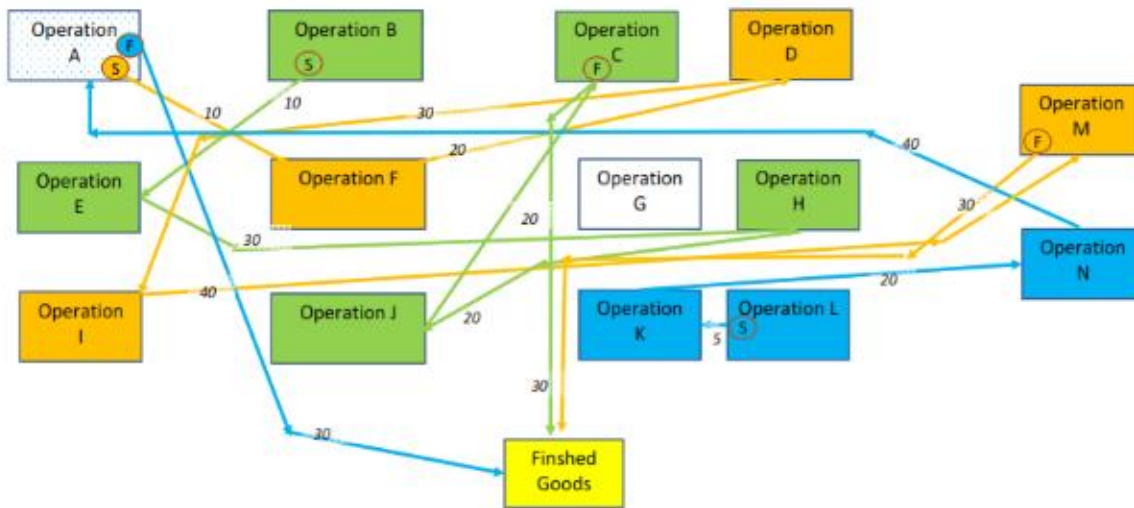
Advantages of properly implemented work cells are reductions in:

- ✚ work in progress,
- ✚ material handling cost,
- ✚ material flow distance, and
- ✚ production lead time.
- ✚ Communication between operators
- ✚ Catching quality issues earlier

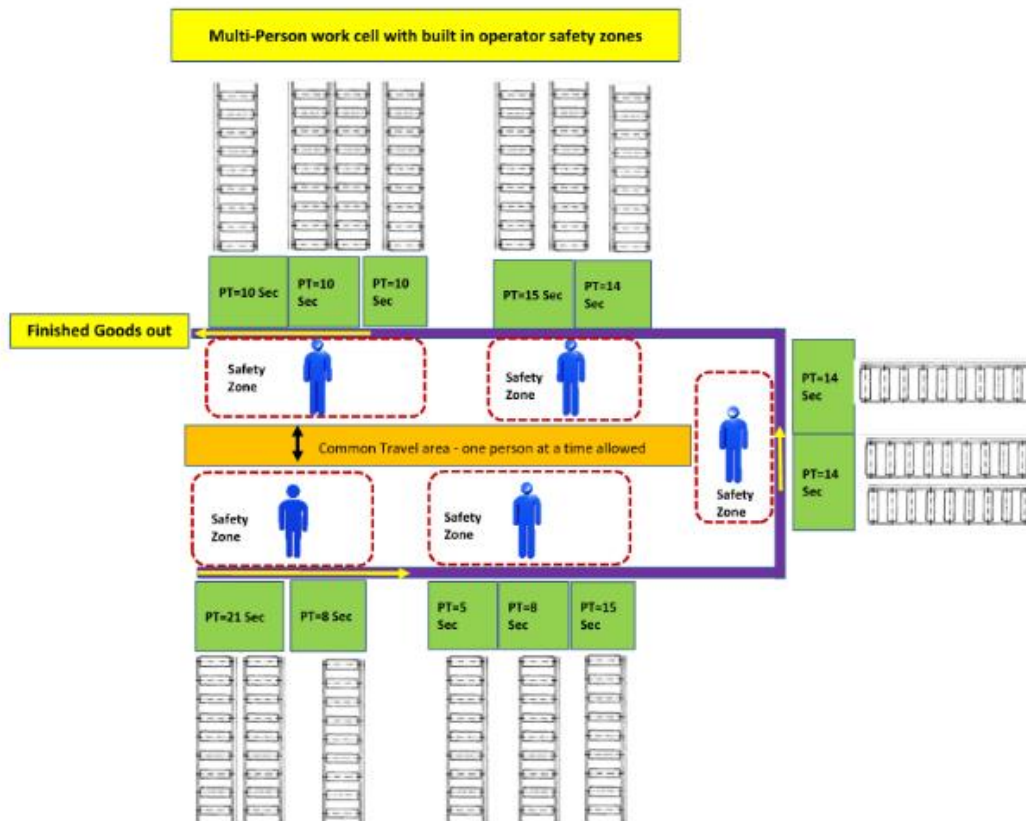
Polaris MEP Project Managers are on hand ready to assist in transforming manufacturing work stations to socially-distanced work cells. Read more at <https://polarismep.org/blog/manufacturing-work-cells-for-covid-19-distancing-and-productivity/>.

## Work Cell Visualizations

BEFORE



AFTER



## HOW: Signage and Floor Markings

Signage is an inexpensive component that can be used to help convey important information about preventative measures.

Signage should be posted throughout the facility, including

- ✦ Outside and inside exterior doors
- ✦ At the entrances to cafeterias and breakrooms
- ✦ Outside and inside restrooms
- ✦ Around handwashing stations / sanitizers
- ✦ Throughout the office

Rhode Island's National Marker Company is a local resource for signs, floor tape and more: <https://nationalmarker.com/>.

*(Signage examples from National Marker. Please talk to Polaris MEP if you would like help identifying and sourcing signs specific to your needs.)*



## HOW: Creating Stable Employee Groups

Stable groups are defined as groups of employees who work together consistently. Each employee has a limited number of contacts, which means fewer employees who must quarantine or isolate if a coworker becomes ill.

Should someone become ill, stable groups simplifies tracking of employees' contacts, and results in fewer workspace and equipment areas that must be shut down and/or cleaned.

Create and maintain stable groups of employees – groups can be based on shifts, teams of employees that work closely together, and/or co-location in the workplace

- 👤 Groupings should take into consideration workers who interact with each other at and outside of work (e.g. commute together, live together, are on same team, socialize outside of work often, etc.)
- 👤 Members must stay consistent
- 👤 Individuals should not interact with members of other groups as this increases the number of potential direct contacts and possible exposures

**Members of stable groups should still maintain safe distance from each other, wear masks and wash hands frequently.**

## HOW: Carpooling

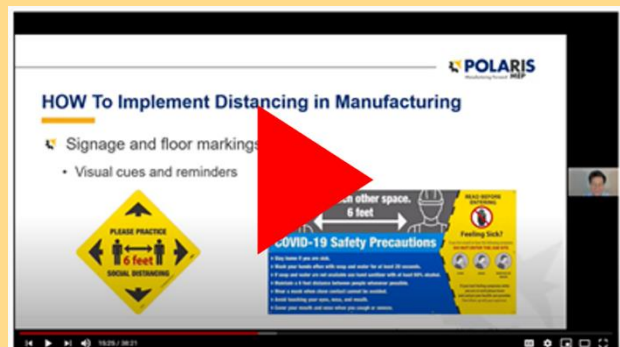
- 👤 Where possible, do not allow for carpooling that would disrupt established stable groups. Keep the carpooling group consistent and discourage employees from catching rides with different coworkers on different days.
- 👤 Wear masks during the commute and open windows if possible.
  - One Rhode Island manufacturer recommends issuing employees a second set of masks that they put on after leaving the workspace and before entering the vehicle.
  - Masks used when at work are put into sealed plastic bags for washing at home that evening.
- 👤 Never carpool when feeling ill, or when exhibiting symptoms representative of COVID-19.
- 👤 Wipe down surfaces that are often touched when carpooling (i.e. radio buttons, door handle, seat belt etc.).

Learn more with tips from industry leaders, experts in this

### **ON-DEMAND WEBINAR:**

*Social Distancing Solutions for Manufacturers*

<https://bit.ly/3nv2eGJ>



# Control Measures: Monitoring, Detection and Response

## WHY: Communicating with Employees about Monitoring and Response

Adopt or maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home when needed because they are sick or to take care of a sick family member.

Have a COVID-19 sick leave policy. Encourage employees not to come to work if they feel ill or a close connection has COVID-19 symptoms.

- The RI Department of Labor & Training stands ready to assist with questions about Paid Sick and Safe Leave or other programs and resources available to help employees stay home if sick.  
<https://dlt.ri.gov/covid19/>
- RIDOH suggests sharing information with employees about who to contact for compensation if impacted by COVID-19. Handouts are available [in English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Emphasize that the protocols benefit workers and are a sign of your respect and commitment to the health of the team. Workers need to understand WHY measures have been put into place, or they will not faithfully implement new procedures.

### Communication Tips:

- 🔧 Reinforce and repeat messages about the WHY of new processes – information is empowering, repetition helps new habits take hold.
- 🔧 Let employees know who in management they can talk to without fear if they spot conditions that don't meet your standards.
- 🔧 Create graphics or worksheets that detail standard operating procedures. This will ensure the steps are taken consistently across shifts.



Before work begins, each employee shall be informed of the following:

- 🔧 How to self-screen
- 🔧 How to protect oneself on a daily basis
- 🔧 Protocol for an employee testing positive for COVID-19

## WHAT: Monitoring & Detection

One of the key difficulties about COVID-19 is the variable incubation period.

This is the period between initial infection and the onset of visible symptoms. One can be harboring the virus inside his/her body and not know it. During this time it is possible to spread the virus to others. (See [\*CDC – Protecting Yourself and Others\*](#)).

Should self-distancing fail to prevent the spread of the virus, it is also important that employees be monitored/observed/screened for the display of symptoms.

This can include several aspects:

- 🔧 Self-Screening (see Controlling Plant Access, above)
- 🔧 Observation of symptoms by co-workers
- 🔧 Monitoring of symptoms (including fever) by employer

### **Observation of Symptoms at Work:**

Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors in an Isolation Area. Then they must be sent home immediately.



If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The employer should instruct fellow employees about how to proceed based on the CDC Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure.

**Monitoring by Employer:**

Employers have the authority to set up a monitoring station at the facility's entrance. (CDC – Employers' Guidance).

If a monitoring station is implemented, please follow guidelines from Screening Section above.

Taco Comfort Solutions shared a playbook that includes more recommendations for Isolation Protocols and Coordinator Training:  
<https://rimanufacturers.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Safe-Work-Playbook.pdf>

## HOW: Isolation Procedures for Suspected Infection

### 1. Identification & Isolation:

- a. Identification & isolation of potentially infected individuals is a critical first step in protecting employees, visitors and others.
- b. Immediately isolate individuals suspected of having the COVID-19 virus. This should be an Isolation Area away from others and able to have a closed door.
- c. Take steps to limit the spread of the individual's respiratory secretions by providing a face mask or other facial covering. A surgical mask is a 'Best Practice' if available.
- d. Restrict the number of individuals entering the isolation area.
- e. Protect employees in Close Contact\* with sick individuals by using additional engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices and PPE.

\* CDC defines Close Contact as being within 6-feet of an infected person while not wearing the proper PPE. Also, Close Contact also includes direct contact within infectious secretions while not wearing the proper PPE.

Close Contact does not generally include brief interactions like walking past a person.

### 2. Following Isolation:

- a. After isolation, the next steps depend on the workplace. For example – in most workplaces:
  - i. Isolated individuals should leave the worksite as soon as possible



- ii. Depending on the severity of their illness, the other employees have choices:
  1. May be able to return home.
  2. May choose to seek medical care on his/her own.
- b. Provide the employee with written guidelines such as <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- c. After the employee is sent home,
  - i. clean and disinfect the Isolation Area thoroughly
  - ii. clean and disinfect all surfaces in their workspace

Any business that experiences a COVID-19 case must cooperate closely with RIDOH to help mitigate the public health impact of the event and guide exposed individual to appropriate resources. (Contact Tracing)



Please visit <https://covid.ri.gov/public/workplaces> for the latest guidance for businesses who

- 🦋 need to report a positive case to RIDOH
- 🦋 have been notified of confirmed cases of COVID-19
- 🦋 want to confirm when/how an employee can return to work after COVID-19

## HOW: Alerting RIDOH to COVID-19 Positive Individuals

Per a May 7 letter from RIDOH,

“To help RIDOH better assist you in preventing rapid spread of disease and illness in your business and in the community, please complete [this survey](#) if you have had any COVID-19-positive individuals, or any individuals with symptoms of this illness, within the last two weeks. In addition, continue to submit new positives and illnesses daily until you have no new illnesses for two weeks. If additional cases later develop, please submit [this survey form](#) to report new cases/illnesses ...

If you need guidance on implementing the policies above, please reach out to RIDOH.

### Survey Link For Reporting Positive Individuals

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/83232059c83d49eea6cf5670f5becc9a>