

COVID-19 MANUFACTURING WORKPLACE READINESS

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

MAY 6, 2020

Version1



MANUFACTURERS
ASSOCIATION



NOTE: This “playbook” is interactive. At any time, you can click on the headers at the top of any page to jump to the topic that is most important to you. The table of contents is also linked within the document. Click and jump to your topic of choice.

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Note to Rhode Island Manufacturers

To our fellow Manufacturing Leaders,

In an effort to provide extended support, Polaris MEP and the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association (RIMA) have developed this “playbook” for manufacturers to help employees resume full-time work, restart 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.

As state and national situations change, and requirements are adjusted, we will update and refine this playbook.

We’d also like to continue to update it with best practices from RI’s manufacturers. Please share your tips and stories by emailing info@polarismep.org.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to your workers, our fellow Rhode Island citizens, and our industry.

Dave Chenevert
Executive Director, RIMA

&

Christian Cowan
Center Director, Polaris MEP

RIMA Pledge

Ensuring the Safety and Integrity of the Rhode Island Manufacturers Supply Chain

In March 2020, the Rhode Island Manufacturers Association introduced a Manufacturer's Pledge to Coronavirus Workplace Safety.

More than **XXX** RI companies have signed the pledge to date, **X%** of our state's manufacturing industry.

Each pledged, in this critical time of addressing the Coronavirus, to follow and improve upon the best practices intended to promote employee and community safety at our factories. Participating manufacturers pledge to the fullest extent possible to:

- Implement and enforce the highest standards of workplace safety that meet or exceed CDC and OSHA recommendations for virus containment.
- Protect employees, their families and our communities
- Secure critical supply chains and employment
- Agree to adhere to all applicable guidelines established by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO)
- Agree to not operate as *business as usual* and make the following key structural changes:
 - Control site traffic
 - Enhance hygiene and handwashing protocols
 - Engender social distancing and reduce density per current directives (6 ft Distance)
 - Deploy emergency response and quarantine procedures
 - Communicate to all stakeholders

If your company has not yet signed the pledge, please consider doing so.

Download: <https://bit.ly/RIMAPledge>








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

About Polaris MEP

The Polaris MEP is *YOUR* state-based Manufacturing Extension Partnership, one of 51 US centers. A non-profit, we support the competitiveness and growth of Rhode Island's manufacturers through:

-  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

Disclaimer – Legal Statement

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

There is no *one size fits all* scenario. These are recommendations, 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. Look for links at <https://polarismep.org/ri-manufacturing-coronavirus/>.

Workplace Readiness Essentials

Worker Preparation Checklist

- Plans, new processes clearly communicated
- Detailed plan of who will return and when developed
- Before workers return* – Training provided (in-person, written and remote) of protocols for masks and self-distancing
- Before workers return* – Workers advised on self-screening policies
- Before workers return* – Training provided (in-person, written and remote) of cleaning protocols
- Before workers return* – Protocols reviewed related to employee attendance, Isolation Response, self-quarantining, and returning to work
- Signage, checklists posted to reinforce new protocols



Site Access Checklist

- Protocols established for safety and health checks, building reception, shipping/receiving, elevators, visitor policies
- 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
- Touchscreens disabled
- 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

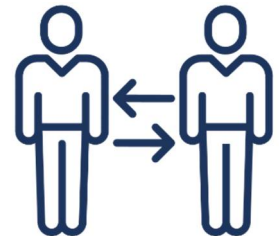
Cleaning and Hygiene Checklist

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices maintained
- Disinfectants supplied near workstations and throughout the plant
- Food/beverages removed – pre-packaged items only, “self- service” 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, remote controls, etc. removed
- Designated storage areas for personal items
- Designated Isolation Area for workers identifying with symptoms
- 10% chlorine bleach solution (sodium hypochlorite solution) made daily, used when appropriate



Masks, PPE and Distancing Checklist

- Masks secured and distributed to workers
- PPE secured and distributed to workers as needed
- Plan to support 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 6-foot distance
- Density reduced through staggered arrival / departure times
- In person meetings limited
- Behavior monitored and reinforced



Objectives

This playbook was created with two objectives for RI's manufacturing businesses:

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.

During the 'Recovery & Return to Work' period, focus on:

- 🔧 sanitation of the facility and equipment,
- 🔧 monitoring employees, and
- 🔧 other essential duties described throughout this plan.

To properly execute this plan, it is in the best interest of the company to establish a COVID-19 response team with authority to make decisions in the best interest of workers and the company. Response team duties will 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:



Preparing the Workforce for Return

Before returning to full workforce on site, put a contingency plan into place, 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 newly promulgated 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.
<http://www.dlt.state.ri.us/pdfs/COVID-19%20Workplace%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>
- Plan 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 these symptoms if they can't 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.

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.

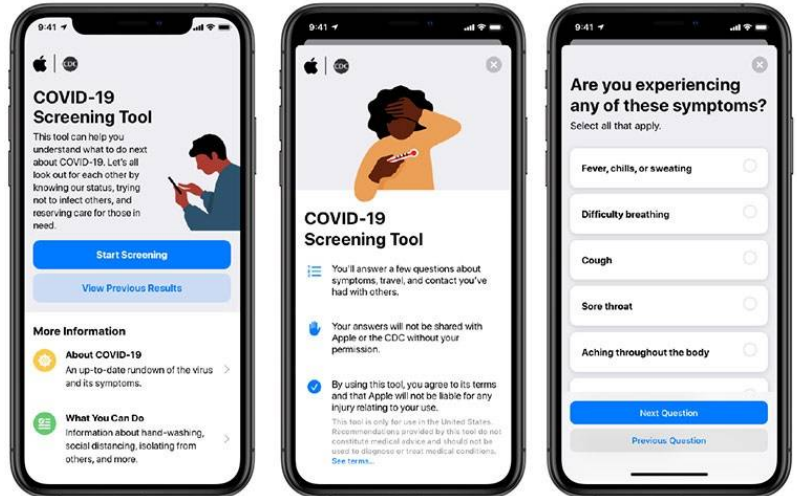
Add new site access procedures to your emergency response plan. (An emergency response and preparedness plan is required for ISO certification and is generally a smart practice for any manufacturer.)



HOW: 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.

- 🔦 Screen people outside the facility if possible, before someone enters your workspace. Phone or online surveys can streamline screening.
- 🔦 If screening occurs on site, ask all screening questions verbally, observing 6-foot 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 CDC's "Guidance for Business Plan & Response" suggests the screening should consist of the following questions:

- Do you have a temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit or greater?
- Do you have a cough? A scratchy or sore throat?
- Are you experiencing shortness of breath?
- Are you having difficulty breathing?
- Are you experiencing unusual fatigue?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'YES", employees are requested to stay at home until *ALL THREE of the following are true*:

- You have been fever free for (at least) 72-hours (3 full days) without taking medication such as acetaminophen or aspirin to reduce fever.
- Other symptoms (cough or shortness of breath) are gone.
- It has been (at least) 7-days since your symptoms first appeared, or you have tested negative for COVID-19 and applied protocols.

A Rhode Island manufacturer uses a larger set of questions which they modify as guidance from CDC or RIDOH is updated:

1. Have you lost your sense of taste or smell?
2. Have you been to a gathering of more than 5 people (other than work, and/or family members living in your home)?
3. Do you have a temperature?
4. What is your current temperature? (if greater than or equal to current RIDOH recommendation, this is considered a fail)
5. Have you been or have been feeling sick in the last 2 weeks?
6. Do you have any symptoms related to coronavirus- shortness of breath, fever, a bothersome dry cough, chills and body aches, sudden confusion, digestive issues, loss of smell and taste, fatigue, headache, sore throat congestion?
7. RI Employees MUST STAY IN RI and cannot go outside the State line, have you traveled outside RI?
8. CT/MA Employees: Other than coming to Meridian and then back home, have you traveled outside CT/MA?
9. If yes, where and when? (this is all one question that they answer based on residency)
10. Have you been in contact with anyone currently being tested for coronavirus, or with a presumptive/confirmed positive test for coronavirus?
11. Have you traveled by plane within the last 2 weeks?
12. Have you traveled to any high-risk areas within the last 30 days- NYC/Boston/Europe/Asia?

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

Temperature Monitoring

According to Dr. James McDonald of RIDOH, temperatures are not the best indicator of COVID-19 coronavirus.

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

Hygiene & Disinfection Protocols

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:

- ✦ Maintain records that include documentation of date, time, location, and procedures for bathroom cleaning activities; trainings of employees; and sick leave policies.
- ✦ 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.
- ✦ Make it available to all employees
- ✦ Ensure employees are aware of their role in implementing relevant procedures and protocols.

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.

Consider having your workforce sign the RIMA Pledge along with leadership. Workers will be reassured with knowing that a commitment to hygiene and disinfection 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 at the end of 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 message 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: Length of Time COVID-19 Lasts on Surfaces

If a facility has been vacant for over 7 days, the need for a Deep-Clean is minimized. The longest the COVID-19 virus can live on a hard or soft surface is 5 days.

The following chart illustrates how long the virus can live, depending on the surface.

HOW LONG COVID-19 LIVES ON SURFACES

2-8 Hours	Soda Cans	ALUMINUM Ladder	Computer Parts
	Coins	COPPER Plumbing Parts	Wires
1 Day	Boxes	CARDBOARD Paper Towel Rolls	Toilet Paper Rolls
2-3 Days	Elevator Buttons	PLASTICS Hard Hats	Safety glasses
	Water Bottles	STAINLESS STEEL Refridgerators	Tools
4 Days	Office Furniture	WOOD Doors	Pencils
Up to 5 Days	Windows	GLASS Mirrors	Phone Screens
	Magazines	PAPER Copy Paper	Notebooks
5 Days	Doorknobs	METAL Tools	Sinks
	Mugs	CERAMICS Dishes	Pottery

SOURCE: <https://www.webmd.com/lung/how-long-covid-19-lives-on-surfaces>

WHAT: Establish Protocols, Prepare

RIDOH requires cleanings 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.

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, limitation and processes for the responsibilities 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 such as the cafeteria.
 - 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 powered industrial trucks, ladders, rolling carts, copy machines, computers, etc. – the operator is required to properly disinfect after use.
 - ii. Prior to shift changes, the employee working is required to properly disinfect the workstation and equipment.
 - iii. If a dolly or hand truck is used by delivery personnel within the facility, 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 Good Manufacturing Practices.
 - v. Ensure proper Good Manufacturing Practices 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: Workers 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: Cleaning Hard Surfaces

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

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



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 \(COVID-19\)](#).

Alcohol Solutions must contain at least 70% alcohol. Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.

Suggested bleach solutions:

- 🔥 One-part household bleach to ten-parts water solution (10% bleach solution)
- 🔥 (5) tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water
- 🔥 1/3 cup of household bleach per gallon of water
- 🔥 (4) teaspoons of household bleach per quart 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 a surface to clean of 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, there is a search bar and a table of disinfectants. The table has columns for EPA Registration Number, Active Ingredient(s), Product Name, Follow the disinfection directions and preparation for the following virus, and Contact Time (in minutes).

EPA Registration Number	Active Ingredient(s)	Product Name	Follow the disinfection directions and preparation for the following virus	Contact Time (in minutes)
1043-117	Phenolic	Quat® Plus Phenolic Disinfectant	Adenovirus	10
923-16-2	Quaternary ammonium	atmosphere	Rotavirus	10
1085-108	Sodium Hypochlorite	Household Bleach 6%	Rhinovirus	5
	Sodium	2.2% Sodium		

- ✦ 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

Additional Cleaning Guidance

HVAC Filters should be cleaned, disinfected, or replaced on schedule.

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.

Masks and Face Covering

WHY: Communicating with Employees about Face Covering

Workers need to understand WHY face covering protocols have been put into place.

Workers should hear frequently and consistently from management that these are important to keep yourself and others safe. Workers will be reassured when they learn that the protocols benefit them.



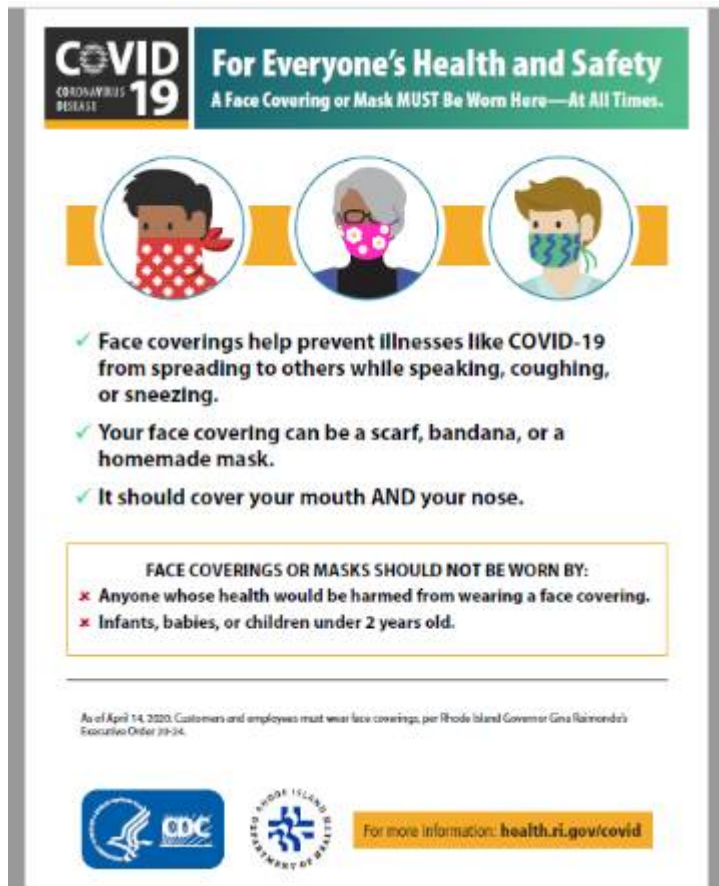
Communication Tips:

- 🔧 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

WHAT the RI Governor's Executive Order on Masks Requires



All employees of customer-facing businesses, office-based businesses and nonprofits, construction businesses, and manufacturers must wear cloth face coverings while at work, beginning on April 18. Either a cloth mask or surgical face mask is acceptable. Respirators and N95 masks should be reserved for designated healthcare workers.

All of these businesses must provide face coverings for their employees. Face coverings can include scarves, bandanas and other homemade and non-factory-made masks.

Source: <https://commerceri.com/masks/>, April 30, 2020

Such protective coverings are not required for:

- 🔧 children under ten (10) years of age; or
- 🔧 anyone for whom use of such protective covering would be damaging to his or her health; or
- 🔧 when a face covering would inhibit an activity of daily living (e.g. eating).

HOW: Mask Sources, Best Practices

Non-medical cloth and paper masks can be sourced and purchased through <https://masksri.com/>.



DOH Guidance on reusing or cleaning masks:

<https://health.ri.gov/publications/guidance/conserving-ppe.pdf>

For non-medical settings, the DOH is recommending cloth masks designed for re-use, if stored in a paper bag after usage, can be laundered as long as the masks maintain their integrity.

When distributing masks, create a log of which employees were given face coverings. This will be a reference should masks be forgotten or lost. Establish and communicate consequences for employees who frequently misplace, forget or are seen not wearing masks.

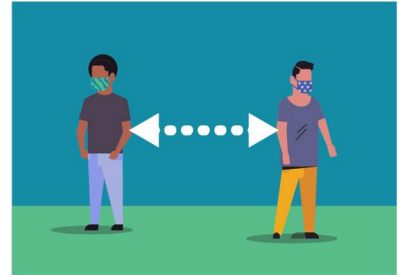
Masks do not replace the requirement for social distancing. They also do not replace the need for handwashing.

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 for each phase of the state's re-opening. Consult as described here: <https://www.reopeningri.com/> for the latest guidance.

WHERE/WHEN of Social Distancing

Karl Wadensten of Vibco shares his mantra: *Shelter at home, Shelter in your workcell.*

It is imperative that employees maintain proper self-distancing as recommended by the CDC and other health organizations. **This means that a minimum of 6-feet must be maintained between employees, at all times, in all locations.**

This procedure should be continued even when workers are wearing masks.

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.

The CDC has published the following social distancing guidance:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

HOW: Distancing/De-Densifying in the Workplace

Duties that require employees to work within 6-feet 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:

1. Maintain 6-feet of separation between yourself and the nearest co-worker at all times.
2. Duties that require employees to work within 6-feet of each other or if workstations do not allow 6-feet of separation, require the following:
 - a. Use of barriers – plexiglass, cardboard, plywood or other similar materials.
 - b. Engineering Controls should be considered prior to work beginning, including the option of eliminating duties (if practical/possible), until the outbreak has subsided.
 - c. Redesigning jobs to allow duties to be completed by one person, introducing tools to assist with jobs that allow 6-feet of 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.

3. 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.
4. 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.
 - a. NOTE: Hand Sanitizer with a 60% alcohol solution is allowable for personal hygiene; a 70% solution is needed for surfaces, equipment and tools.
5. Avoid sharing equipment & tools – when possible.
6. Avoid coming within 6-feet of outside personnel – including those making deliveries (i.e. truck drivers, parcel delivery, post office) – or other individuals coming onsite. Allow the driver to place items down and back away.

Offices, Public Spaces:

- ✦ 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 a minimum of 6-feet by all employees.
- ✦ Designate one-way walking paths including offices, warehouses, storage areas or similar where traffic is common and other safety protocols will not be impacted.
- ✦ Limit use of elevators; direct employees to stairs and consider how to mark for “one-way” traffic.



Breakrooms, Lunch Areas, Cafeterias:

- ✦ Encourage employees to maintain proper self-distancing.
- ✦ Employees shall not sit directly next to or across from one another.
- ✦ Minimize touching objects such as vending machines, coolers, refrigerators and other commonly shared items. When items are touched, employee must wash hands.
- ✦ Avoid touching faces.
- ✦ Prior to exiting the shared room, properly disinfect all items encountered.
- ✦ When possible, use separate doors to enter and exit to avoid close proximity with others.
- ✦ Encourage employees to bring their own lunch so no more communal sharing- (such as hot buffet/ cafeteria lunch program) etc.
- ✦ Discourage drop- off food deliveries to maintain social distancing and spread of COVID-19.
- ✦ The use of disposables such as plates, cups and utensils are deemed a ‘Best Practice.’
- ✦ Prepackage items. Self-Service should not be allowed at this time.

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, restroom require pathways that avoid 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.

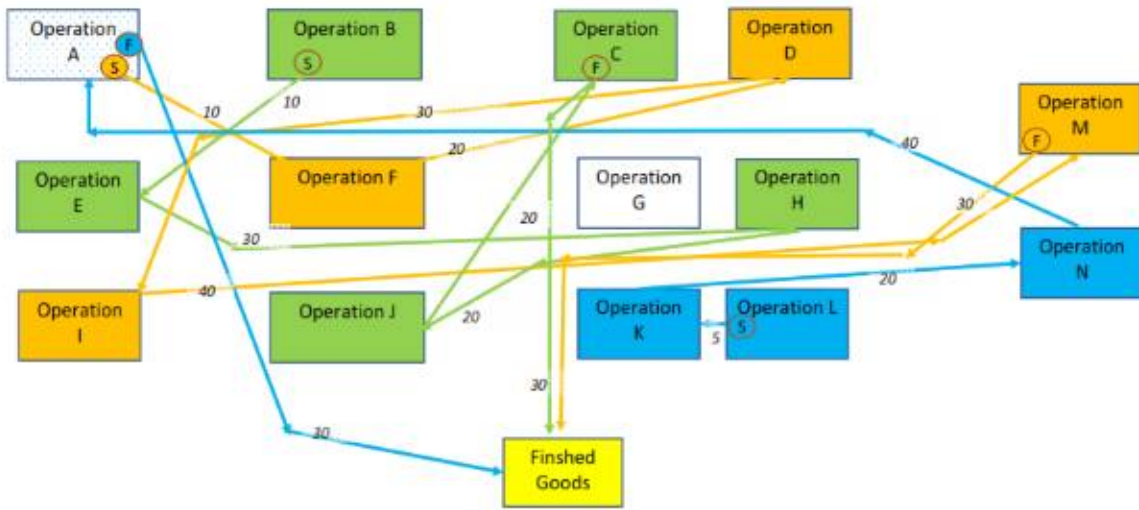
Advantages of properly implemented work cells are reductions in:

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

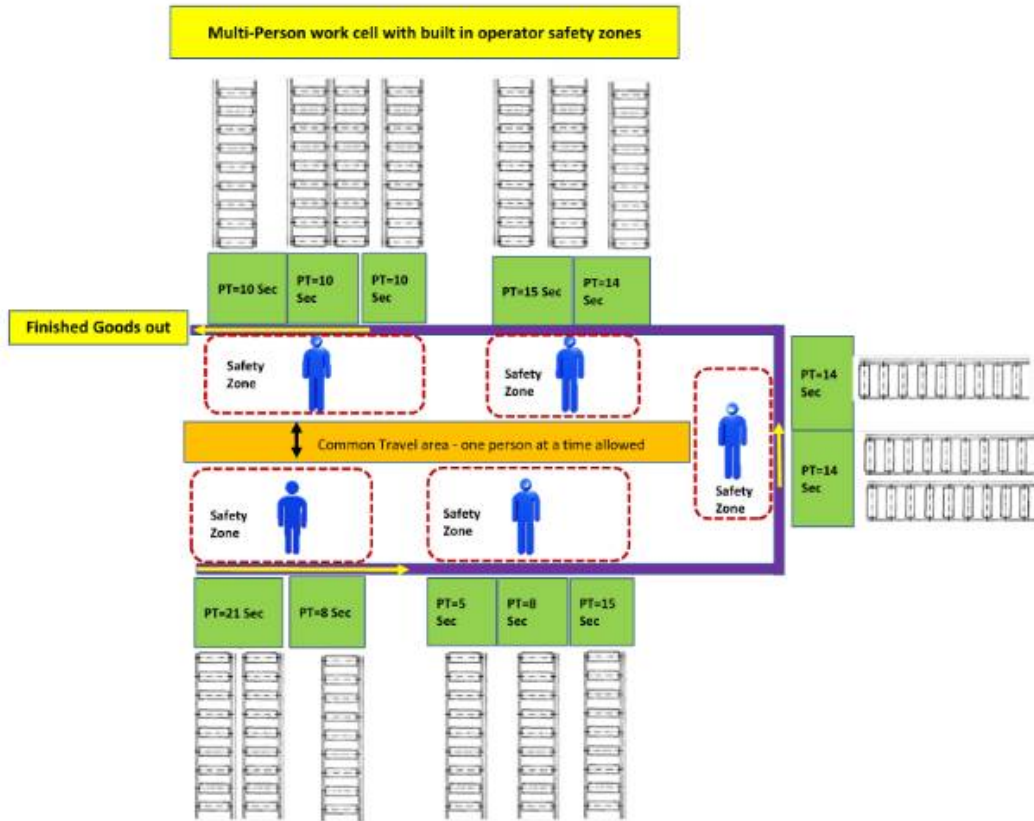
Polaris MEP Project Managers are on hand ready to assist in transforming manufacturing work stations to socially-distanced work cells. Read more at <https://polarismep.org/blog/manufacturing-work-cells-for-covid-19-distancing-and-productivity/>.

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.)



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. 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 workers stay home if sick.

(<http://www.dlt.state.ri.us/pdfs/COVID-19%20Workplace%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>)

On the job, emphasize that the protocols benefit them and are not punitive but a sign of your respect and commitment to the health of the team. Workers need to understand WHY control measures have been put into place, or they will not faithfully implement new procedures.

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 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 long 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

1. 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.

2. 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 consider the following:

- a. Employing a health screening team that will monitor symptoms of individuals entering the property and/or facility.
- b. Close alternative entrances to ensure all employees pass through the monitoring system.
- c. Use no-touch thermometers to evaluate employee's body temperature.
- d. If an employee exhibits a fever upon entrance, he/she should be sent home to self-quarantine or pursue medical attention. Provide written guidelines such as <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>.

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: Procedures for Suspected Infection

1. Identification & Isolation:

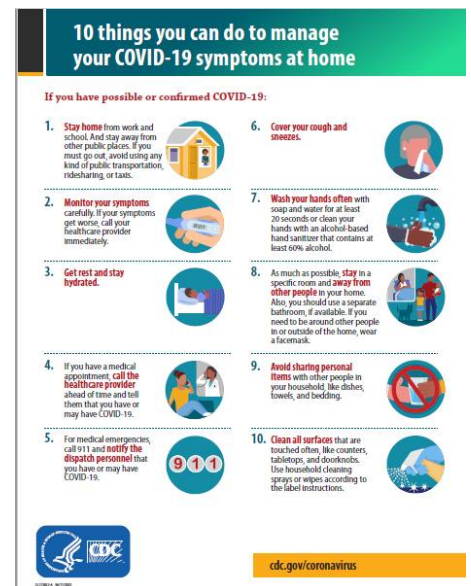
- a. Identification & isolation of potentially infected individuals is a critical first step in protecting workers, visitors and others.
- b. Immediately isolate individuals suspected of having the COVID-19 virus. This should be an Isolation Area away from others and able to have a closed door.
- c. 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
 - iii. compile information on persons who had contact with the ill employee during the time the employee had symptoms and 2 days prior to symptoms should be compiled. (Contact Tracing)



HOW: Contact Tracing for Suspected/Confirmed Infection

The CDC advises that Contact Tracing is a key strategy for preventing further spread of COVID-19.

- ✦ In contact tracing, public health staff work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the timeframe while they may have been infectious.
- ✦ Public health staff then warn these exposed individuals (contacts) of their potential exposure as rapidly and sensitively as possible.
- ✦ To protect patient privacy, contacts are only informed that they may have been exposed to a patient with the infection. They are not told the identity of the patient who may have exposed them.
- ✦ Contacts are provided with education, information, and support to understand their risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, monitor themselves for illness, and the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they themselves do not feel ill.
- ✦ Contacts are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distance from others (at least 6 feet) until 14 days after their last exposure, in case they also become ill. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice daily and watching for cough or shortness of breath. To the extent possible, public health staff should check in with contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms. Contacts who develop symptoms should promptly isolate themselves and notify public health staff. They should be promptly evaluated for infection and for the need for medical care.

If asked, manufacturers can support the contact tracing work done by DOH by working with the employee to compile a log of contacts at the workplace.

Visit the CDC website for information about contact tracing:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/principles-contact-tracing-booklet.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/digital-contact-tracing.pdf>

HOW: Employees' Return to Work After Infection

The following are the [RIDOH guidelines](#) on ending home isolation.

Any employees sent home may not return to the workplace until her or she provides competent evidence to the employer demonstrating that:

- ✦ after being sent home he or she tested negative for COVID-19; or
- ✦ after being sent home he or she tested positive for COVID-19 but he or she has since been proven to be COVID-19 negative; or
- ✦ provides a doctor's note showing he or she is not contagious; or
- ✦ has been COVID-19 symptom free, without use of medication, for at least seventy-two (72) hours and at least seven (7) days have passed since his or her symptoms first appeared.

People who DID NOT have COVID-19 symptoms, but tested positive who and are self-isolating at home (or other non-hospital setting) can leave their "sick room" and home when:

- At least 7 days have passed since the date of the first positive test
AND
- They continue to have no symptoms (no cough or shortness of breath) since the test

For 3 more days, this group of people should continue to limit contact (stay 6 feet or more away from others) and wear a face covering for their nose and mouth when other people are present (including at home).

Links, Resources

Preparing Workplaces

- 🔗 [OSHA guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19 coronavirus](#)
- 🔗 [CDC Workplace/ Home/ School guidance](#) printable flyers.
- 🔗 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
- 🔗 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html>
- 🔗 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- 🔗 How to deal with sick employees who come into work? See the [Rhode Island Department of Health's official page](#) or call 401-222-8022. If inquiring outside of business hours, dial 211.
- 🔗 [The Rhode Island Manufacturers Association](#) has additional links on their website.

Supporting Employees

- 🔗 Manufacturing Talent Exchange <https://polarismep.org/ri-manufacturing-job-board/>
- 🔗 Programs for employees out sick or not allowed to work dlt.realjobs@dlt.ri.gov
- 🔗 Rhode Island Department of Labor & training <http://www.dlt.ri.gov/>
 - Share with employees the latest [DLT COVID-19 Workplace Fact Sheet](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic has created difficult circumstances for families and individuals all over the world. Direct employees to the following pages to explore resources that assist with housing, childcare, food and more, and continues to do so throughout these difficult times.

- 🔗 <http://www.dlt.state.ri.us/>
- 🔗 <http://oha.ri.gov/deliveryoptions/>
- 🔗 <https://health.ri.gov/diseases/ncov2019/>


Workforce Training, Recruiting

As the Manufacturing Sector Workforce Intermediary for Real Jobs RI, Polaris MEP is poised to address your company's workforce needs by providing new hire placement and training assistance and/or incumbent worker trainings, along with grant support to offset training costs where applicable.




In addition to the standard workforce support always offered, Polaris MEP will soon be offering COVID-19 specific workforce training funds to support pandemic-related facility layout training, Personal Protective Equipment usage training and retraining.

Manufacturers interested in obtaining information about Polaris MEP's standard customizable workforce training/hiring and/or financial support for workforce initiatives, or about COVID-19 specific workforce support, should contact the Workforce Coordinator, Margo Karoff-Hunger (mkaroffhunger@polarismep.org).


Disaster Recovery Planning

-  Many Polaris MEP clients have disaster recovery plans associated with their [ISO certification](#). Revisit and update these plans.

Funding Assistance

-  SBA Coronavirus Relief Options – <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options>
-  SBA Disaster Loan Assistance Program – [Click here for RI details](#).
-  Rhode Island Commerce Corp. Small Business Hotline – 401-521-HELP (401-521-4357) or email info@commerceri.com.

Business Continuity

-  [Small Business Association](#) and [RI Small Business Development Center](#) can help connect you to supportive experts.