

Iowa COVID-19 Preparedness & Return to Work Checklist

CIRAS is providing the following checklist to help Iowa businesses better respond to and reduce the risks of COVID-19 as well as support a safe return to work plan. Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and lessons learned, we will update this checklist as the virus and controls are better understood. As such, ISU and CIRAS make no warranties, express or implied, including the warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, nor the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any of the information provided.

If your business has a practice you would like to share or anything else that should be included, please email ciras.info@iastate.edu.

RETURN TO WORK PLANNING

Most companies will need some form of a Return to Work plan whether this is for staff currently working remotely, a return to full production or restarting the entire company or production. In this section we have provide some best practices companies should review in developing and executing their Return to Work plan. In addition, companies should review this entire checklist for best practices related to your on-going operations.

CREATE A COMMITTEE

- A committee-based approach will help build support and result in a more complete return to work plan.
- Identify an executive sponsor and lead.
- Include representatives from salaried and hourly team members.
- Ensure Human Resources and Environmental, Health and Safety representatives are on the team.
- Communicate regularly to all employees on the status of the team.

DEVELOP A PHASED APPROACH

- Map out a phased return to work plan.
- Phases should be based on agreed criteria that include public health measures and business needs.
- Identify what criteria must be met to move to the next phase.
- State expectations of staff per phase.

REVIEW HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

- Eliminate or substitute hazards.
- Redesign operations to minimize risk.
- Implement procedures and policies to reduce potential exposures.
- Utilize PPE where risks remain.

Important Link: [CIRAS COVID-19 Hierarchy of Controls](#)

DEVELOP A COVID-19 EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN

- Identify areas of exposure risk in your operation.
- Conduct a Job Hazard/Safety Analysis for each position.
- Identify social distancing, cleaning & disinfection, and visitor & staff policies.
- Identify PPE requirements and available supply.

ENSURE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF YOUR PEOPLE

□ MINIMIZE PEOPLE ON SITE

- Restrict visitor and contractor access.
- Transition as many staff as possible to remote work. Reassess regularly.
- Have clear policies and HR practices that allow sick employees to stay home.

Important Link: [CIRAS Protecting your business checklist](#)

□ IMPLEMENT SCREENING PROCESSES

- Have a clear, objective set of screening questions.
- Document procedures for employees that confirm fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or sore throat.
- Consider non-contact infrared (IR) temperature screening.
- Ensure personnel responsible for screening have appropriate training on how to minimize person-to-person transmission of the virus.

Important Link: [CIRAS Screening Guide](#)

□ ENSURE SOCIAL DISTANCING AT ALL TIMES

- Stagger shift start times and breaks.
- Ensure entire shifts vacate building before next shift starts.
- Limit staff to zones within the plant.
- Rearrange workstations, eliminate alternating workstations, and/or install protective barriers.
- Use floor markings as guides.
- Further separate key operations to minimize their chance of exposure.
- Ensure all areas are considered, including meeting rooms, break rooms, cafeterias, locker rooms, smoking areas and anywhere else employees congregate.

□ IMPLEMENT CDC CLEANING GUIDELINES

- Increase frequency of cleaning, including in process cleaning and sanitizing by operators.

- Conduct routine cleaning between shifts.
- Find ways to minimize contact surfaces, such as leaving all doors open inside the facility.
- Document clear standards for in process, shift, and daily cleaning. Ensure managers and senior leadership audit process and results daily.

Important Links: [Industrial Cleaning Services](#), [CDC Recommendations](#)

□ IMPLEMENT FACILITY MODIFICATIONS

- Remove unnecessary items in work areas.
- Consider removing lids, covers, doors, and other items that require contact to operate.
- Limit the number of seats in meeting and break rooms.
- Increase ventilation rates and increase percentage of outdoor air in circulation.

□ ENSURE GOOD HYGEINE PRACTICES

- Ensure you have adequate supply of cleaners, soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, and tissues on hand at all times.
- Train employees on good practices and refresh training regularly.
- Post reminder signage throughout the facility.

Important Link: [CDC Hygiene Practices](#)

□ USE PROPER PPE

- Use NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls to control risks before using PPE.
- Consider providing or allowing cloth face coverings (recommended by CDC).
- Consider face shields in certain situations.
- Always consider the specifics of operations and other risk factors when deciding on additional PPE.

Important Links: [Iowa Based Products and Services](#), [NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls](#)

□ SUPPORT EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

- Remind employees of access to employee assistance program (EAP), if provided.
- Provide access to other resources focused on employee well-being.

Important Links: [ISU Managing Personal Finances](#), [Iowa Mental Health Resources](#), [Iowa Legal Aid](#)

RESPOND TO A COVID-19 EXPOSURE

□ PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE

- Send people with COVID-19 symptoms home immediately.
- Provide the employee with CDC guidance for those that are sick.
- Identify people that have had contact with sick employee, consult with IDPH on appropriate actions.
- Consider a temporary closure for cleaning.

Important Links: [CDC steps if you are sick](#), [CIRAS - Responding to a COVID-19 Exposure](#)

- If possible, wait 24 hours prior to cleaning and disinfecting.
- Ensure cleaning staff or service provider wear proper PPE.
- Follow CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting.

Important Links: [CDC Recommendations](#), [OSHA PPE](#), [COVID-19 Cleaning Service Suppliers](#)

□ CONDUCT THOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING

- Close of areas used by infected person until thoroughly cleaned.

□ INFORM AUTHORITIES IF APPROPRIATE

- Contact IDPH for guidance regarding potentially exposed employees.
- Report absence rate over 10% to IDPH (voluntary reporting).

UPDATE BUSINESS POLICIES

□ LEAVE POLICY

- Consider paid leave to encourage employees to stay home when sick or family members are sick.
- Require employees with any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or sore throat) to stay home until symptom free for at least 72 hours, or a negative COVID-19 test.
- Require supervisors to notify HR immediately if aware of diagnosed employee.

Important Links: [CIRAS Guide to the FFCRA](#), [CDC Return to Work guidelines](#)

□ FLEXIBLE WORKING

- Review work from home policies.
- Ensure employees have equipment and services required to be successful.
- Establish policies regarding reimbursement of employee expenses such as internet and mobile phone.
- Review cybersecurity risks and increase employee training.

Important Links: [CIRAS - Supporting an Effective Telecommuting Workforce](#), [Iowa OCIO Strategies](#)

□ OTHER POLICIES

- Suspend business travel.
- Post [workplace posters](#) and share electronically with remote staff as required by the Department of Labor.

Important Link: [CDC Travel Guidelines](#)

ASSESS FINANCIAL IMPACTS

□ ENSURE CASH AVAILABILITY FOR OPERATIONS

- Consider federal assistance programs such as the [PPP](#) or the [EIDL](#).
- Analyze cash flow for multiple scenarios, including short term demand swings and long term softening of business.

Important Links: [IEDA Business Recovery](#), [Iowa SDBC's](#), [CARES Act Summary](#), [EIDL vs PPP Comparison](#)

□ IDENTIFY ALTERNATE SOURCES OF SALES

- Analyze short-term and long-term growth industries in adjacent markets.
- Consider direct-to-consumer approaches for retail-driven product lines.
- Consider government sales opportunities.
- Review your website for needed updates to match temporary or changing sales strategy.

Important Link: [Selling to the Government](#)

IDENTIFY CONTINUITY RISKS

□ CLOSURE OF NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES

- Iowa has not ordered blanket closure of non-essential businesses to date. Only specific sectors such as retail, restaurants, etc. have had operations limited.
- Review the CISA Critical Infrastructure Industries. Understand your relationships to those industries and document your assessment of which parts of your business are essential in the event of additional state guidance.

Important Links: [CISA Critical Infrastructure](#), [CIRAS: What is an Essential Business?](#)

- Consider the impact of non-essential closures in other states.
- Immediately pursue alternative sources of supply for PPE and areas of risk.
- Assess risk of material shortages for key inputs due to closures, government intervention, or other causes.
- Assess risk of closure of suppliers due to reliance on severely impacted industries such as automotive or aerospace.

Important Links: [CIRAS Supply Chain Disruptions](#), [Emergency PPE Products for the Healthcare Industry](#), [Emergency Producers of Hand Sanitizer](#), [COVID-19 Cleaning Service Suppliers](#)

□ SUPPLIERS, CARRIERS AND CUSTOMERS

- Maintain continuous communication with suppliers, carriers, and customers.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

□ COMMUNICATE TO EMPLOYEES

- Ensure communication is in many forms and provided in all applicable languages.
- Inform employees of possible exposure, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Encourage participation in TestIowa.com.
- Plan and act based on facts; anticipate employee fear, anxiety, rumors, and misinformation and plan communications accordingly.

COMMUNICATE TO STAKEHOLDERS

- Create a list now of key stakeholders in the events of a positive test at your facility. This should include media, local officials, state officials, suppliers, and customers.