

Operations Management Best Practices

Pandemics like COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, create a need for a new approach to managing operations within your manufacturing, warehousing, or distribution operation. This guide provides information and best practices related to minimizing the risk of COVID-19 within your workplace. Companies should review these best practices and implement those that are feasible within their operation.

Employee Distancing in Operations:

The following is a list of items a company can implement to maintain employee distancing:

- Move as many job functions (e.g. office/admin) to remote working arrangements as possible.
- Stagger start times so all employees are not entering the facility and operating floor at the same time.
- Stagger break and lunch periods to minimize the number of staff in your break and lunch rooms.
- Rearrange workstations on the floor to maintain a minimum 6-foot separation. Where a minimum separation can't be maintained, consider installing clear physical barriers or shields between operators.
- Move as many meetings as you can to a virtual format (or eliminate them). For remaining meetings, space out attendees to maintain minimum separation. Replicate meetings to reduce attendee size per meeting.
- Schedule shifts to avoid overlap so an entire shift can vacate the premise before the next shift arrives.
- Zone your operation and limit staff to only the zones they need to be in to do their work.
- Create new shifts and split employees between shifts to limit exposure to a single shift.

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Best practices in managing your operation to minimize any COVID-19 exposure include:

- Increasing the frequency and depth of sanitizing efforts, focusing especially on high-traffic areas, high-touch items, break-rooms, restrooms, controls, and tools.
- Conduct a routine cleaning in between each shift, and disinfect all touched surfaces.
- Provide sanitary wipes throughout the facility and train employees on using them constantly to clean high-touch surfaces.
- Train employees on self-responsibility behaviors (and refresh the training regularly) in regards to protecting themselves from exposure (frequent handwashing, eliminate physical contact, distancing, etc.).
- Post signage within your facility to promote proper activity. Refer to [signage provided by the CDC](#).
- Identify key personnel to your operation and create schedules and procedures to isolate them from your other staff to minimize the risk of exposure.
- Improve and expand the cross-training of your employees across multiple job duties.
- Remove all unnecessary items from the operating area to minimize the number of exposed surfaces.
- Review if it is possible to remove lids, covers, doors, and other items that require contact to operate.
- Increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the facility.

For help responding to the COVID-19 emergency or implementing a response plan, contact:

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