

Business Energy Savings Program



COVID-19 Modified Operations Recommendations for Offices

General Recommendations for Closed Offices

- ☐ Ensure emergency & security systems are operating as intended
- ☐ Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, sink handles, countertops)
- ☐ Supply hand sanitizer for employee use
- ☐ Provide disposable wipes to anyone entering your facility so that surfaces can be wiped down before and after use
- ☐ Limit occupancy to reduce person-to-person contact
 - Provide guidance, such as floor markings with tape, to encourage occupants to maintain six feet of separation
- ☐ Maintain appropriate thermal conditions and indoor air quality for occupied spaces
- ☐ Consider using videoconferencing or teleconferencing for work-related meetings and gatherings (e.g., Skype, GoTo-Meeting, Zoom, etc.)

Spaces

General

- ☐ Turn off all nonessential interior lighting
- ☐ Close all windows, doors, and blinds
- ☐ Turn off or unplug production equipment when not in use (e.g., audio, visual, lighting)
- ☐ Turn off or unplug unnecessary electrical equipment
 - Computers, monitors, printers, and scanners
 - Televisions, cable boxes, and other media players
 - Space heaters and personal fans
 - Desk phones (power only, leave network cable connected)
 - Lamps and decorations

- ☐ Turn off, unplug, or de-energize nonessential facility equipment:
 - Nonessential interior and exterior lighting (e.g., accent lights)
 - Water fountains
 - Bathroom exhaust fans
- ☐ Shut-off leaky faucets, urinals, or commodes and tag for repair

Kitchen, Concessions, & Break Rooms

- ☐ Consolidate refrigerators and freezers; defrost and unplug empty units
- ☐ Turn off or unplug unnecessary cooking equipment (e.g., ovens, stovetops)
- ☐ Unplug small kitchen appliances when not in use (e.g., microwaves, coffee machines, toasters)
- ☐ Leave dishwashers slightly ajar to prevent growth of mold and mildew
- ☐ Turn off exhaust hoods

Equipment

HVAC and Controls

- ☐ Set building automation system to unoccupied, if applicable
- ☐ Set thermostats to unoccupied setpoints (IECC 2015 suggests 55°F heating / 85°F cooling)
- ☐ Set HVAC fans to "Auto" mode (ensure fans are not short cycling)
- ☐ Set HVAC to maintain relative humidity below 60%
- ☐ Close outside air dampers to minimum allowable position
- ☐ VAV Systems
 - Set supply dampers to minimum allowable position
 - Adjust supply fan to minimum speed to reduce static pressure
 - Increase supply air temperature (cooling)

- ☐ Disable energy recovery ventilation wheels
- ☐ Consider increasing MERV rating of central air filtration, utilizing portable room air cleaners with HEPA filters, and installing ultraviolet germicidal irradiation technologies

Hot Water Heaters

- ☐ Turn down to lowest temperature setting
- ☐ Consider tankless or demand-type heater
- ☐ Inspect insulation around heater tank and distribution piping

Reopening Procedures

- ☐ Signage to ensure social distancing should be posted in high-traffic areas. In small congregation areas, such as a small kitchenette or copy machine area, signage should prohibit occupation of the space by more than one employee at a time.
- ☐ Meeting rooms should be posted with a maximum occupancy that allows for sufficient social distancing based on the size of the room.
- ☐ Floor markers should be placed in areas where employees may queue up, such as at soda machines, coffee machines, etc.
- ☐ Where possible, allow only one person at a time in restrooms. Post signs in the restrooms reminding employees about hand-washing protocols. If it is not possible or practical to limit occupation of the restroom, place floor markers that indicate six-foot boundaries. In situations where these controls aren't possible, abide by social distancing protocols to the extent possible.
- ☐ Place hand sanitizer stations strategically around the office, especially at entrances.
- ☐ Place sanitizing wipes where they can be used to open doors that cannot be left open.

Deep Cleaning: 7-Day Rule

If the facility has been **unoccupied** for seven days or more prior to the anticipated reopening, there is no COVID-19 related cleaning necessary.

For facilities that have been **occupied** within the seven days prior to opening, a COVID-19 specific cleaning and sanitization process will need to be undertaken. This cleaning and sanitization process should include the following:

- ☐ All common and high-traffic areas (restrooms, breakrooms, kitchens, cafeterias, meeting rooms, etc.) should be deep cleaned using EPA approved cleaners known to kill viruses. It is strongly recommended that a third-party service be used to perform this task.

Additional Resources

View more in-depth guidelines from the CDC:

- [CDC Coronavirus Guidance for Business](#)
- [CDC Decision Tree for Offices](#)

If you'd like to learn more about how switching to energy-efficient technology can save money for your business in the short term and long term, check out [Eversource's Business Energy Savings Program](#).

The recommendations contained in this document are guidelines provided by the CDC and should not be considered guidance directly from Eversource. This document is intended to help both businesses and employers inform their decision making. Decisions businesses, employers and local public health officials make should be determined by the specific circumstances in local jurisdictions. Check and follow all CDC, local city, and state guidelines about reopening.