

Order of the Secretary of Health: Directing Public Health Safety Measures for Businesses Permitted to Maintain In-Person Operations

Summary

On April 15, 2020 Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Rachel Levine issued an [Order](#) containing an “additional appropriate disease control measure...for all employee and visitors at life-sustaining businesses that have remained open during the COVID-19 disaster emergency”.

The order establishes two classifications of standards as follows:

- 1) Social distancing, mitigation and cleaning protocols for all businesses
- 2) Additional measures for businesses that serve the public within a building or defined area

Secretary Levine’s order is effective immediately and will be enforceable beginning at **8:00 PM on April 19, 2020**. It is not applicable to health care providers, which are already adhering to their own, stricter protocols.

Protocols for All Businesses

(A)

- 1) In accordance with CDC guidelines, clean and disinfect high-touch areas routinely in spaces that are accessible to customers, tenants and other individuals
- 2) Maintain pre-existing cleaning protocols for other areas of the businesses’ buildings
- 3) Establish protocols for execution upon discovering that the business has been exposed to a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19, including:
 - a. Close off areas visited by the person with a probable or confirmed case. Open outdoor windows, doors and turn on ventilation fans. Wait a minimum of 24 hours, or as long as practical, before cleaning and disinfecting the area.
 - b. Identify employees in close contact with the person with a probable or confirmed case from a time period of 48 hours before symptom onset until the person was isolated. Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for about 10 minutes.
 - i. If the person shows no symptoms, he or she should adhere to the CDC’s [Interim Guidance](#) for people who may have been exposed to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - ii. If the person becomes sick, the individual should be sent home immediately. Surfaces in the employee’s workplace should be cleaned and disinfected. Information

on other people in contact with the sick employee should be compiled, in accordance with Secretary Levine's order.

- iii. Employees who were in close contact of any known exposure shall be promptly notified.
 - iv. The business shall ensure it has a sufficient number of employees to perform these protocols effectively and timely.
 - c. Implement temperature screenings for employees before they commence work, in accordance with the order. Employees with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher should be sent home.
 - d. Employees with symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath should notify their supervisor and stay home.
 - e. Sick employees should follow CDC-recommended steps before returning to work. Employers are encouraged to implement liberal paid time off for employees.
- 4) Stagger work start and stop times for employees when possible to avoid large gatherings
 - 5) Provide sufficient space for employees to have meals and breaks while maintaining social distancing (6 feet); employees should not sit across from each other and should all face the same direction
 - 6) Stagger employee break times to reduce the number of large gatherings and maintain social distancing (6 feet)
 - 7) Limit persons in employee common areas to the number of persons that can maintain social distancing (6 feet)
 - 8) Conduct meetings and trainings virtually (phone or Internet). In-person meetings, where necessary, should not exceed 10 people and should maintain social distancing (6 feet)
 - 9) Provide employees access to regular handwashing and ensure common areas are cleaned on a regular basis
 - 10) Provide masks for employees to wear during their time at the business and make it mandatory to wear masks while on the work site, in accordance with guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and CDC. Employers may approve masks obtained or made by employees.
 - 11) Ensure that the facility has a sufficient number of employees to perform all measures listed in the order
 - 12) Ensure that the facility has a sufficient number of personnel to control access, maintain order, and enforce social distancing (6 feet)
 - 13) Prohibit non-essential visitors from entering the premises of the business
 - 14) Ensure that all employees are aware of these required procedures, either orally or in writing, in the employees' native or preferred language

Additional Measures for Businesses that Serve the Public

(B)

- 1) Where feasible, conduct business by appointment only. Where not feasible, limit occupancy to no more than 50% of the number stated on the certificate of occupancy for the building while maintaining social distance (6 feet) at check-out and counter lines and place appropriate signage on social distancing for both customers and employees
- 2) Alter hours of business so that the business has sufficient time to restock and clean, based upon the building size and number of employees
- 3) Install shields or barriers at registers and check-out to separate cashiers and customers or take other measures to ensure social distancing
- 4) Encourage the use of online ordering by providing delivery or pick-up options
- 5) Designate a specific time for high-risk and elderly persons to use the business at least once a week
- 6) Require all customers to wear masks while on the premises, and deny entry to those not wearing masks, unless the customer is unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition
- 7) Only use every other register or check-out lane. Each hour, rotate employees and customers to the previously-closed register or check-out lane, and clean the previously-opened areas
- 8) Schedule handwashing breaks for employees at least every hour
- 9) Where carts and handbaskets are available for customers, assign an employee to wipe down carts and handbaskets before they become available to customers entering the premises

Please note that this is a summary of the requirements contained in the Secretary of Health's order of April 15, 2020. Please refer to the order for specific protocols and additional details associated with these requirements.