



COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Return to Work – Worksite Protection Protocol

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As we continue the gradual reopening of some lower-risk workplaces, outlined by Governor Gavin Newsom, this guidance has been developed to help keep our employees and the public we serve safe.

As we stabilize from the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at home restrictions are lifted, we will begin to bring employees back into the physical workplace. The migration of our workforce back to our places of business will look different for every department. The mix of returning employees will vary, and in some cases, a segment of the workforce may continue to work remotely.

We will continue to commit to safety first, including minimum 6 foot social distancing, frequent hand washing, sanitizing and disinfecting, face coverings, telework when possible, flexible work hours – and continuous training and retraining on these practices.

Simply put, all employees will be at greater risk if some employees fail to adhere to this protocol and it is therefore essential that we all commit and monitor, for the health and well-being of each other.

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COUNTY OF LAKE COVID-19 RETURN TO WORK PROTOCOL

COVID-19 Workplace Protections

All County offices will maintain a supply, and when reasonable and necessary, shall require the use of the following:

- Face Coverings
- Disinfecting wipes or spray disinfectant and paper towels Hand sanitizer
- Gloves
- Protective shields at customer service counters

Unless exempt, all Californians must wear face coverings when in “high-risk situations,” as defined by [State guidance issued June 18, 2020](#).

In consultation with Human Resources and County Counsel, Department Heads will reasonably accommodate employees meeting any exemption criteria detailed in the guidance linked above.

In any in-person interactions where a member of the public cannot wear a face covering and there is no option of either six-foot social distancing or protective shielding, the County employee should courteously advise the individual that when the County's workplace COVID-19 safety protocols cannot be followed, service must be provided to the individual by telephone or other means that do not require in-person interaction.

Employees are responsible for regularly washing and/or sanitizing their face coverings.

See [State Face Covering](#) and [sector-specific occupational guidance](#) for further information.

This protocol is not intended to, and shall not, replace or supplant the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements of those certain County positions which mandate said use.

Facility Signage

Signage, regarding requirements for face coverings, social distancing and other practices to reduce or prevent the spreading of germs, will be placed at each public entrance and throughout interior areas including customer service counters, elevators, lobbies, and employee work areas of County facilities to inform employees and the public.

Enhanced Hand Washing, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, it is essential that employees practice frequent hand washing and sanitizing of high-touch areas such as door handles, desk phones and cell phones, remote controls, countertops, tables, desktops, light switches and restroom fixtures.

Handwashing technique:

Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap. Lather hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of hands, between fingers, and under nails. Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds.

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Frequent sanitizing:

- Train employees on proper disinfecting guidelines.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently touched.
- Encourage employees to clean and disinfect work surfaces and equipment.
- Do not reuse wipes to wipe down multiple surfaces.
- Do not dry the surface after wiping.

In addition:

- Provide gloves for employee use when handling cash, checks, credit cards, and paperwork from the public.
- Provide hand sanitizer and hourly relief to customer service employees, to provide an opportunity to frequently wash hands.
- Review and complete refresher training with janitorial staff on sanitizing, general cleaning and site specific protocols.

Social Distancing

Social distancing means avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance of at least 6 feet from others when possible. This includes employee work areas.

Social distancing strategies include:

- Practice 6 foot social distancing.
- Continue to allow telework when possible and as needed to make social distancing feasible.
- Allow flexible work hours, such as staggered shifts.
- Increase physical space between employees and the public such as; installing protective shielding, erecting partitions, and marking floors to guide spacing at least six feet apart.
- Advise employees not to use other employee's phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Encourage "no contact greetings"; do not shake hands or touch elbows when greeting.
- Deliver services remotely, without in-person contact by phone, email, video, or web.

Paper Handling – Best Practices

While the risk of transmission of the virus through paper handling is considered to be low, employees should be provided the option to wear gloves and of course, reminded of the need for frequent hand washing. When possible, setting paper received from an outside source aside for 24 hours is reasonable.

Employee Self Screening / Symptom Check / Temperature Self Checks

Under the California Occupational Safety and Health Act ("Cal-OSHA"), employers are required to maintain safe and healthy working conditions for employees.

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During the Public Health Emergency, if an employee comes to work sick, is symptomatic, or has a medical diagnosis of COVID-19, the responsible manager must immediately send the employee home to Shelter in Place in order to manage the risk to other employees and to the public.

Before an employee starts work each day, for the safety of **all** of us, s/he must ask himself/herself the following questions:

- Am I currently experiencing (or have I experienced in the last 14 days) one or more of the following symptoms: temperature over 100 degrees, difficulty breathing, sore throat, new or worsening cough, muscle pain, headache, chills, and new loss of taste or smell?
- Have I had contact with anyone with confirmed COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

If an employee answers yes to any of the above, s/he must take responsibility for the safety of fellow employees and the public and not enter any County facility or report to work. S/he must quarantine, call his or her primary care provider for further direction, and notify the supervisor as soon as possible.

Some departments have elected to provide no-touch thermometers for employee temperature self-checks and this practice may be offered to employees on a voluntary basis. It is essential that thermometers must be sanitized after each use. If an employee has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher during a self-temperature check, s/he must notify the supervisor, quarantine, and call the primary care provider for further direction.

Employees Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

Adults 65 years and older and/or those who have serious underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and the Governor's guidance continues to strongly encourage such persons to shelter in place.

The following strategies will be used to support employees who are at high risk:

- Strongly encouraged to Shelter in Place.
- Allowing telework, when possible.
- Supporting flexible work schedules.

Meetings and Training - Cancel, Postpone, Conduct Electronically

- All in person meetings should be avoided when possible. Meetings should be conducted electronically.
- When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, employees and the public must wear face coverings, meet in open, well-ventilated spaces, and practice minimum 6 foot social distancing.

Employee Travel

All non-essential travel, as defined by the Department Head, is canceled until further notice.

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When more than one employee must travel to the same essential destination, to the greatest extent possible, employees should travel separately. When separate travel is not possible, employees traveling together must use face coverings.

Employee Exposure, Testing, Return to Work from Quarantine

Each employee is responsible for following this protocol and meeting the requirements described herein, both to protect fellow employees and the public from exposure to COVID-19. In the event an employee believes s/he has been exposed, s/he must quarantine up to 14 days, while either working remotely (subject to department approval), using paid leave accruals or taking leave without pay

And,

Consult with his/her health care provider and follow medical advice. (The employee may return to work in less than 14 days if cleared to do so by his/her health care provider.)

Or,

Make arrangements for testing. (The employee may return to work in less than 14 days if test results indicate the employee is not COVID-19 positive.)

If an employee has clinical questions or concerns, s/he is encouraged to contact his or her health care provider directly. For urgent questions or questions about outbreaks or preventing contagion in the workplace, employees can contact Public Health at 707.263.8174.

Employee tests positive (or has had close contact with person who tests positive)

On July 24, 2020, additional State Guidance has been released, [Employer Playbook for a Safe Reopening](#), which must be followed by all employers, including the County of Lake.

- Consult and follow the guidance of the County Department of Public Health.
- Instruct the employee to quarantine up to 14 days, while either working remotely (subject to department approval), using paid leave accruals or taking leave without pay, and follow any instructions/orders from their health care provider and the County Department of Public Health.
- Do not disclose the identity of any person, in the workplace, who tested positive for COVID-19.
- Notify other employee(s) that may have been in prolonged contact with the affected employee (within 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes).
- If there has been a possible exposure to any employee(s) in the workplace, due to prolonged contact with the affected employee (within 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes), send the exposed employee(s) to quarantine for up to 14 days, and complete Workers Compensation claims forms. (The employee may return to work in less than 14 days if s/he receives negative test results or is cleared to return by his/her health care provider.

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- Temporarily close the general area where the positive employee worked until cleaning and sanitizing of the area where the employee worked and may have been, including break rooms, restrooms and County-owned vehicles (if applicable) can be completed.
- Coordinate with the Public Information Officer in the County Administrative Office to issue a Press Release to the community regarding the incident and all measures taken to mitigate it.

Employees Working in the Field

For employees working in the field, for example, to do home inspections or client home meetings, if a face to face meeting outside the office is required and no other form of remote contact is available or allowable:

- Call ahead to determine if the individual(s) to be contacted are symptomatic (temperature over 100 degrees, difficulty breathing, sore throat, new or worsening cough, muscle pain, headache, chills, and new loss of taste or smell.) or have had contact with anyone with confirmed COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
 - If YES, reschedule after a 14 day period after a 14 day period has passed, and restart this process when the new date is imminent. OR, if rescheduling is not possible due to program mandates, consult with supervision.
 - If NO, proceed with the face to face meeting utilizing all safety measures outlined in this protocol to the fullest extent.