



VISALIA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

WORKPLACE TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES

The following is general workplace and safety information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Stay informed about public health recommendations related to the coronavirus and other health threats by visiting the CDC website at www.cdc.gov

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)? Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person.

How does COVID-19 spread? The virus is thought to have spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

HEALTHY HABITS TO HELP PREVENT COVID-19



Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

Avoid close contact

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.



Stay home if you're sick

Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover from home. Do not visit public areas.

Clean and disinfect

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.



Source: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fprevention.html



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RESPONSE GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS

TIPS FOR PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AT WORK

The following guidance may help prevent workplace exposures and provide employers implement strategies to protect their workforce while ensuring continuity of operations.

IN ADVANCE OF EMPLOYEES GETTING SICK

Determine whether flex working is an option: Review human resources policies and explore whether you can establish policies and practices, such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours. Supervisors should educate employees that if they become sick they should telework instead of coming into the workplace until symptoms are completely resolved.

Create an employee communications plan: Establish a process to communicate the latest coronavirus information to employees and business partners. Anticipate employee fear, anxiety, rumors, and misinformation, and plan communications accordingly.

Decide how to handle spikes in absenteeism: Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, child care due to closed K-12 schools, and those who stay home to care for sick family members.

Coordinate with state and local health officials: Coordination with state and local health officials is strongly encouraged for all businesses so that timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses. Employers should take the time now to learn about plans in place in each community where they have a business by contracting their local public health department.

Make a business continuity plan: Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, consider digital meetings, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).

Source: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html

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WHEN EMPLOYEES BECOME SICK



Ensure that your sick leave policies: Consistent with public health guidance, permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member, and that employees are aware of these policies. Actively encourage sick employees to stay home. Employees should notify their supervisor if they are sick and won't be coming into the office.

Local decision making: Employers with more than one business location are encouraged to provide local managers with the authority to take appropriate actions based on the conditions in each locality



Separate sick employees: CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately.

Employee travel: Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice if needed.



Workplace hygiene: Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

Social distancing: Plan to minimize exposure between healthy employees and also between those employees and the public.



Source: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html



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OFFICE UPDATES EMAIL TEMPLATE

(Subject: COVID-19 Office Update)

[Greeting]

[Office/Company structure] met this morning and want you all to know that we are closely monitoring the updates around the coronavirus (COVID-19). We want to continue monitoring and ensure we're taking any precautionary measures to avoid any unnecessary health risks. We aim to be proactive and to keep our employees as safe as possible, while keeping the continuity of our business. We have been preparing the ability of our company to proceed in this manner and we are excited to be able to expand our ability to work remotely for staff that would like to.

This is uncharted for everyone, and we appreciate the feedback received and patience as we evolve our plan and options with our number one objective to maintain a safe working environment to protect your health. Here are some updates to the evolving plan:

Initial Office Updates:

- Our initial focus was to ensure our office environment is protected. We have updated air circulation and ventilation, worked to spread everyone out as best we can, and are coordinating with our cleaning company to come in more often with a focus on disinfecting the office.
- We are gathering materials that help identify proper ways to maintain sanitation and promoting the guidelines provided by the Health Officials, including:
 - Wash your hands regularly throughout the day for at least 20 seconds at a time.
 - Use sanitation wipes as necessary (we have them at the copier station and in the kitchen).
 - Avoid touching your face – especially eyes, nose, and mouth – with your hands.
 - Cover your mouth with your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
 - Open the windows regularly to ensure regular fresh air flow.
 - Keep 6' of separation between yourself and your co-workers if possible (we have moved staff workstations around to help accommodate this)
- Limit in person meetings with clients and internally. Utilize Zoom meetings when possible or meet in an outside open-air venue.

Further Updates:

- Our team has come up with a plan to help better assist the desires and concern of our staff and have decided that those whom positions are deemed applicable can work from home. This will hopefully decrease the potential for person to person interaction here in the office, allow for some to work remotely from the office, and help create peace of mind for our staff.
- Those who choose to still work from the office or whose positions require them to come into the office, will obviously continue to operate as usual. Despite that fact that some will be choosing to remote in, the office will still continue to be functional with less staff being present, so that we can continue to provide essential services to our staff, clients, and community needs, especially in a time like this.
- Unfortunately, not all positions are ones that can be managed from this kind of telecommuting setup, so discussions and agreements with your department manager, HR staff, and management are necessary to approve this option. For those who can and choose to work remotely, we have staff here to help facilitate getting you set up. **[List options, if applicable or available]** Those wishing to temporarily work remotely will need to fill out and submit the temporary policy document attached to this email. Please submit this form to **[Department/Employee Name]**.
- For those that are concerned for personal or health reasons and are not able to work at this time, they can utilize their available sick time or vacation time for paid time off.

We will keep an eye on any developments pertaining to the coronavirus situation and will let you know if there are any extra precautionary measures we can implement. Rest assured that the **[office/company structure]** will be meeting regularly to remain fluid in this situation as we are all trying our best to make the right decisions in this uncharted territory.

Feel free to reply to this email or stop by HR if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,



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TEMPORARY WORK FROM HOME POLICY TEMPLATE

(TEMPORARY POLICY FOR COVID-19)

For any employee who will be temporarily working from home, we would like to help make sure you are set up for success by providing some guidelines as to what will be required. We respect and trust you and know that you will do the same as we put this temporary policy in place. Our intent is to not micromanage you, but give you set expectations for minimum requirements we are asking from each of you during this time.

Work from Home Requirements:

- In order to minimize interactions with others, each team will determine the in-office/out of office working situation for its team members. Please connect with your Department Manager if you would like to work from home and they will make the determination if your job duties are capable of being remote.
- We expect everyone to maintain normal working hours while at home **[List hours: i.e. Monday-Thursday 9hrs with a core time of being online and available from 8:30am – 4:30pm & Fridays 4hrs from 8am-12pm]**
- Mandatory daily calls with your team will be scheduled. This must be a call – no email or text will be allowed during this specific meeting. The purpose of the call will be to define and discuss the day ahead and make sure you are connected to what is happening. Department Managers will be setting up these meetings.
- Ensure that you are logged into **[list application i.e. Gmail, GChat, Teams, etc.]** and any project management tools daily. These will be used for easy team communication on projects.
- Ensure your home has adequate internet capacity/bandwidth, in order to “effectively” work remotely (**[Company Name]** is not responsible for home internet/network capacity or availability).
- Update your timesheet on a daily basis to ensure we are all being transparent about what projects we are working on.
- Check your voicemails as well as check-in with your supervisor one-on-one at least once a day. Please work with your manager to determine best time to get these scheduled.
- Any **[Company Name]** equipment taken home must be checked out through **[Department/Employee Name]** before leaving the office.
- If you have any computer or internet issues, please send an email directly to **[Department/Employee/IT Name]**

- **[Company Name]** will be providing everyone working from home with a \$10 monthly stipend for their internet and cellphone usage. Please add this to your expense report and contact **[Department/Employee Name]** if you need any assistance with this.

Employee acknowledges that they have read the work from home requirements and will abide by the guidelines set by **[Company Name]**. Employees who do not abide by the set work from home requirements will be subjective to corrective action including but not limited to: temporary furlough or limited schedule until it is deemed in the employee's best interest to return back to work. The employee also acknowledge that they will be taking company property home and will be responsible for returning any property to **[Company Name]** once they return to the office.

*At any time, this policy (for an individual or company basis) can be revoked, cancelled, or modified, by **[Company Name]**.*

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisor Signature

Date

Human Resource Administrator

Date



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WORK FROM HOME TIPS

- **Maintain regular working hours or even consider starting your day earlier.** Working in an office, your morning commute helps you wake up. But sometimes from your pillow to your computer can be a little harder of a transition.
- **Get dressed and mentally prepare like you are going to the office.** Things like setting your alarm, getting out of your pajamas, getting your morning coffee help you stay in a routine.
- **Structure your day like you would in the office,** have a task list, segment out your work time into time blocks so you are still taking the mandatory breaks (for hourly employees) and adding a little bit of mix into your day.
- **Choose a dedicated workspace.** This is especially important. Have a space in your house designated only for work. Sometimes having a specific room helps you stay on task and in the right mindset.
- **Make it harder for yourself to scroll social media.** Remove them from your browser, delete your phone app or set a time for how long you can be on social media per day to limit distractions.
- **Commit to doing more** – projects always take longer than you initially think they will, especially at home. Be sure to overestimate how much time you might spend on a task and communicate clearly with your supervisor.
- A bizarre but true rule of productivity is that **the busier you are, the more you'll actually do.** It's like Newton's law of inertia: if you're in motion, you'll stay in motion. Have a list to keep you busy so you can stay motivated throughout the day.
- **Communicate expectations with anyone who will be home with you.** Of course, you might be working from home, but you still have roommates, parents, spouses and dogs that will be around you during working hours. Just because you're working from home, doesn't mean you are "home". Be sure to communicate expectations on the front end to those that you will be around while working from home.

- **Don't hesitate to ask for what you need.** Whether that is equipment or something different, it's important to stay in communication with your office/supervisor about what you need to get your job done comfortably and effectively.
- **Overcommunicate.** Working remotely requires you to be in constant communication. Tell everyone who needs to know about your schedule, when you finish a project or move on to the next task.
- **Be sure to still socialize with colleagues.** Even though you aren't in the office, doesn't mean you can't text or check in with others just like you would in the workplace. We all need a little interaction.