

## **Phase Two Guidance**

### **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance for Non-Essential Retail Establishments**

During Phase Two, the public and businesses must adopt behaviors and rigorous safeguards to reduce risk for all. Non-essential retail establishments must implement the following measures to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission amongst employees, customers, and the community. For additional information, visit [coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo).

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or who is required to isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 diagnosis or exposure<sup>1</sup> must not work in or visit a business due to the risk of exposing others. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

#### **General Information**

- **UPDATE:** Starting May 1, 2021, non-essential retail establishments may increase capacity from 25% to 50% (including staff) of their rated capacity on their Certificate of Occupancy, or 250 persons (whichever is fewer) inside the establishment at any one time.
- **“Big box” stores** (defined as: large scale retail establishments with >50,000 square foot retail space) that sell a range of essential and non-essential goods **are not subject to the 50%/250 person occupancy cap**. However, they must keep strong safeguards in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Occupancy levels must be limited to **ensure that 6 feet of social distancing** is able to be maintained between all persons in the business.

#### **Employees and Customers Must Practice Everyday Prevention Measures**

- **Get the COVID-19 vaccine.** Find out more at [coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine).
- **Stay at home if you are sick** or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.
- **Practice social distancing.** Stay at least 6 feet from other people who are not from your household.
- **Wear a cloth face covering** when in the establishment. Masks protect the wearer and protect other people.
  - All individuals **must** wear a face covering while in the establishment.
  - Masks are most effective if they fit snugly to the face and have 2-3 layers of tightly woven fabric.
- Gloves must be worn only as indicated per routine job responsibilities.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
  - Key times to perform hand hygiene include:
    - Before eating food;
    - After using the toilet;
    - Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings;
    - Before and after work shifts and work breaks;
    - Before and after services to each client;
    - After handling client belongings; and
    - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

#### **Considerations for Employers**

- Employers are responsible for providing a safe workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, including information about quarantine and testing exemptions, please see *Guidance for Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure* at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)

- Employers must conduct a thorough assessment of the workplace to identify potential workplace hazards that could increase risks for COVID-19 transmission.
- Employers must provide staff with cloth face coverings or masks and appropriate personal protective equipment per their job responsibilities. Gloves must be worn only as indicated per routine job responsibilities.
- Businesses implementing return to work plans must take measures to safeguard employees' and contractors' health. Employers may continue to allow telework, as appropriate for business operations.
- Employers should staggering staff shifts, start times, and break times to support social distancing between staff.
- Implement leave policies that are flexible and non-punitive, and actively encourage sick employees to stay home. Leave policies are recommended to account for the following:
  - Employees who report COVID-19 symptoms,
  - Employees who were tested for COVID-19 due to symptoms, exposure, or travel and test results are pending,
  - Employees who are isolating due testing positive for COVID-19;
  - Employees who need to quarantine due to close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19<sup>2</sup>;
  - Employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.
- Encourage and support staff to get the COVID-19 vaccine by providing leave options to get the vaccine and if they experience common side effects.
- Keep abreast of current law, which has amended both the DC Family and Medical Leave Act and the DC Sick and Safe Leave Law and created whole new categories of leave, like Declared Emergency Leave.
- Learn about and inform your employees about COVID-related leave provided through new federal law, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and all applicable District law relating to sick leave.
- Employers must educate employees about COVID-19. Refer to [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov) for more information.
- **For additional information specific to businesses**, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html).

### **Avoid Close Contact and Reduce Touchpoints**

- Stores should continue to encourage online shopping, curbside pick-up and delivery options.
- Employers must arrange shopping areas, workstations, common areas, break rooms, and other areas of the business to provide at least 6 feet between people in the store (both employees and customers).
- Employees must avoid using other employee's phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment.
- Employers must communicate COVID-19 policies to staff and customers (e.g., on their website, social media sites, prominent signage at entrance and throughout the store).
- Signage must be posted at the entrance stating that nobody with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to enter the establishment.
- Display signage throughout the establishment reinforcing social distancing, mask wearing, and hand hygiene policies.
- Management must provide adequate supplies to allow for frequent hand hygiene (e.g., soap and

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<sup>2</sup> For more information, including information about quarantine and testing exemptions, please see *Guidance for Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure* at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)

water and alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol) for use by staff and customers.

- Employers must close off or limit access to areas where physical distancing cannot be practiced.
- Employers must install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, in areas where it is difficult for employees to remain at least 6 feet from customers.
- Employers must provide physical guides, such as tape on floors and sidewalks and signage, to remind individuals to stay at least 6 feet apart in queuing areas.
- Mark one-way paths through the store to avoid crowding.
- Implement contactless payment via digital platforms, as much as possible.
- If food or beverages are prepared and sold, please see [Guidance for Restaurants at coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).

### Screening and Monitoring for Symptoms

- Businesses must perform screening (e.g., symptom questionnaires) of daily, prior to entering the business, over the phone or in person.
  - For Screening Tool Guidance, visit [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).
- Businesses must place signage at the entrance to inform staff and clients of screening procedures.
- Employees who report symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 must not enter the business.
- If an employee or customer develops any symptoms of COVID-19 while in the building, there must be a plan in place for that individual to immediately isolate, notify their supervisor (if the individual is an employee), and leave the building.
- Business must maintain a daily record of staff and contractors who have visited the business for at least 30 days to assist with contact tracing. Information collected must include name, date and time of visit, phone number, and email (if available). This information must be provided within 24 hours if requested by DC Health if a case of COVID-19 occurs at your establishment, in order to assist with contact tracing.

### Clean and Disinfect

- Establishments must develop a comprehensive plan for increased routine cleaning (and disinfection as needed) of common spaces and frequently-touched surfaces within the establishment (e.g., counters, payment kiosks, workstations, computers, cash registers, handrails, door handles, light switches).
- Management must properly train staff on cleaning procedures and monitor cleaning schedules to ensure compliance.
- If the establishment has been closed, it must be thoroughly cleaned prior to re-opening.
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned at least daily.
- Clean any shared objects frequently, based on level of use.
- Restrooms must be cleaned and disinfected at least every 4 hours when in use, with special attention to high-touch surfaces (such as faucets, toilets, stall doors, door handles, countertops, diaper changing tables, and light switches). Restrooms should be appropriately marked and monitored to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed (please note neighboring stalls may be used). Ensure an adequate supply of soap and paper towels is present at all times.
- Use disposable gloves when handling trash bags. Once done handling trash, dispose of gloves in a lined trash can. Do not reuse gloves. Perform hand hygiene after removing gloves.
- **For comprehensive guidance on cleaning and disinfection**, please see the following DC Health guidances at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance):
  - *Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19*
  - *Guidance on Routine Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities*

### Building Considerations

- Consider making the following improvements to improve building ventilation ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)):
  - Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Use fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows.
    - Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms).
  - Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and provide acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space.
  - Decrease occupancy of spaces with poor ventilation.
  - Improve central air filtration to the highest level compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter to limit bypass.
  - Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed.
  - Turn off any demand-controlled ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on occupancy or temperature during occupied hours.
  - Consider portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to help enhance air cleaning (especially in higher risk areas).
  - Keep systems running longer hours, 24/7 if possible, to enhance air exchanges in the building space.
  - Consult with a specialist to see what works for your building.
- If the building was closed for an extended period of time, remember to check HVAC systems and ensure all water systems are safe to use. For more information, see CDC's Guidance for Reopening Buildings after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html).

### Establish a Plan for COVID-19 Exposure

- Establish a plan in the event an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Identify a point of contact at the establishment that an employee can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- If an individual develops any of the symptoms above during the workday, there must be a plan in place for that individual to immediately isolate, notify their supervisor, and leave the establishment.
- If an employee chooses to report to the establishment that they are positive for COVID-19, the establishment must have a notification process to share the following with staff:
  - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
  - Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://www.coronavirus.dc.gov).
  - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov/testing](https://www.coronavirus.dc.gov/testing).
- Refer to the guidance "*First Steps for Non-Healthcare Employers when Employees Test Positive for COVID-19*" at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://www.coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).
  - A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, during that person's infectious period.
  - The infectious period starts two days before symptom onset and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset (or test date for people who do not have symptoms).
- Establishments must notify DC Health when:
  - An employee who frequently interacts with customers notifies the establishment they **tested positive for COVID-19** (not before results come back)

#### AND

- the person was in the building **during their infectious period**.
- Notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website [dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements):

- Submit a **Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form**.
- An investigator from DC Health will follow-up within 48 hours to all appropriately submitted notifications. Please note this time may increase as cases of COVID-19 increase in the District.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov) regularly for the most current information.