



Government Operations, Public  
Safety, and Criminal Justice  
Committee Additional  
Recommendations for the ReOpen  
DC Advisory Group

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May 21, 2020

For more information, and to see the ReOpen DC Advisory Group Steering Committee's full recommendations, please visit <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/>.

# GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The committee held five focus groups with returning citizens, the recovery support community, consumers of court services, and labor representatives. These focus groups engaged more than 60 District residents, employees, and labor leaders across the following clusters: health and human services, internal services, operations and infrastructure, human resources, public safety and justice. The committee also met with Councilmember Charles Allen and Councilmember Brandon Todd, and representatives from the Public Defender Service, the Council on Court Excellence, and the District Taskforce for Jails and Justice. Finally, the committee reviewed input received through the ReOpen DC surveys, which received over 17,000 responses. Key takeaways from these conversations are embedded in the Committee’s recommendations.

## STAGING RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the report’s primary guidance and universal safeguards (e.g., physical distancing of at least six feet, use of masks in public spaces, stringent sanitation and hygiene practices) the Committee proposes the following guidance for the subsectors listed below.

SECTOR AND SUB-SECTORS	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
<b>District government</b>	District opens additional in-person services with safeguards and expands virtual service delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Essential services that cannot be performed or facilitated online should resume in-person. District government should prioritize front-facing services that, while deemed non-essential when closed for a few weeks, are deemed essential when closed for months</li> <li>— Employees that provide critical functions or support critical functions could return to work with</li> </ul>	District opens some additional in-person services with safeguards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Employees that can telework, but prefer not to, may be permitted to return to work</li> <li>— Some non-essential programming resumes, with reduced capacity when appropriate or necessary</li> </ul>	Most in-person services resume with safeguards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Many services resume, with as many being provided virtually as possible</li> <li>— Employees with mitigating factors (childcare, personal or household health risks) will work with human resources to determine work status</li> </ul>

	<p>reasonable accommodations, including additional protections or have mitigating circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Duties that are currently performed in-person, but could be facilitated online, are transitioned to virtual service delivery</li> </ul>		
<b>Federal government</b>	<p><i>Federal government employees are a critical part of DC and their jobs vary based on the type of work they do across office spaces, parks, etc. Federal workers should follow the activity most applicable to their workplace, in conjunction with guidance from agency leadership</i></p>		

## RECOMMENDED SAFEGUARDS

Across all stages, the Committee recommends adoption of the additional safeguards outlined below.

SECTOR AND SUB-SECTORS	STAKEHOLDER	ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES
<b>District government</b>	Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Facilitate access to broad, easy-to-access testing</li> <li>– Conduct internal contact tracing (1 contact tracer per 120 employees)</li> <li>– Institute requirements to put employees on quarantine after exposure</li> <li>– Issue guidelines promoting employee physical distancing outside of work</li> <li>– Implement mitigation measures including physical changes to the workplace</li> <li>– Provide access to an adequate supply of PPE for all staff</li> <li>– Conduct workplace screening for all staff</li> </ul>

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND ‘BIG IDEAS’

The committee and its members have identified several additional initiatives and ideas for consideration, which include:

- **Maintaining changes that embody ReOpen DC’s HOPE values** - There are several changes in District government operations which should be potentially made permanent. These include the expansion of telework, continuation of officer-less papering at the United States Attorney’s Office, and continued

efforts to reduce the DC Jail population to prevent overcrowding by enhancing meaningful alternatives and increasing the practice of restorative justice measures

- **Using a multi-pronged compliance strategy** - The burden and expectation must not remain on police as the sole officials for enforcing stay-at-home orders, face mask use and, etc. The city should deploy credible individuals, hard-to-reach communities, to educate and influence. Non-law enforcement government representatives such as health inspectors and liquor board inspectors should have a role in investigating complaints regarding non-compliance
- **Building a culturally competent contact tracing force** - The hiring process for the District's Contact Tracing force should ensure that position requirements do not shut out otherwise qualified community members from these job opportunities. A pairing process might allow culturally competent contact tracers who do not have a college degree, but have community ties, to be able to play a role in this life-saving work. Having trusted community members in these roles will be key to successful contact tracing in communities that do not trust the government
- **Issuing clear communication regarding gating criteria for reopening and pulling back** - When public health experts announce the start of a phased reopening of DC, District government employees and the public will want to know on what public health basis that decision was made. In line with guidance issued by Johns Hopkins University's Center for Health Security, the Committee recommends communication around the reopening of DC be centered around gating criteria, or conditions that must be satisfied before proceeding to a phased reopening. Mayor Bowser will also have to clearly announce that she will likely have to reimpose these restrictions in the future for recurrent outbreaks. Ideally, all District residents should understand which phases or parts of reopening will have to be closed again should there be another spike in cases
- The district government should **make testing more widely available and free of charge**
- DOES should **convert workforce and transitional employment programs to virtual**
- DOES and other DC agencies that hold contested hearings should **create an advisory committee of attorneys to provide feedback and recommendations on the reopening of the workers' compensation system, etc.**
- DOES should **implement a mandatory mediation program to avoid backlog of practice compensation cases.** The recommended would be like the DC Superior Court mandatory mediation program that has reduced the time and expense to resolve cases
- The District should **ensure the safe opening of a new men's halfway house**
- The **Department of Corrections should urgently work to safely increase out-of-cell time**
- The **Metropolitan Police Department should strive to be transparent about its mask and physical distancing enforcement policies** and procedures
- **Superior Court should create an advisory committee of attorneys and other stakeholders to provide recommendations on how to reopen court services**