Lucas County
Open for Business
COVID-19 Guidance

Updated 4/28/2020
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Introduction
The COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted nearly every aspect of life for Lucas County and Ohio residents. Social and workplace limitations introduced through the Ohio Director of Health's Stay At Home Order have been effective to slow the spread of COVID-19 and allowed our medical and public health infrastructure to focus resources on protecting our most vulnerable citizens. As Ohio begins to reopen, we must work together to ensure our community returns to business as safely as possible while continuing to fight the spread of COVID-19 in Lucas County.

The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department and the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Development Center are working with State, County, and City officials to implement a roadmap to recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic. This roadmap will allow our community to adapt strategies that reduce and limit further spread of the virus as restrictions are gradually lifted at state and local levels.

The Phases of this roadmap include:

- **Phase I: Slowing the Spread**
- **Phase II: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Isolation of COVID-19 Cases and Contacts**
- **Phase III: Mitigation and Removal of Physical Distancing**
- **Phase IV: Rebuilding Readiness**

This packet is intended to provide guidance for the gradual easing of restrictions for employers.

Visit the websites below or the Additional Resources section for more guidance:

Toledo-Lucas County Health Department  
419-213-4100

Ohio Department of Health  
1-833-427-5634

Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce  
419-243-8191
COVID-19 Basics

Origins

- First identified in Wuhan Province, China in November 2019, COVID-19 comes from a large family of viruses called coronaviruses.
  - There are currently 7 known coronaviruses that can infect humans, 4 of which commonly circulate among people and cause mild illness, like the common cold.
  - COVID-19 is not the same as these other viruses and can cause more serious and even life-threatening illness. Being a novel (new) virus, we are still learning the effects of the virus in both healthy individuals and those at higher risk.

How does it spread?

- COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets made when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
  - These droplets may be inhaled by nearby people or land on surfaces that are later touched by uninfected individuals who then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.
  - COVID-19 is most likely to be spread when individuals have symptoms, but spread has been documented from people without any signs or symptoms.

- COVID-19 seems to spread most easily when infected individuals have close contact with uninfected individuals. The more people who share the same space as an infected individual, the more likely the virus will spread faster and to more people within the community. Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- COVID-19 is Community Spread, meaning the virus can spread very easily and sustainably between people. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 may not be sure where or how they became infected.

How can I protect my employees and customers?

- The best way to protect your employees, customers, and business is to follow the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department and your local Chamber of Commerce. Public Health officials are working with community leaders to protect the health, safety, and livelihoods of everyone who lives, learns, works, or plays in Lucas County.

- This guide has been designed to link you to the resources and information you need to help you operate as safely as possible during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Guidance is being updated as fast as we learn about this new virus. Check in with these trusted sources of information often.
Preparing your Business

☐ Small Business Development Center Business Reboot Checklist

While every business is different, the following items should be considered as you move to reopen your business. You are encouraged to consult with your legal counsel, human resources professional, and/or advisors from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) about your specific needs.

1. Compliance with Health Department Guidance/Requirements
   • Follow the guidance in this packet as closely as possible to ensure your business or workplace is prepared to operate as safely as possible under the "return to work guidelines."

2. Staffing Considerations
   • Determine how many employees to bring back and at what rate as business increases.
   • Continue remote work of employees wherever possible.
   • Consider alternative work schedules and/or shifts.
   • Prepare for increased absenteeism.
   • Adjust break and lunch schedules to reduce crowding.
   • Hold meetings virtually as much as possible to limit in-person contact. Limit in-person meetings to the minimum number of individuals possible, and ensure strict social distancing.
   • Ask your employees whether they will experience day care/child care issues due to schools not reopening, daycares limiting enrollment, or if in-home child care is not available.
   • Determine if any employees are on unemployment and/or if the business utilized any of the SBA Disaster funding options available (PPP or EIDL). For the PPP, make sure the deadline of June 30, 2020 is met for rehiring employees.

3. Update Policies and Procedures
   • Review your sick time policy to ensure staff have adequate time off to quarantine or care for sick family members if necessary.
   • Evaluate your current travel policy to limit viral spreading and risk of exposure.

4. Re-establish Inventory and Vendor Relationships
   • Determine how much inventory, both perishable and non-perishable, that will need to be purchased to re-open the business and if this is based on gradual or immediate return of customers/clients.
   • Anticipate extended lead times. Ask your suppliers how much time will be needed to provide you with the required inventory. Some suppliers may have retooled or redirected their resources in response to the pandemic. You should anticipate changes to your inventory mix due to supply chain issues.
• Evaluate whether your business has the liquidity available to make necessary inventory purchases. If not, then consider other available funding sources such as lines of credit, SBA programs, and credit cards.
• Negotiate terms with your vendors until the flow of business increases your liquidity and allows you to adequately determine the amount of inventory needed.

5. Evaluate Equipment and Supplies
• Evaluate the need for any equipment and/or supplies to be purchased to allow your business to re-open and how this will be funded.
• Identify and activate alternative supply sources.
• Identify alternate products to replace current offerings that may not be available.

6. Develop an Employee Communication Plan
• Ensure that employees are aware of your return timeframe and your expectations.
• Communicate with employees about the steps being taken to protect them and your customers, including any changes which will be associated with their return or their hours.
• Develop a plan for communication with employees if a coworker tests positive.

7. Develop a Customer Communication and Marketing plan
• Determine any additional marketing costs required to notify your client base that the business is either reopening or ramping up. Also, make sure any changes to the business model are included (i.e. a restaurant which now includes delivery).
• Include any links and changes to the business model on the business website.
• Take pictures and/or video to show employees and customers the steps your business is taking to insure a safe environment.
• Update Google My Business.
• Ask your customer to come back. Be honest. Tell them you need them and they need you.
Hierarchy of Controls

"The best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on workers to reduce their exposure." - OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

Elimination
The best way to reduce a hazard is to remove it entirely from the workplace. This can be achieved by changing how you provide certain services, or temporarily stopping some of your normal services. It may require major changes in business models, procedures, or equipment to eliminate the hazard.

Examples include switching from in-person client meetings to video meetings or conference calls, or purchasing equipment to allow some employees to work from home permanently.

Substitution
At times, it is possible to exchange one business process for another to reach the same goal. This can be achieved by leveraging technology and creative problem solving to minimize the disruption to both employees and customers.

Examples include curbside pickup rather than in-store pickup, issuing work cell phones rather than using desk phones, and having employees work virtually rather than at the office in person.
Engineering Controls
This involves making changes to the work environment to prevent the hazard from reaching employees. This might involve reconfiguring work spaces, installing barriers, or modifying HVAC systems.

Examples include putting up clear, hard plastic barriers between stationary staff and customers, marking floors so customers stand at least 6 feet apart, or closing off the places where people tend to gather in a work environment.

Administrative Controls
At the administrative level, there are a number of policy changes that can help manage the spread of COVID-19. Policies should be focused on making sure that people who are sick have enough time off to recover so they do not come into work ill, and limiting the in-person contact employees have with each other and customers.

Examples include allowing employees to work remotely on a regular basis, changing schedules to four 10-hour days or otherwise modifying shift and break times, and starting a screening policy to make sure employees are not sick before they come into work.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Not all hazards can be controlled and sometimes the only option is to provide protective equipment to lower the risk of employee being impacted by the hazard. This is the least effective measure as proper PPE use may not always be followed or understood.

Examples include training employees on the safe use of PPE and conducting spot checks to make sure PPE is being worn correctly throughout the work day.
COVID-19 Workplace Safety Best Practices

☐ Responsible Protocols

The Ohio Department of Health has launched Responsible Restart Ohio to provide protocols, practical guidance, and information that will protect the health of Ohio employees, customers, and families as communities work to responsibly re-open.

Five Protocols for all Businesses:

1. Require face coverings for all employees and clients/customers at all times.
2. Conduct daily health assessments by screening employees to determine if "fit for duty"
3. Maintain good hygiene at all times: handwashing, sanitizing, and social distancing.
4. Clean and sanitize workplaces throughout the workday, between shifts, and at the close of business.
5. Limit capacity to meet social distancing guidelines.

As Ohio responsibly re-opens, be sure to visit the Ohio Department of Health and Toledo-Lucas County Health Department's websites for detailed information on which sectors are open for business and the requirements to safely open.
Implement Screening Protocols

Conducting a daily health screening is an easy way to check the health of your employees before they start their work shift. There are two parts to conducting employee screening. Your organization should create a screening plan that works best for your employees and facility.

Self-Reporting

- This involves asking your employees to answer questions before reporting to work. You can set up an online form or have employees call and check in before each shift. Suggested questions include:

  1. Do you have symptoms of fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, sore throat or diarrhea?
  2. Do you live with someone who has the symptoms in Question 1 above that cannot be isolated from you in your home? (e.g., a person who does not have their own bedroom with a door and dedicated bathroom)
  3. Have you had close contact in the last fourteen (14) days with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19?
  4. Have you traveled outside Northwest Ohio in the last 14 days?

- If an employee answers YES to any of those questions, even if they do not have symptoms, they should be sent home to self-quarantine and follow the guidance in the Self-Quarantine & Isolation section.

Temperature Checks

- It is strongly recommended to take employee temperatures before every shift prior to entering the workplace using a forehead thermometer. If your workplace can’t find forehead thermometers, employees can take their temperature at home and report it prior to coming into work.
  - If an employee has a temperature of 100.4 F (38 C), they should self-quarantine at home and follow the guidance in the Self-Quarantine & Isolation section.

Self-Quarantine & Isolation

- Self-Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Someone in self-quarantine stays separated from others, and they limit movement outside of their home or current place.
  - Employees who answered yes to self-reporting Questions 2 through 4 above should self-quarantine for 14 days unless they can get a COVID-19 Test and are tested negative (refer to the COVID-19 Tracking & Testing section).
  - If employees start to show symptoms, they should report their change in status to a supervisor and follow the guidance in the Isolation section below.
• **Isolation** is used to separate sick people from healthy people. People who are in isolation should stay home. While at home, anyone sick should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific “sick” bedroom or space and using a different bathroom (if possible).
  o Employees who answered yes to self-reporting Question 1 should isolate at home for a minimum of seven (7) days from when symptoms first appeared and the employee has gone fever-free for three (3) days without using fever reducing medicine.
    ▪ It is recommended that employees with cough or shortness of breath not return to work until those symptoms have improved in addition to being fever free and isolating after symptoms begin.

• **Do not allow** symptomatic people to physically return to work, even if their symptoms are mild.
• Any employee who reports to a supervisor that they are ill should be given guidance on testing, isolating, and the requirements for contact tracing.

**Confirmed & Suspected COVID-19 Positive Employees**

One of our employees just tested positive for COVID-19, what should I do?

• Instruct the employee to stay home and self-isolate.
  o **IMPORTANT:** you must protect the confidentiality of your employee. Legally, you cannot identify the employee by name. Do not disclose to other staff or third persons the name or other personal or health information of the employee who tested positive for COVID-19.

• When a positive case is reported to the Health Department, an epidemiologist will contact the positive individual or their emergency contact to determine where the individual was while they were sick.
• If the employee had been working while ill, identify co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into contact with and follow the **Self-Quarantine & Isolation** guidance above.
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• Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and other elements of the work environment as well as frequently touched surfaces. Refer to the Cleaning Your Facility section below.

Suspected or Probable COVID-19 Exposure

• One of our employee’s family members has a “suspected” (but unconfirmed) case of COVID-19. What should we do?
  o Employees who have been close contacts to a suspect or known case of COVID-19 should be in self-quarantine. Follow the guidance in the Self-Quarantine & Isolation above.

• One of our employees has a “suspected” (but unconfirmed) case of COVID-19. Should I send everyone home?
  o You would follow all the same steps outlined above for an employee who tested positive for COVID-19. Identify co-workers and individuals that the employee may have come into close contact with while ill and advise them to self-quarantine at home.

• One of my employees has self-reported that they came into contact with someone believed to be positive for COVID-19. What should I do?
  o Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, then the employee should self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework if feasible.

• One of our employees just found out that they were exposed to COVID-19 after interacting with a member of the public (or vendor, or contractor). What steps do I take?
  o Review the nature of the exposure. If the contact occurred within 6 feet of the ill individual for more than 10 minutes, then the employee should self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the date of the contact. Offer telework, if feasible.
  o Check to see if other employees may also have had similar exposure to the ill individual. If so, they should self-quarantine at home for 14 days, as well.

• When can my employee come back to work if they have been ill or had an exposure?
  o Employees who have been ill with symptoms of an upper respiratory illness, whether a new onset of fever or symptoms of possible COVID-19 infection, can return to work after meeting the criteria under the Isolation guidance.
  o Employees with possible exposure can return to work at the end of their self-quarantine period if no symptoms developed. They should continue to self-monitor and maintain social distancing practices.
Facility Modifications

Changing your workplace to limit in-person contact can be difficult. This section contains some methods to help keep everyone safe at work.

Physical Workspace Changes

- **Layout**: change the layout of your workplace or store to discourage people from gathering in groups.
  - Consider replacing seating areas with additional merchandise or displays with information.
  - If your organization has a customer waiting area, rearrange the furniture to limit the total number of people at one time and keep chairs six (6) feet apart.
  - Employees who share office rooms or have neighboring desks/workstations should be assigned alternate work spaces to ensure proper social distancing of more than six (6) between individuals.

- **Flow**: control flow through your workplace by designating specific entrances and exits to limit employee and customer contact.
  - **Close common areas** like breakrooms and kitchens or strictly limit the number of employees that may use those areas at one time. Remove or distance chairs to ensure six (6) feet of separation.
  - Close areas of your facility not in use. This will reduce the risk of contamination and the need for more extensive cleaning if a worker tests positive.
  - **Note**: do not physically barricade or obstruct exits in violation of building safety and fire codes.

- **Sanitize**: install accessible cleaning stations stocked with hand sanitizer and/or cleaning wipes as appropriate in key, high-touch/traffic areas throughout your building (e.g., near doors or shared equipment). Ensure bathrooms are well stocked with soap and single-use paper towels.

- **Automation**: where possible, replace manually operated equipment with automatic versions (e.g., doors; soaps or paper towel dispensers).
  - Alternatively, consider leaving internal doors open to reduce contact or place sanitizer nearby.

- **Queue**: if customers need to wait in line, mark the floor every six (6) feet to promote and maintain proper social distancing.
  - This can be done simply with painter’s tape or creatively by using inspirational quotes, business-related messaging, or placing your logo at the correct intervals.

- **Barriers**: set up sturdy, clear plastic barriers to separate customers and public-facing, stationary employees to block droplets from moving from one person to another.

- **Signage**: use clear signs to let customers and employees know expected behaviors and processes.
Service Delivery & Workflow Changes

Service Delivery

- **Go Digital:** replace hand-written forms with electronic devices that can be wiped clean between users.
  - Email forms to clients when possible and encourage customers to complete forms ahead of time.
  - Offer services online, by phone, or by video conferencing. This will be very helpful to employees and customers who are staying at home because of illness or child-care issues.

- **Schedule:** when possible, schedule customers to cut down time spent waiting in lines and to reduce the number of customers arriving at your facility at one time.

- **Deliver:** add delivery and curbside pick-up options for customers. They will appreciate the convenience and it will cut down on the number of people in the business space.

- **Hours of Operation:** consider offering services outside your normal hours for vulnerable populations like senior citizens who may not be comfortable going out when a lot of people are around.

Workflow Changes

- **Telework:** allowing employees to work from home can be a difficult transition, but it is the best option when it comes to keeping everyone safe. Anyone who can work from home should work from home.
  - Consider this arrangement for employees who:
    - Serve as the primary caretaker for an older immediate family member;
    - Are immunocompromised or care for an immunocompromised family member;
    - Have day/childcare issues for their school-aged and younger children.

  - Make sure employees have access to the same information, technical support, and coworkers to conduct business efficiently.
    - Provide a work laptop as applicable and verify employees have a reliable internet connection. If internet access is a challenge, consider investing in a hotspot or enable a work-issued cell phone to become a hotspot if needed.

  - Establish clear work schedules when employees are expected to be on the clock.
  - Provide employees with an updated list of important phone numbers for your organization.
  - Forward desk phones to cell phones (as applicable). Consider issuing work cell phones as necessary.

- **Go Digital:** work to eliminate in-person meetings and virtualize business as much as possible.
  - Provide call-in or video conferencing options for employees who are working from home or are members of a high-health risk population.
• **Flexibility**: consider offering flexible work hours to accommodate employees that need to care for children or sick family members.

• **Stay Connected**: consider instituting regular check-ins between employees and managers to discuss challenges to working offsite, employee concerns, and to provide support.
  
  o Consider connecting employees through online socialization (e.g., hosting video chats centered on different interests or promoting work or hobby related skill sharing).

• **Sick Policy**: review your sick time policy and determine if employees can be provided enough sick time that they feel comfortable staying home if they are sick, or if they have to care for a sick family member. Providing adequate sick time is one of the best ways to reduce the risk of COVID-19 entering your workplace. If an employee has to choose between keeping their job and admitting they are not feeling well, they may not tell their supervisor when they are feeling ill.

**Personal Protective Behaviors & Equipment**

**Personal Protective Behaviors**

• **Self-Monitoring**: all employees should self-monitor for symptoms and tell their supervisor immediately if they are feeling sick.
  
  o If the employee is at home, they should not come in to work. If the employee is at work, they should be separated from other employees and sent home. Refer to the Implement Screening Protocols section.

• **Social Distance**: whenever possible, employees should stay at least six (6) feet away from coworkers and customers. Minimize any time spent closer than six (6) feet.

• **Hygiene**: employees should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds between customers (as applicable).
  
  o While COVID-19 spreads easily, it is a **fragile virus**. Soap and water easily destroys or removes the virus from hands.
  
  o Employees should be careful to avoid touching their face, even while wearing gloves. Immediately wash hands after touching your face.
  
  o Cough or sneeze into your elbow if a tissue is not available. Immediately wash your hands if you cough or sneeze into a tissue.
  
  o Clean surfaces you touch often, including cell phones, keyboards, and work stations.

• **Minimize Shared Use**: employees should not share equipment if possible.
  
  o If it is not possible to prevent shared equipment, have employees wash their hands **before and after** using shared equipment. Clean and sanitize equipment between uses.
• **PPE:** employees should wear PPE as directed and make sure it fits correctly. Even when wearing PPE, employees should maintain six (6) feet of distance to other people and minimize any time spent closer than six (6) feet.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- **Appropriate PPE:** "A critical component in implementing PPE preservation strategies is determining the appropriate level of PPE for use. Non-healthcare industries should carefully consider whether PPE is required by law or regulation as part of their routine duties or whether it is needed for mitigating employee exposure to COVID-19."
  - If PPE is not required by law or regulation, businesses should not attempt to acquire medical or industrial use PPE for their employees.
  - Instead, businesses should implement exposure-reducing measures and safe-work practices like those outlined in the previous sections.
  - Some types of PPE, like gowns, N-95s, and surgical masks should be reserved for medical workers, first responders, and industries legally required to use those items.

- **Proper Use:** in order to be effective, PPE must fit correctly and be worn consistently for the entire workday.

- **Cloth Face Coverings:** whether in a general office environment, consumer or retail services, or in manufacturing, distribution, and construction, it is mandatory in Ohio to wear face coverings while at work or in retail store environments where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
  - Cloth or paper face coverings help to reduce infections by slowing the spread of virus from individuals who may be asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic.
  - Cloth face coverings should:
    - Fit snugly but comfortable against the side of the face;
    - Be secured with ties or ear loops;
    - Include multiple layers of fabric;
    - Allow for breathing without restriction;
    - Be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.
  - Cloth face coverings should not:
    - Be placed on young children under age 2;
    - Used on anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious or incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.
When removing cloth face coverings:
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth, and wash hands immediately after removing.
- The front of a cloth face covering should never be touched to remove the garment. Only touch the straps or ear loops and pull the face covering directly away from your face.

Cleaning Your Facility
- **Regular Cleaning:** establish a procedure for staff to sanitize workspaces after every shift, even if you use a cleaning service. Focus on frequently touched surfaces and tools including phones, countertops, desk, computers, elevator buttons, and doorknobs/push bars.
  - Use EPA-approved disinfectants according to label instructions. Remember that COVID-19 is a fragile virus.

- **COVID-19 Cleaning:** if a customer or employee becomes ill with the primary symptoms associated with COVID-19 infection or an employee tests positive for COVID-19, follow CDC guidance on cleaning your facility when someone is sick.
COVID-19 Questions, Tracking & Testing

24/7 Community COVID-19 Call Lines

- Nurses are available at both numbers to answer COVID-19 medical questions. *Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and other language access is available for Limited English Proficient (LEP) community members.

  o **419-251-4000** (English Only)  |  **419-291-5355** (Multilingual)

Lucas County Community COVID-19 Survey

- **Designed to** help health officials track suspected cases, estimate COVID-19 presence in our community, and follow-up with individuals expressing mild to moderate symptoms as time and resources permit. *(Securely encrypted, safe, and HIPAA protected)*
- Made possible through close collaboration between the University of Toledo and the Health Department.

Lucas County Community COVID-19 Testing

- Through close collaboration between the Health Department, Lucas County Commissioners, and Community and Corporate Partners, five testing sites for Lucas County residents will be established April 20 and will be conducted through May 31.

  o Businesses who have employees with suspected or confirmed exposure to a COVID-19 infected individual may consider asking their staff to be tested at one of the community testing sites.
  o Testing is most appropriate for community members experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
  o All testing sites require appointments to be made through the information provided below.

- For more information on available test sites and requirements, visit the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department's COVID-19 page or consult the resources below.
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Additional Resources

Center for Disease Control & Prevention:

CDC Resources for Businesses and Employers:

Ohio Department of Health:
• https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/home

Responsible Restart Ohio:
• https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/

Small Business Development Center:
• https://www.toledochamber.com/small-business-development-center.html

Toledo-Lucas County Health Department:
• https://lucascountyhealth.com/coronavirusupdates/

Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce:
• https://www.toledochamber.com/