

MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS & TRADE SHOW GUIDELINES



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
JB Pritzker, Governor

RESTORE ILLINOIS

A Public Health Approach To Safely Reopen Our State

PART OF PHASE 4 OF RESTORE ILLINOIS PLAN

APPLICABLE TO EACH REGION UPON TRANSITION TO PHASE IV | ISSUED ON MARCH 18, 2021

The Revitalization Phase of the Restore Illinois public health approach to reopening the Illinois economy includes larger gathering sizes, additional businesses reopening and increased capacities. We must all continue to social distance, frequently wash our hands and cover our faces to maintain progress in overcoming COVID-19.

This document is applicable to businesses that meet the following criteria:

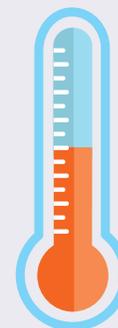
- Hotel meeting rooms, convention centers, arenas, and large-scale meeting rooms.
 - i. Sports venues, arenas, stadiums, facilities, fields or courts engaged in showing live sports games should refer to [Seated Spectator Events Guidelines](#)
 - Theaters, cinemas, and performing arts centers primarily engaged in showing live or pre-recorded performances should refer to [Theaters and Performing Arts Guidelines](#)
- Note: Organizations that operate across multiple workplace environments should refer to applicable Phase IV guidelines for guidance on those workplaces
- Note: Venues hosting meetings, conventions and trade shows may operate under the following capacity restrictions:
 - Venues with overall capacity under 200 people may operate at the lesser of 50 people, or 50% of the overall capacity
 - Venues with overall capacity in excess of 200 people may operate at the lesser of 250 people, or 25% of the overall capacity
- Capacity restrictions will be reassessed on an ongoing basis throughout Phase IV

Uniform guidelines across businesses, industries and nonprofits within the State of Illinois:

GENERAL HEALTH

i. Minimum guidelines

1. All employees who can work from home should continue to do so
2. Employees should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when within 6-ft. of others (cloth masks preferred). Exceptions may be made where accommodations are appropriate – see [IDHR's guidance](#)
3. Social distance of at least 6-ft. should be maintained between non-household individuals unless participating in activities permitted under Phase IV guidelines
4. Employers should provide hand washing capability or sanitizer to employees and if applicable, customers
5. Frequent hand washing by employees, and an adequate supply of soap/ paper towels and/or disinfectant/ hand sanitizer should be available



HR AND TRAVEL POLICIES

i. Minimum guidelines

1. All employees and workers who perform work at the worksite (such as temporary or contract workers) should complete health and safety training related to COVID-19 when initially returning to work. Resources to design a training are posted on the [DCEO Restore Illinois guidelines website](#)
2. Employees should follow [CDC travel guidance](#) to protect themselves and others during business travel
3. Employees should not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work if sick or symptomatic (with cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever of 100.4 degrees or above, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, or other [CDC-identified symptoms](#)), and sick or symptomatic employees should be encouraged to seek a COVID-19 test at a state or local government testing center, healthcare center or other testing locations
4. Employers should clearly explain all paid leave policies and make workers aware that they may be eligible for benefits if they are sick or symptomatic
5. Employers should be aware that the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and provisions of state law prohibit employers from retaliating against workers for raising safety or health concerns



ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Provide reasonable accommodation for COVID-19-vulnerable employees, including but not limited to work from home (if feasible), reduced contact with others, use of barriers to ensure minimum distance between others whenever feasible or other accommodations that reduce chances of exposure

HEALTH MONITORING

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Employers should make temperature checks available for employees and encourage their use. Employers should post information about the symptoms of COVID-19 in order to allow employees to self-assess whether they have any symptoms and should consider going home
2. All employers should have a wellness screening program. Resources outlining screening program best practices are posted on the DCEO Restore Illinois guidelines website
 - a. Employers should conduct in-person screening of employees upon entry into workplace to verify no presence of COVID-19 symptoms
 - b. If employee shift is greater than 5 hours, employers should also conduct mid-shift screening to verify no presence of COVID-19 symptoms (in person preferred, though virtually is permitted)
3. If employee reports having any COVID-19 related symptoms, they should remain isolated at home for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset AND until feverless and feeling well (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 72 hours OR confirmed to not have COVID-19 via 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart
4. If employee reports having any COVID-19 related symptoms, employers should encourage employee to contact their health care provider; if multiple employees report having any COVID-19 related symptoms, employers should notify their local health department within three days of being informed of the prevalence of COVID-19 symptoms; if multiple employees test positive for COVID-19, employers should notify their local health department within one day of positive test results
5. If an employee is identified as being COVID-19 positive by testing, CDC cleaning and disinfecting should be performed according to CDC guidelines
6. Where appropriate, notify employees who have been exposed. Employers should not identify an employee who tested positive by name
7. Any employee who has had close contact with co-worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 should quarantine for 14 days after the last/most recent contact with the infectious individual and should seek a COVID-19 test at a state or local government testing center, healthcare center or other testing locations. All other employees should be on alert for symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath and taking temperature if symptoms develop
8. Hosts should make information available to all attendees regarding post-gathering symptom monitoring, testing for COVID-19, and how to inform the host and appropriate public health authorities of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
9. Attendees from outside of the United States should receive a negative COVID test within 72 hours of the event

ii. Encouraged best practices

1. If practical, a one-time nasal swab for RT-PCR testing of all live performers should be obtained within forty-eight to seventy-two hours prior to the start of work on set or location
 - a. If practical, host should advise attendees to test for COVID-19 within 48 to 72 hours before the convention



- b. Host should make health screenings available for meeting and event participants; for multi-day events, event host should screen guests daily at multiple sites to avoid congregation
2. Host should design a way to indicate that guests have been screened each day (e.g., color coded wrist bands for guests)

¹ Close contacts include household contacts, intimate contacts, or contacts within 6-ft. for 15 minutes or longer unless wearing N95 mask during period of contact.

Guidelines specific to meetings, conventions and trade shows:

PHYSICAL WORKSPACE

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Venue operators should [display signage](#) at entry with face covering requirements, social distancing guidelines, cleaning protocols, and any reduced capacity limit, in multiple languages as needed
2. On website and digital ticket purchasing sites, event hosts should clearly indicate face covering requirements, social distancing guidelines, cleaning protocols, and any reduced capacity limit in multiple languages as needed
3. Venue operators should allow for 6-ft. spacing between occupied front desk workstations OR if not practical, install an impermeable barrier between front desk workstations
4. Venue operators and event hosts should arrange furniture in event space to be at least 6-ft. apart (e.g., tables, chairs). If furniture cannot be moved, venue operators and event hosts should limit furniture use to ensure social distancing
5. Venue operators should have a plan to limit congregation during entry/ exit and throughout duration of the event. Possible ways to limit congregation include:
 - a. Schedule staggered guest arrival times, with email or mobile notification
 - b. Allow guests to select their entry time and location and limit number of unscheduled entries
 - c. Designate specific point of entry for guests based on seating location
 - d. Release guests by row, beginning with those closest to exits (use videoboard/ PA announcer to facilitate release)
 - e. Create plan to limit congregation in venue-owned parking lots and assign parking spaces to guests during the digital sales process
6. Event operators should design a plan to ensure social distancing within the event venue and designate employee(s) to monitor capacity limits and social distancing throughout the venue, including entrance and egress.
7. Venue operator should make hand sanitizer or handwashing stations available at entry and exit points, and near on-site registration stations
8. If providing participants with transportation to and/or from the event:
 - a. Interior of vehicle should be sanitized in compliance with GSA protocols
 - b. Provide hand sanitizer at the entrance of the vehicle
 - c. All riders should wash or sanitize hands prior to boarding the vehicle
 - d. Guests, employees and drivers should wear masks when in the vehicle
 - e. Guests should maintain social distance from non-household members while in the vehicle
 - i. Guests should sit one to a seat unless sitting with one additional household member
 - ii. If practical, guests should sit in staggered rows (one participant per seat, per row)

- f. If a rider in the vehicle is identified as being COVID-19 positive by testing, CDC cleaning and disinfecting should be performed according to CDC guidelines
 - g. There should be a supervisor to oversee participants on the bus (can be bus driver)
9. Venue operators and hosts should follow [Restaurant and Bar guidelines](#) for all food service

ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Display visual markers 6-ft. apart at customer queue points
 - a. Avoid winding queues whenever possible. If necessary, ensure distance between queued attendees of at least 6 feet in all directions.
2. Display visual markers to regulate traffic flow and limit congregation of individuals throughout venue
3. Limit attendee travel to one-way movement only in corridors narrower than 16 feet. If practical, install impermeable barrier between employee and customer at check-in/check-out points
4. If practical, implement touchless check in or registration
5. Where possible, eliminate common touchpoints (e.g. remove shared items in commons areas, use touchless door pulls)
6. If practical, designate doors as entry-only and exit-only to reduce likelihood of close contact and congestion points
7. If check-in is required, event hosts provide opportunities for guests to check in ahead of time online
8. If practical, designate staging area for taxis and rideshare vehicles to drop attendees off
9. Where building management practices allow, increase air turnover rates in occupied spaces and increase outside make-up air to the maximum extent practical
10. Prepare a venue-specific emergency evacuation plan that allows for patrons to maintain 6-ft social distancing
11. Where possible, minimize use of coat and bag checks and clean area frequently
12. To the extent possible, reduce the need to use parking garage elevators by providing parking on levels with direct access to building
13. For events that have security, utilize walk-through magnetometers to allow security workers to maintain social distance and avoid patting down any guests
 - a. If not practical, security workers performing pat-down searches wear appropriate face coverings and gloves and have access to a hand washing and/or sanitizing station

DISINFECTING/CLEANING PROCEDURES

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Cleaning and disinfecting of premises should be conducted in compliance with [CDC protocols](#)
2. Clean and disinfect common areas (e.g., restrooms, cafeterias) and surfaces which are touched by multiple people (e.g., entry/exit doorknobs, stair railings) frequently; every 30 minutes recommended for high-traffic areas
3. Clean and disinfect occupied tables and seats between use by different groups or parties, and again at closing time
4. Clean and disinfect audio-visual equipment, including any buttons, displays, props, microphones, podiums, photo booths and other customer-facing equipment after each use



5. Valet staff should perform cleaning of vehicle in compliance with [GSA protocols](#)
6. All required disinfecting, cleaning, or sanitizing activities to be conducted by employees should be within their normal workday or during otherwise compensated time

ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Allot extra time between event programming to allow for more frequent cleaning

STAFFING AND ATTENDANCE

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Venues hosting meetings, conventions and trade shows may operate under the following capacity restrictions:
 - a. Venues with overall capacity under 200 people may operate at the lesser of 50 people, or 50% of the overall capacity
 - b. Venues with overall capacity in excess of 200 people may operate at the lesser of 250 people, or 25% of the overall capacity
2. Staff not included in this limit
3. Venue operators should design a plan to allow for social distancing within the workplace
4. Venue operators should assign employees to monitor social distancing, assist guests to navigate the event, and reduce mingling or mixing of customers at high-traffic locations (e.g., parking lots, entry/ exit points, etc.)
5. Venue operators should limit the occupancy of common areas/ break rooms to allow for social distancing of 6-ft. or greater by removing/decommissioning furniture or staggering break times; this guideline is not intended to diminish employees break time requirements



ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Stagger shift start and end times to minimize congregation of employees during changeovers

EXTERNAL INTERACTIONS

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Before allowing external supplier or non-customer visitor to enter, or while requiring them to wait in a designated area, employers should ask whether external supplier or non-customer visitor is currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
 - a. If possible, venue operators should take external supplier (non-vendor) or non-customer visitor temperature using thermometer (infrared / thermal cameras preferred, touchless thermometers permitted)
2. Venue operators should keep log of all external suppliers who enter premises



3. Suppliers and non-customer visitors should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when entering premises (exceptions can be made for people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering)

ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Limit contact between external suppliers/ non-customer visitors and employees

CUSTOMER BEHAVIORS

i. Minimum guidelines

1. Customers should wear face coverings over their nose and mouth at all times on the premises (exceptions can be made for people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering)
2. Customers should be advised to monitor for symptoms for COVID-19 for at least 7 days and, if symptoms develop, to test for COVID-19. Hosts should make information available to attendees directing them how to inform the host and appropriate public health officials of a positive test for COVID-19

ii. Encouraged best practices

1. Customers should be encouraged to test for COVID-19 within 1-3 days before the gathering.
2. Before allowing entrance, event hosts should ask whether customer is currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
 - a. If practical, event host should take customer temperature using thermometer (infrared / thermal cameras preferred, touchless thermometers permitted)
3. If practical, implement touchless transactions/ registration for guests upon arrival to the event (e.g. mobile check-in, meeting organizer mails badges to attendees in advance)
4. If applicable, customers should be encouraged to register for event or meeting online in advance

**If you have questions or need additional support:
Please call our hotline at 1-800-252-2923
or e-mail us at ceo.support@illinois.gov
or return to illinois.gov/businessguidelines**

Additional Resources:

- [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- [CDC Workplace Decision Tool](#)
- [IDPH Releasing COVID-19 Cases and Contacts from Isolation and Quarantine](#)
- [IDPH Testing Guidance](#)
- [IDPH FAQs](#)
- [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- [IDHR FAQ for Businesses Concerning Use of Face-Coverings During COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- [CDC Guidance on Cleaning Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
- [EPA Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)