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Update your employee and workplace policies

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In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation.

Topics covered include:

Update your employee and workplace policies

Having clear employee policies that you consistently apply keeps you and your employees safe and provides confidence to patients that you are taking important steps to keep them safe as well, reducing any concerns they may have about being in your office when it becomes necessary.

If you have employees that are not currently working, now is the time to consider when they should return to the office. For all employees, you'll need to think about what they'll need to know about new protocols, including any changes to your employee/workplace policies.

The following recommendations are intended to help you maintain a safe and well-planned transition for your employees as they return to work in your office.

As applicable, determine an employee transition plan.

❑ Check your state Governor's website for any Executive Order(s) that may provide return-to-work protocols or guidelines

❑ Consider whether to call all employees back to work or to implement a phased approach, depending on business need and any applicable protocols or guidelines

❑ If you decide on a phased approach, identify who returns to work and when based on business need

Update your employee and workplace policies

Review your existing employee policies and communicate any changes to your employees along with any new workplace policies.

❑ Paid Time Off – including paid sick leave, vacation, personal days, paid time off

❑ Leaves of absence – family and medical leave, personal leave

❑ Review your policies for managing employee illness, including suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19

- Become familiar with specific public health reporting practices and legal requirements in your area.

- Determine and communicate what specific information your employee is required to disclose and to whom.

- Do not share any medical information; if you become aware of a positive case, gain consent from the employee before sharing the information with others.

- Be clear about how long employees will be required to remain away from work if they are suspected or confirmed to be sick.

- Help employees identify if they are eligible for Federal Emergency Paid Sick Leave or other state or local leave or paid leave entitlements.

❑ Be prepared to manage employee concerns about returning to the workplace, including concerns about safety at work, employees with medical restrictions or family members of employees at higher risk of infection. Many employees are asking employers what precautions are being taken to help safeguard their safety.

❑ Prepare for office staff illnesses, absences and/or quarantine. With disruption to child care, schools and many other support services, your employees may have more obstacles than normal to maintain their typical work schedule. Some of these reasons may be protected under law. Cross train staff for essential office and medical functions on business need.

Be prepared to manage employee concerns about returning to the workplace.

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Update your employee and workplace policies

Consider employee screening/testing measures to ensure the health and safety of everyone in your office.

These could include questionnaires; temperature and other symptom checks; and virus or antibody testing (if available and legally permissible).

Educate your employees and provide training on the new protocols you've established for your practice, including:

❑ *Preparing a Safe Environment*

❑ *In-Office Appointment Flow*

❑ Employee/Workplace Policy Updates

❑ Communication of any changes in your Hours of Operation