GETTING BACK TO WORK:
FIVE EMPLOYEE "MUST DO'S" FOR A SAFER OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

Companies are eager to reopen, and more and more employees are being called back to work in office settings, which often means having close contact with other people in a confined workspace. Even the most rigorous office-cleaning protocols won't shield your employees from face-to-face transmission of a highly contagious virus, which means that practicing protective behavioral measures is more important than ever. These five "must do's" will help your employees contribute to a safer and more productive office environment as your company gets back to work.

EMPLOYEE MUST DO #1:
Agree to Your Safety Protocols

As we've seen from images in the news, the response to the possibility of COVID-19 infection varies widely. Many people voluntarily wear facial masks while others choose to wear no protective coverings at all, and even fail to maintain "six feet apart" social distancing guidelines. That's why it's vital for your employees to understand and adhere to any safety protocols your company has in place—safeguards that can result in a healthier and more positive work environment for everyone. By insisting on a commitment to rules about hand washing, mask wearing and social distancing, your employees will be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

EMPLOYEE MUST DO #2:
Keep a Safe Social Distance

Experts have seen that when people congregate—especially indoors—the chance of COVID-19 transmission rises significantly. And while the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that workers maintain six feet of distance between them, achieving that in an office setting has some very real challenges. Here are some things your employees can do to work safely when they get back to the office:

- Work in staggered shifts or workdays so that fewer people are in the office at the same time;
- Maintain a greater distance between desks or other office seating arrangements;
- Avoid attendance at large in-person meetings, and use remote conferencing or other substitutes;
- Take turns using common areas such as kitchens and copy rooms.

From the CDC… what you can do as an employer

Strategies and recommendations for employers responding to COVID-19, including those seeking to resume normal or phased business operations:

- Conducting daily health checks
- Conducting a hazard assessment of the workplace
- Encouraging employees to wear cloth face coverings in the workplace, if appropriate
- Implementing policies and practices for social distancing in the workplace
- Improving the building ventilation system

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EMPLOYEE MUST DO #3:
Practice Personal Hygiene

The daily conduct of your employees is essential to maintaining a healthy work environment while the threat of COVID-19 infection exists. OSHA recommends that hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes and tissues, as well as plenty of trash receptacles, be readily available throughout the office, especially in high-touch areas. In addition, you should encourage your employees to:

• Wash their hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water;
• Cover occasional sneezes and coughs;
• Avoid touching their faces with their hands;
• Stay home if they are displaying symptoms;
• Avoid using other employees' desks, keyboards, phones and supplies.

You can also consider taking the temperatures of employees as a preventative measure. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has determined that taking the temperatures of employees is an acceptable practice during the current COVID-19 crisis, but it's important to remember that temperature evaluation is considered a medical examination, and subject to prevailing confidentiality rules. It's also worth noting that not everyone with COVID-19 has an elevated temperature, so it's not a fail-safe detection technique.

EMPLOYEE MUST DO #4:
Watch for Active Symptoms

As employees return to your office, make sure that they're fully aware of the symptoms typically associated with this coronavirus, which can vary widely in type and severity. Stress the importance of monitoring possible symptoms and staying home if any appear. As with any communicable disease, timely communication is vital. Make sure that other employees are aware that they may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus without disclosing the sick employee's medical details. Then, implement sanitation procedures recommended by the CDC, including closing any exposed areas, or even the entire office, until it has been thoroughly disinfected.

If an employee does get sick or needs to stay home in order to care for a family member, it's good business to make sure your office is adequately prepared for a prolonged absence. If possible, train your employees on the fundamentals of each other's jobs so that productivity levels can be maintained and projects can move forward without interruption.

EMPLOYEE MUST DO #5:
Be Prepared to Return to Remote Work

It can be hard to hear that stay-at-home mandates might be imposed again, but as we've seen, the unexpected can happen. That's why it's essential to have a workable plan for your employees to follow if and when another lockdown period occurs. The next time around, you can take advantage of what you have learned from firsthand experience and be better prepared to put measures in place before you actually need them.

If they haven't already, this is a good time for your employees to prepare an adequate at-home workspace equipped with all of the tools needed to do their jobs—desk, computer and telephone at a minimum—in a location that's relatively free of external noise and distractions. That way, if and when remote work becomes necessary, everyone is ready to keep the productivity going.

About D3 Clean

Only Clean Harbors D3 Clean offers the proven processes, specialized equipment and skilled personnel to protect your business from the risks of COVID-19. We've helped schools, businesses and other organizations safely reopen their doors—from a small, owned daycare center to a nationwide chain of restaurants. Our dedicated D3 Clean workforce of 1,200 trained experts is on the front lines of COVID-19-related remediation and mitigation, ensuring the highest possible levels of cleanliness and safety.

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