Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated Employer Technical Resources

Many states are beginning to ease restrictions on facility closings and considering re-opening of their economies. This will likely occur in phases allowing certain types of businesses to open at different times over the next several months. Employers should consider several steps to protect their employees and visitors from potential spread of the virus as they resume operations. Critical steps include the following:

1. Advance Employee Communications.
2. Instructions for Returning Employees.
3. On-Site Employee and Visitor Screening Protocols.
4. Workplace Training to Maintain Safe Practices Inside the Facility.
5. Management Communication and Coordination.
6. Department of Labor and EEOC Considerations.

The above steps are components that are part of a complete Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan. If you are in need of a plan template, please see the attached sample obtained from JJ Keller & Associates, Inc.®, an Arch Insurance partner. The plan is provided in Microsoft Word and can be customized to meet your company needs. You can simply tab from field to field to insert your information in the grayed sections.

This memo is provided to raise your awareness to several valuable resources concerning COVID-19. We strongly encourage employers to regularly monitor the imbedded website links as information may change frequently. Employers are also encouraged to monitor local and state Health Department websites for information specific to your particular location.

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA®) recently published a series of very useful documents focused on getting **BACK TO WORK SAFELY™.** These documents provide guidance for various industry sectors and address many similar topics as outlined in the remainder of this bulletin. The documents are free to download from the following website:

- AIHA - Back to Work Safely

NOTE – If website links to not properly launch directly from this document, simply copy and paste the link directly into your web browser. Google Chrome is recommended for most sites.

1. Advance Employee Communications:

These types of communications are designed to provide potential returning employees with tools and advice to help ensure they do not bring the virus into the workplace. This may include an employee who is sick or showing symptoms of the virus, as well as employees who may be taking care of sick family members but are asymptomatic themselves. Instructions for the employee on how best to regularly disinfect and clean their household will help prevent further transmission of the virus outside of the home.

Employee at-home screening protocols should be established and communicated. Prior to authorizing an employee to return to the workplace, the employer should consider implementing a process to verify the at-home screening was completed and to maintain records of the results.

Advance communications to the employee base may have to occur by a combination of email, SMS/text[1], hard copy mailing, and phone communication depending on the technology available to the employer and employees.

The following website links provide detailed guidance to address these advance communication factors:

- CDC - How to protect yourself / Symptoms and Self Checker
- CDC - What to Do if You are Sick
- CDC - If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone
- CDC - Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings
- CDC - Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure
- CDC - Cleaning and Disinfection for Households
- CDC - Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home - Extra Steps When Someone is Sick

2. Instructions for Returning Employees:

Consider developing specific instructions to communicate to employees who have been authorized to return to the workplace. These instructions should be provided prior to the employee physically arriving at the company location. Potential elements of such a plan may include, but are not limited to:

- Develop a phased employee arrival process to avoid undue concentrations of employees at the workplace. Establish staggered arrival dates and times.
- Instruct employees to notify the facility before arriving if they have fever or symptoms of COVID-19. If symptoms are indicated, the employer should provide instruction for postponing their arrival date and time. Employees should be instructed to monitor symptoms daily and communicate results to the employer.
- Advise employees to wear a cloth face covering or mask, regardless of symptoms, before leaving their home.
- Instruct employees to avoid using public mass transportation, if possible. Confirm if the company will reimburse employees who drive to the office or use a car service.
- Upon arrival, the following should be in place:
  - Pre-established parking areas identified and marked to maintain social distancing.
  - Assign a designated company representative to meet arriving employees at a predetermined entrance point. Ensure the representative is equipped with the appropriate PPE and is knowledgeable of the plan and procedures established by the employer.
  - Ensure a minimum of six feet is provided between employees at arrival and entrance points. Mark walking surfaces in these areas with high visibility materials or tape to indicate required spacing, as employees stand in line prior to screening.
  - Direct employees to the pre-established screening checkpoint.

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[1] SMS/text may require employee permission.

3. On-Site Employee and Visitor Screening Protocols:

Consider developing protocols for daily screening of employees, contractors and visitors. Elements in such a program typically include:

- Prohibit entry of visitors and contractors unless the service is absolutely necessary. If entry is deemed necessary, ensure each person has appropriate PPE and complies with your established plan for your own employees when entering the facility.
- Take daily temperatures of anyone entering the facility. Documentation should be kept by name, company name, date, and results[*].
- Develop and implement a questionnaire outlining possible symptoms of exposure to the virus. The questionnaire can be verbally provided by the employer screening coordinator. Records of all screening results should be maintained and tracked for changes from day to day[*].

The following websites provide clarifications from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission concerning the legality of screening employees by taking temperatures and by complying with related guidance suggested by the CDC[*]. Also provided is a sample screening questionnaire and general considerations for safe work practices employers should implement.

- EEOC - Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- SD Department of Health - Sample Employee Screening Questionnaire
- CDC - Implementing Safety Practices

4. Workplace Training to Maintain Safe Practices Inside the Facility

Develop a training program to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and lower impact in the workplace once employees are inside the facility. Include training in the following areas:

- Techniques to reduce transmission among on-site employees.
- How to maintain healthy business operations.
- Maintain a healthy work environment.
  - o Engineering control factors for ventilation systems.
  - o Respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
  - o Cleaning and disinfecting facilities.

The following links provide detailed information for procedures, activities and printable resources (posters, bulletins, stickers, etc.) within each category noted above.

- CDC - Guidance for Businesses and Employers
- EPA - Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2
- CDC - Health Promotion Materials

5. Management Communication and Coordination:

Ongoing communication and coordination amongst multiple company facilities and locations is critical. Elements to consider implementing in your communication plan:

- Establish pandemic coordinators for each business location.
- Train coordinators to assist employees on virus related issues and questions.

*Please check with your HR Department

- Coordinators should manage inventory to ensure PPE is readily available and appropriate.
- Place posters, bulletin reminders, and other collateral materials throughout the facility.
- On a daily or weekly basis report to management on location-specific results:
    - Number of employees screened by department.
    - Number of unexcused absences.
    - Number of employees reporting positive tests results.
    - Negative impact on normal business operations.
    - Concerns with availability of required PPE and cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
    - Additional employee training opportunities.
- Provide overview to management on key data concerning local community spread and risk factors.

6. Department of Labor and EEOC Information:

Many employers may have questions concerning the impact of COVID-19 on various employer and employee issues: The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA); Reasonable Accommodations; Fair Labor Standards Act (FSLA); and other similar aspects of the employment relationship. The following Department of Labor and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission websites provide valuable information and resources on these and other important topics: (*NOTE - You may have to right click, copy hyperlink, and paste directly into your web browser to launch these websites*).

- Department of Labor - COVID-19 FMLA Questions and Answers
- Department of Labor - COVID-19 and the Fair Labor Standards Act Q&A
- EEOC - ADA, Rehabilitation Act, and Coronavirus

We hope that this information is valuable. Please contact your designated Arch Risk Control representative if further assistance is required. You can also reach our message center below and we will contact you as soon as possible.

1 888 411 2832 or **losscontrolservicescenter@archinsurance.com**