RESPONDING TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK

As employers in every sector monitor the spread of the coronavirus outbreak (officially, "COVID-19") in the U.S., many are taking precautionary measures to prepare for its potential arrival in local workplaces. Here is a summary of those measures, as well as some guidance to stay healthy and safe.

What is it?

Coronavirus is a virus that causes the disease now known as COVID-19. It is a respiratory virus spread between people in close contact (within 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced by an infected person when they cough or sneeze. It may also spread by touching a surface or object with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes – although person-to-person contact is considered the more likely way it gets transmitted.

See the CDC's helpful guide to understanding COVID-19 here.

Individual best practices

Here are some best practices you can and should follow now to minimize your risk. The CDC recommends that you:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

- Follow CDC recommendations for using a facemask:

  ➢ The CDC does **not** recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.

  ➢ Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

  ➢ If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Workforce – Stay home when you're sick

Depending on your office setup, some or all employees may be able to work remotely. Employers should consider how to accommodate those who cannot. Cautious employers who want to encourage good workplace etiquette **may require employees who are sick to stay home** – either by taking PTO or by working remotely – at the first sign of illness.

Employers will want to consider whether to continue taking outside meetings in their building and reexamine their decision if the outbreak spreads to Louisville.

Employers may want to have employees planning either personal or professional travel to discuss those plans with their managers and consider how to address travel already booked. Employee health and safety should be the top priority.

Building maintenance

Consider having cleaning crews begin cleaning "high-touch" areas – light switches, door handles, railings, etc. – more frequently with a disinfectant called HDQ (or HDQL), which will kill viruses, including the coronavirus.

Also consider providing disinfectant wipes (that will kill coronavirus within one minute) to employees so they can clean their personal workspaces as frequently as they want to. And consider placing pump hand sanitizer in common areas around your facilities.

Keep up

Monitor [CDC's guidance for workplaces](#) to ensure that you stay current with recommendations – which may change over time.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation as we monitor this health event.