Checklist for Returning Employees to the Workplace - New York

Guidelines for Reopening - NY State has provided Guidelines for Reopening for Phase One by industry (https://forward.ny.gov/industries-reopening-phase). We anticipate that NY State will continue to update these as the state transitions through the phases.

- ❏ View Summary Guidelines.
- ❏ Read and Affirm Detailed Guidelines for your industry.
- ❏ Prepare Business Safety Plan Template and maintain in your records in case of an inspection.

The following are areas to consider when planning for reopening your business. Please note that some of these areas have been covered in the above guidelines provided by NY State.

Strategic Management Decisions

- ❏ Evaluate current staffing and pay levels and determine whether changes are necessary (e.g., rehires, layoffs, furloughs, pay changes).

- ❏ Determine who needs to be in the office and who can work remotely.

- ❏ For those working in the office, consider different shifts or different days in the office, or a combination of remote and onsite work. Consider a phased return to work.

- ❏ Determine what screening methods to use (e.g., diagnostic testing, temperature checks, questionnaires) to ensure it is safe for employees to return to work, continue to work, and return to work after they or a household member have Covid-19. Decide who will administer these tests and how will you ensure confidentiality.   Determine what screening method you will require for customers or vendors, if applicable.

- ❏ Evaluate how to handle employees who say they cannot return to work due to individual circumstances (e.g., lack of childcare, employee or household member in higher risk group for Covid-19, commuting concerns, employees who don't feel comfortable returning to the office).

- ❏ Determine a contingency plan if cases of Covid-19 increase and some or all employees can no longer work in the office.

- ❏ Ensure that you have met criteria for loan forgiveness under the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and completed required documentation, if applicable. Continue to monitor aid programs available to your business.

Operational & Logistical Decisions

❏ Review CDC guidelines prior to reopening ([CDC guidelines for businesses and workplaces](#)).

❏ Designate someone to be responsible for on-going monitoring of federal, state and local regulations and guidelines, ensuring the company is in compliance and that these guidelines are reviewed regularly.

❏ Revise or develop temporary and/or long term policies (e.g., remote work, sick leave, employee travel, rehire and bridge of service, attendance, paid time off, health & safety, expenses, information security, meeting protocol, PPE).

❏ Plan for how you will implement 6 ft. physical distancing (e.g., plexiglass dividers, tape on floor, revamping workplace configuration, utilizing shared space for individual space, signs).

❏ Set parameters for group gatherings and client interactions (e.g., utilize tele or video conferences, if in person held outside or in open, well-ventilated spaces that allow for social distancing).

❏ Establish protocol for pickups and deliveries.

❏ Discuss with your landlord or building management company what actions they will be taking (e.g., elevators, stairwells, lobbies, restrooms, cafeteria, cleaning protocols).

❏ Plan for appropriate protocols to ensure sanitary conditions (e.g., frequency of cleaning crew, maintenance of cleaning log, appropriate signage, placement of hand and equipment sanitizers, soap dispensers, sanitizing after use of common items such as printers, copiers, standards for employees cleaning surfaces they touch and their individual workspaces).

❏ Arrange for the appropriate PPE (e.g., masks, gloves) and replacements. Establish policy to ensure PPE is appropriately cleaned, stored and/or discarded. Ensure you have the necessary PPE to support any screening procedures.

❏ Develop a plan for cleaning, disinfection and contact tracing in the event of a positive case.

❏ Train managers on new protocols (e.g., screening, social distancing, cleaning, PPE) and how to address employee concerns.

❏ Determine appropriate documentation required, if applicable, for employees returning to work after they have had Covid-19.

❏ Maintain a continuous log of every person, who may have had contact with other individuals at the office, including staff and visitors.

❏ Plan for utilization of Paid Time Off/vacation time for the remainder of the year. Review and revise (as appropriate) carryover policies.

❏ Post the mandatory Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) posters in the workplace. These should already have been sent to employees working remotely.

❏ Ensure that employees know where to find the FFCRA request form, and that you have obtained documentation to receive tax credits under FFCRA. Note, if you have less than 50 employees you may apply for an exemption, and health care providers and emergency responders may also be exempt.

Communication Strategy

❏ Determine when and how you will communicate your return to work plan. Note, we recommend providing employees with as much notice as possible (or required timeframe, if applicable) to prepare and to raise concerns.

❏ Determine how and what you will communicate to staff (and customers, if applicable) if an employee or household member is infected with Covid-19, and what actions you will take. Ensure confidentiality as required by state and federal regulations.

❏ Notify local health authorities of any positive cases among employees.

❏ Develop a plan to keep staff, visitors and clients abreast of any changes regarding Covid-19 as it relates to the workplace (e.g., weekly or ad hoc meetings or emails).

❏ Post signage throughout the site to remind staff to adhere to proper hygiene and social distancing rules, ensure appropriate use of PPE, cleaning and disinfecting products.

❏ Determine communication strategy for employment changes and decisions (e.g., layoffs, furloughs, pay cuts).

❏ Re-issue rehire letters to returning employees who were laid off or furloughed.

This content is intended to provide a general overview of the subject matter covered as of June 9, 2020. Businesses need to review state guidelines in order to ensure compliance prior to reopening. Please contact KPHR Advisors for a consultation regarding specific issues impacting your business.

KPHR Advisors

**Insightful HR Solutions.
Inspired Results.**

info@kphradvisors.com
**914.491.5747
kphradvisors.com**