



### Coronavirus- COVID-19 Workplace Policy

While we are all getting updates from the CDC, DHHS, and NIOSH on COVID-19, I would like to point to a Pennsylvania-based resource for developing a COVID-19 workplace policy, specifically the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). IUP operates the Pennsylvania OSHA Consultation program with funding from OSHA. They developed a sample COVID-19 workplace policy template that may help your organization in the development or improvement of your own program. From a Risk Management perspective, every employer should develop a COVID-19 Workplace Policy. A sample taken from this template is shown below:

The following workplace changes will be implemented until further notice:

- 🐾 Daily sanitizing of common-use areas will be performed at the end of each workday. This work will be assigned on a rotating basis.
- 🐾 Each morning, employees must check in at \_\_\_\_\_ to verify you are not exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19 such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. Each person's temperature will be taken and logged on a daily sheet. Anyone with an elevated temperature above 100.4F or exhibiting any other symptoms will be sent home for the day. Return to work will be discussed on a case-by-case basis.
- 🐾 Employees noticing others exhibiting any symptoms such as cough, etc. should immediately notify \_\_\_\_\_.
- 🐾 Contact with customers picking up or delivering equipment should be minimized, and non-employees will only be permitted to enter the following areas \_\_\_\_\_.
- 🐾 Delivery drivers will be instructed to remain with their vehicles. Drivers are not permitted to use the rest room.
- 🐾 Avoid being within 6 ft. of another person, if possible. Lunch and breaks should be scheduled to minimize the number of employees congregating in common areas. The following locations have been designated as being available for breaks and lunch: \_\_\_\_\_.
- 🐾 Employees are to wear Nitrile gloves, unless it will make it impossible or unsafe, to complete their specific job tasks. Provide examples: \_\_\_\_\_.
- 🐾 All vendor, sales, and other appointments should be cancelled until further notice. We are not permitting either walk-in or scheduled meetings in the office during this time.
- 🐾 All incoming equipment will be wiped down disinfected prior to being released to the worksite. Appropriate disinfectants can be found on this link: [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2).

This template is available in Microsoft word for easy editing. If you would like a copy of the full template, please contact us here at Wolverine Loss Control or contact IUP directly for further assistance at 1-800-382-1241, or by visiting [www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation](http://www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation).

According to the Department of Labor & Industry, if your Safety Committee, or a portion thereof, can still meet remotely (via conference call or a remote online meeting), please do so. The State temporarily suspended the requirement to have a quorum (>50% of the total members) at each meeting. If you are unable to hold a meeting because of a reduction in staff or members not having access to computers at home, the State is granting exceptions. Each month, you must document in the meeting minutes what was done, who was in attendance, why a quorum wasn't able to be achieved, or why you were unable to hold a meeting. The State will grant exceptions due to COVID-19 during this period of time.

Regarding Safety Committee Certification training, Brown & Brown is still conducting online training sessions to be held April 6<sup>th</sup>, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, and June 1<sup>st</sup>. If you are interested in joining the webinar, please contact Lisa Bellis or Gordon Smoko for a link to register.

If any of your members are unable to receive the required Safety Committee Certification training, please follow through and renew your 5% credit application online at: <https://www.hands.state.pa.us/HandS.Web/Login.aspx>.

Indicate 'No' for training. Then finish completing the application and click 'submit.' After you submit the application, please send Lisa Bellis an email including the names of those individuals not trained and the reasons why. **Please indicate your Federal Employers Identification Number (tax ID).** We will contact the reviewers at the State and explain the circumstances. They have already expressed their willingness to work with Committees.

-Lisa Bellis

## Home Office Safety



These days, we are learning to juggle working remotely. For those of us who thought it would be easy to work from home, we are learning there are definitely some challenges. Here are some tips to help you navigate successfully in your new home office.

1. Being remote doesn't have to mean isolation. Hold morning coffee breaks with your fellow co-workers, using a video conferencing platform such as Zoom.
2. Establish a comfortable, yet private area of your home, where you can conduct calls and focus on important tasks.
3. Stick to the schedule. During this time, it's essential to maintain our normal work routine, as much as possible. Set the alarm clock at your normal waking time.
4. Stretch! When we work at home, sometimes we forget to get up and walk around. Sitting for 8 hours straight is not healthy. Get up and do some light stretching. Take a short walk to the mailbox or check on loved ones.
5. Get dressed. Okay, so don't put on the three-piece suit, but at least put on pants! It's easy to remain in sweat pants, jammies, and hey, even no pants during these times. Why not give yourself a psychological boost by putting on a pair of jeans and maintaining your normal self-care routine.
6. Consider virtual office pizza parties or happy hours to stay connected with co-workers. Limit conversations regarding COVID-19 by setting boundaries on the discussion ahead of time. Keep the conversation light and uplifting!
7. Remember, it won't be like this forever! We WILL get through this...

...TOGETHER!

-Lisa Bellis

## How to Prevent Musculoskeletal Disorders

During this pandemic event we cannot afford to neglect all areas of employee safety. A leading injury type and loss driver for the Trust are strains from transferring, repositioning and lifting individuals at day programs and in homes. The CDC Center for Workplace Safety and Health offers tips for employers and employees working in the home healthcare industry that will benefit many Trust members.



### Employers:

- ❖ Develop policies to ensure care plans determine whether ergonomic assistive devices are needed.
- ❖ Provide ergonomic assistive devices (such as slide boards or gait belts) when needed.
- ❖ Provide training on the devices, their uses, clinical situations requiring them, and how to order them in the plan of care.
- ❖ Develop policies to assess the caregiver's competence with the devices once he/she has been trained and is using them.

### Employees:

- ❖ Participate in ergonomic training.
- ❖ Products such as slip sheets, slide boards, rollers, slings, and belts were designed to assist healthcare workers in transferring clients. Use these devices.
- ❖ Equipment such as adjustable beds, raised toilet seats, shower chairs, and grab bars are also helpful for reducing injuries.
- ❖ Use proper body mechanics. Even when assistive devices are used during client care, some amount of physical exertion may still be necessary. Move along the side of the client's bed, rather than reaching to perform tasks at the bedside.
- ❖ When manually moving the client, stand as close as possible to the client. Keep your knees bent and feet apart. To avoid twisting the spine, make sure one foot is in the direction of the move. Using gentle rocking motions can also reduce exertion.
- ❖ Pulling a client up in bed is easier when the head of the bed is flat. Raising the client's knees and encouraging the client to push (if possible) can also help.
- ❖ Apply anti-embolism stockings by pushing them on while you are standing at the foot of the bed. Less force is exerted in this position, than standing at the side of the bed.

Lifting and moving individuals, increases the risk for back injury and other musculoskeletal disorders for home healthcare workers. Having an ergonomics program that includes your organization's specific equipment type and location, along with location-specific policies and training, is essential.

### COVID-19 Resources

<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#ForBusinesses>

**Small Business Loans**

[www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster)

**Family Paid Leave**

<https://www.uc.pa.gov/COVID-19/Pages/FFCRA.aspx>



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Senior Risk Manager

Source: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/healthcare](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/healthcare)