

# Suggestions and Advice for Operating or Reopening Small Businesses during COVID-19

Adapted from information presented by Jackie Swihart, Project Manager, Office of Community and Rural Affairs

**Consider the following suggestions as you begin or continue thinking about operating in the midst of COVID-19. Things are still unclear and changing quickly, but keeping your employees safe and helping to prevent further spread of COVID-19 should be a top priority and focus for you as we move forward.**

## Give your space a good cleaning before you re-open.

- If your business has been closed for an extended period of time, open up windows and/or doors and let in fresh air. Even if the business hasn't been closed or has been regularly cleaned, it is still a good idea to air it out regularly, and sanitize everything that might come in contact with or be touched by employees or customers before you re-open.
- If you cannot find disinfectant for cleaning, you can use a diluted bleach solution: Mix 1/3 cup bleach per 1 gallon of water. Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used. For reference, visit the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>

## Implement CDC-recommended safety measures.

We don't know yet what the status of the virus will be when businesses are able to re-open, but be prepared to alter your business practices to follow whatever safety guidelines the CDC recommends.

This includes limiting the number of customers allowed to come in to business at once (**as enforced in the most recent Executive Order and Ordinance from the City of Logansport and Cass County Commissioners**), maintaining six-feet of social distance, sanitizing stations, and other precautions.

Below are some suggestions of safety measures you can start preparing for that the CDC might recommend or that you can go ahead and use to make your customers and employees feel safe.

- If your business has seating, take out or block off every other seat or table. This will force people to social distance without you having to monitor or enforce it. Clean those seats and tables in between each customer experience.
- Use tape or stickers to indicate how customers and employees should space themselves from each other. This can be especially useful for areas where people tend to line up, like the register.
- Allow the first hour of every day for "at risk" clientele.
- For further protection at a counter or register, you can also install a clear barrier on the counter to separate the customer and employee, but still allow communication.
- Set up hand sanitizer at points of contact like doors, bathrooms, registers, etc.
- Post signs on your doors that masks must be worn inside the store – offer free ones at the door, if possible. Cloth masks are safe and acceptable.

## Ensure that all employees have the necessary PPE.

- If your employees are going to come into close contact with customers, it is very important that you provide any and all personal protective equipment.
- All employees should be provided with some kind of mask for their protection. If they already have a mask, they should be allowed to wear it as well.
- Gloves are not recommended as necessary PPE. It is better to frequently wash your hands and avoid touching your face. If not used correctly, gloves can spread infection further than by just stopping to wash your hands regularly. If possible, please make hand sanitizer readily available to all employees.
- You should also ensure that all of your employees are using their PPE correctly for every single customer.

## Create and follow a continual sanitizing schedule.

Similar to the PPE, you need to have a sanitizing schedule that is completed on a regular basis that every employee follows. This could be wiping down the screen or credit card pad after each transaction, cleaning door handles every hour, cleaning handles and fixtures in restrooms, and wiping down phones.

## Prominently share and post all safety measures.

- Compile all the safety measures you will be following and put it on your website, your social media, your front door, at your register, and anywhere else you think it needs to be. It will make your employees and customers feel better about coming in if they have seen proof of the business being sanitized for their safety. Customers may choose to come to your place of business, simply because they know that their health will be protected.
- If there are certain rules customers need to follow, like limiting how many people can come into the store at once, you need to make those rules easy for them to find.