



2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 Continuity of Operations Recommendations for Business

Updated 3/10/20

Outbreaks like COVID-19 can have moderate to severe impacts on businesses and organizations that are unprepared to take steps to prevent and respond to the spread of illness in the workplace. Some of the steps you can take are:

- **Prepare a clear communication plan for continuity impacts.**
 - Staff notifications and alerts- especially during sudden impact events when notifications cannot be made (disabled cellular towers).
- **What effect can you expect from COVID-19 in our community?**
 - Absenteeism
 - Changes to commerce patterns impacted by international events
 - Changes in the supply chain and delivery schedules
 - Need for social distancing impacting worker anxiety and stigma associated with ill employees
- **Reduce the risk.**
 - Develop flexible leave policies for use during outbreaks like COVID19.
 - Allow for additional sick time for those with COVID-like illness (fever, cough, respiratory illness). Flexible policies should also allow time to take care of sick family members.
 - Waive the “sick-note” policy to return to work. This places an unnecessary burden on the healthcare system.
 - Remember: hourly employees may need added incentive to remain at home if sick.
 - Emphasize common-sense practices like covering coughs and sneezes and washing hands often.
 - Increase workplace cleaning: high-touch surfaces (doorknobs, phones, keyboards, etc.) and public areas (restrooms, waiting rooms, breakrooms).
 - Discontinue unnecessary, out-of-office/travel until risk has passed. Ensure your staff is aware of the locations of high risk prior to breaks and vacations.
 - Separate out sick employees and encourage them to remain at home until they are symptom-free for at least 24hrs.
- **Prepare for possible increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members.**
 - Identify staff that are cross-trained to cover for ill employees.
 - Monitor employee absenteeism and conduct a business process review to identify staff that are mission essential. Reduce the workload of non-mission essential functions and reassign them to critical functions.
 - Allow for telework when possible to ensure an adequate number of mission-essential employees are available.

- **Resources may be in short supply due to supply chain impacts and travel guidelines.**
 - Keep a two week supply of essential cleaning supplies and stock up on mission-critical materials to minimize the burden of frequent reordering.
 - Encourage staff and their families to have a personal preparedness plan for things like medications, baby formula, pets supplies, and notification during emergencies (especially if you are a healthcare worker or first responder).

If you are a supervisor or manager, the minimum information you would need written down in case you are unable to perform your duties:

- Impacts if this service is not performed are...
- Other locations or hours this service could be performed if staffing could not be maintained at current levels are...
- The recovery time objective (maximum amount of time service could be unavailable) is...
- The partners that rely on me/this service are...
- The minimum staff and resources that must be available to continue operations are...
- If I am unavailable in an emergency, the secondary point of contact, and how to contact them is...

As the local public health authority, we are working to keep local residents informed and updated on the issue and provide messaging around ways to stay healthy and prevent the spread of illness. More information can be found at <http://health.mesacounty.us/covid19>