

REOPENING RI

Guidance for Manufacturing

About this guidance

The manufacturing industry has remained open in Rhode Island during the COVID-19 crisis. These guidelines summarize requirements and recommendations for manufacturing companies and workers as they move toward economic recovery. In addition to the sector-specific guidance outlined here, all businesses should review the [Vital Workplace Resources section](#) of Reopening RI's website. Ensuring that anyone who is sick stays home and does not come to work is a top priority.

This guidance document is intended to cover issues that frequently arise when complying with the general requirements for all establishments regarding physical distancing, cleaning and disinfecting, masking, and other standards. The general requirements include those in Executive Orders and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) regulations [Safe Activities By Covered Entities During the COVID-19 Emergency](#). In addition, businesses and organizations should also review the general workplace guidelines applicable to your business or organization.

These guidelines are designed to reduce the risk of clients, employees, and all Rhode Islanders from contracting COVID-19. Upon inspection, if a business is found in violation of the applicable regulations, fines may be issued and/or the business may be closed by RIDOH officials. Keep in mind that the regulations and guidance documents will be in effect during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic and may be updated from time to time.

Both these industry-specific guidelines and the general business/organization guidance affirm the recommendations that manufacturers sign and are aligned with the Rhode Island Manufacturer's Association (RIMA) Pledge, which includes updating cleaning and disinfecting procedures, following PPE guidance, using physical distancing models on the production floor, and having as many office employees work remotely as possible.

Questions about this guidance can be directed to the Department of Business Regulation via its [online form](#) or by calling 401-889-5550.

Manufacturing operations

Manufacturers will be able to remain open for in-person activity with the following guidance in place to protect public health and safety.

These practices should be incorporated into the quality control standards established by each manufacturing company in order to maintain product safety and health-quality standards.

Anyone who is sick or who has [COVID-19 symptoms](#) should stay home and not come to work. This is very important because it helps prevent others from getting sick. Use the COVID-19 Screening Tool (available in [English](#) or in [Spanish](#)) before allowing anyone to come on site or enter the facility.

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Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from work and isolate at home.

- Close contacts to positive individuals (anyone within six feet for more than 15 minutes while the person had symptoms and two days before symptoms started) need to be excluded from work and quarantine for 14 days.
- Employees need to be told to call their supervisor and not go to work if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Physical Distancing Requirements, Workstations, and Common Areas

- Ensure that all people stay at least six feet apart at all times, unless physical distance is unsafe due to the nature of the manufacturing work.
- When necessary, reconfigure and redesign workstations to keep workers at least six feet apart (e.g. move equipment or install partitions between individual workstations that exceed the individuals' height when workstations cannot be moved).
- Consider closing or reconfiguring lobbies, break rooms, and common areas to allow for physical distancing.
- Post signage and floor markings with directional arrows to control traffic flow and assist with physical distancing.
- Implement policies to limit group interactions, including staggering shifts, meals, and breaks to ensure physical distancing.
- Assign working areas for individuals to limit movement throughout the space.
- Implement floor markings or individual locations following physical distancing for employees as they line up for timeclocks and for other gatherings such as daily meetings at start of shift.
- Consider creating set workstations, clear walkable pathways, and designated work areas that section off the manufacturing facility to limit worker movement throughout the space.
- Create teams that do not intersect or overlap.

Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use

- The use of masks is required in these settings (indoors and outdoors) in alignment with RIDOH regulations which indicate that masks must be worn unless six feet of physical distancing can be maintained easily and continuously.
- Masks or face coverings are not required when workers are in an environment where a face mask would create a safety hazard (e.g. near open flames; in the presence of extreme environmental conditions; when a mask or face covering would hinder communication of safety procedures or verbal/visual cues necessary for safe operations; when environmental conditions are exacerbated with a mask and further compromise the safety of an employee).
- Workers who were previously required to wear a face mask or PPE should maintain the same practices as before (e.g. during paint stations, woodworking areas, chemical processing, or sanding operations).
- Consider creating no-mask zones for work where wearing a mask would make it difficult or impossible to perform the task at hand. In such zones, there should be set and stationary areas for workers to limit movement and ensure six feet of physical distancing.

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Cleaning and Disinfecting

- High-touch surfaces and shared objects must be cleaned in accordance with the [General Business/Organization Guidelines](#) posted on Reopening RI's website. Providing hand-sanitizer **containing at least 60% alcohol** next to the time clock is strongly recommended.
- Limiting mutual contact on equipment is strongly recommended. It is recommended to thoroughly clean and disinfect shared equipment between users, unless doing so would create a hazard due to the nature of the work.
- Frequently clean and disinfect tool crib (e.g. between each shift). Shared tools must be cleaned and disinfected before and after being removed from the tool crib and between users.

Contact Tracing

The collection of contact tracing information for those who enter the manufacturing facility, including visitors, is recommended. Employers should provide supporting tools to help each employee track their contacts within the manufacturing facility during shifts.

Screening

Businesses should screen all entrants, including employees, visitors, and customers, upon arrival to the manufacturing facility. It is recommended that businesses conduct such screenings verbally. A COVID-19 Screening Tool, in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#), is available on Reopening RI's website.

Deliveries

Limiting the number of outside visitors to the facility is recommended, when possible. Consider having your own employees unload items from a delivery instead of having the delivery driver enter the facility.

Offices

Office spaces in manufacturing facilities should follow the [general guidance for offices](#) available on Reopening RI's website.

Travel

It is recommended that workers do not carpool to and from work unless they live in the same household. If carpooling is unavoidable, face coverings should be worn when inside the vehicle and individuals should keep as much distance between themselves as possible.

Communication Plans

Manufacturing employers that follow guidance may have to make significant changes to their production floor layout, material flow, and shift operations. These changes all require an clear and frequent communication with employees and strategic modifications which allow for safe operations and for production operation to continue efficiently. Modifications to daily or shift meetings, convened in order to properly communicate, should be considered so that physical distancing guidelines are followed. But, it is important to communicate regularly to the entire organization re COVID-related practices.

Consider developing a communication plan to explain the COVID-19-related practices and guidelines. Determine the best materials and methods for communicating information (e.g. developing and disseminating a one-pager, posting information and FAQs online, sharing information on social media, posting information in all areas where employees may congregate like outside picnic tables or time clocks, and developing and sharing screening tools and signage for public buildings and businesses).



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RIMA and Polaris MEP are leading efforts to train employers and employees on best practices from CDC and OSHA. These training programs are based on general guidance and are also customized for manufacturing environments in order to allow for the most efficient production operations possible.

Procedures for symptomatic or confirmed COVID-19 individuals

Please review and follow the guidelines for individuals who show signs of illness or tests positive for COVID-19 available in the [General Business/Organization Guidelines](#) posted on Reopening RI's website.

Additional Resources:

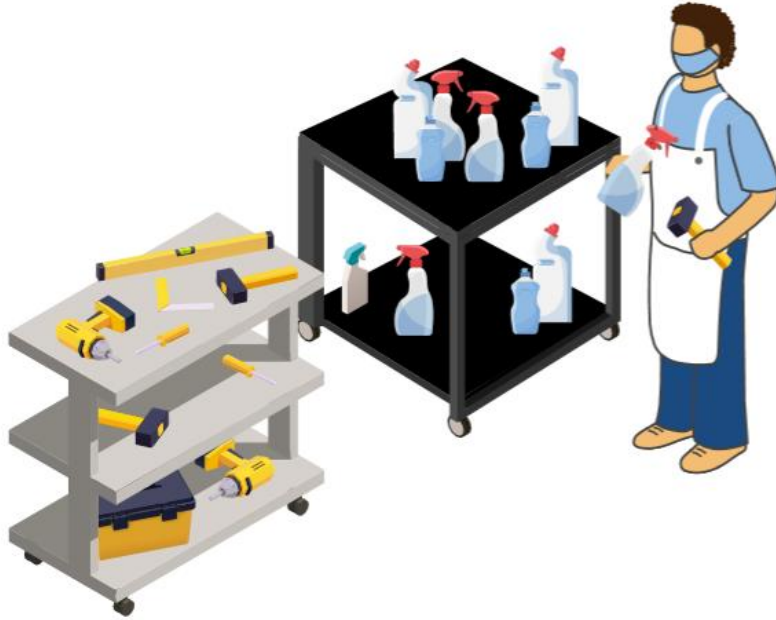
- [RIMA/Polaris Readiness Playbook](#)
- [OSHA Guidance](#)



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Illustrative Examples:

Example: Frequently Clean and Disinfect High-Touch Surfaces



Frequently clean and disinfect tool crib. Shared tools must be sanitized before and after being removed from the tool crib and between users. Using a mobile cart to clean and disinfect high-touch equipment between uses may be considered.

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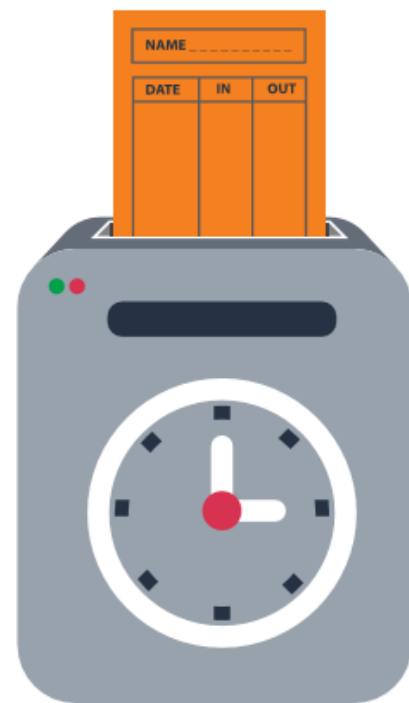
Example: Reconfigure Workstations



When necessary, reconfigure and redesign workstations to place workers at least six feet apart (e.g. move equipment or install partitions between individual workstations that exceeds the individuals' height when workstations cannot be moved).

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Example: Time clocks



Implement floor markings or individual locations following physical distancing for employees as they line up for timeclocks and for other gatherings such as daily meetings at start of shift. High-touch surfaces and shared objects must be cleaned in accordance with the general business and organization guidance document available at: www.reopeningri.com. Providing hand-sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol next to the time clock is strongly recommended.