6 Ways to Prepare to Reopen

A Resource Guide Prepared by the Madison County Chamber of Commerce
Build A COVID-19 Plan

Make a list of your current business processes and procedures that will require modification before opening (back to a new normal) and create a written plan of action for each. Several points of the plan should be referenced in advertising efforts to show you are serious about customer and employee safety. Call it your "Covid-19 Safety Plan"; review and revise it as necessary.

Create a project punch list that includes new protocols, safety procedures, social distancing, and marketing. Discuss these with your staff to ensure each point is understood.
Respect Social Distancing

By now, you've been to a store that has placed stickers on the floor indicating where to stand, seen signs which indicate "ten people or less", and even noticed plastic shields in front of checkout counters. You should consider similar procedures. Start gathering necessary supplies and signage to accommodate your COVID-19 plan.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including eye protection, facemasks, or gloves may be required. If you don't have any, begin shopping for them now.
Customer Interaction

Review your inventory of business supplies and add relevant items in anticipation of changes, based on your plan. For example, you may need to add hand sanitizer and hand cleaning stations, which may be expected by your customers.

Consider whether you need to rearrange your store, check-out location, seating, foot traffic patterns, restroom or dressing room policies, etc. as you prepare to keep staff, customers, and yourself safe.

Curbside pick-up locations should be clearly marked and accessible. Even though your doors may be open for business, customers will still be cautious and will appreciate these conveniences.

Create professional looking signs indicating all points of change. There are several Chamber members who can help you with quick, easy solutions.
Customers will notice if your store is clean, organized, and safe to enter. Revise your cleaning/sanitation plan and have all the necessary items to ensure the ongoing safety of everyone who enters your business. Create a formal cleaning/sanitation schedule, add it to your daily calendar, and make sure your staff is able to comply with it. Include inspection times and checklists for quality control.

- Keep cleaning supplies visible, and have a goal of smelling fresh and recently cleaned.
- Provide easily accessible disinfectant wipes.
- Consider having a professional cleaning company do regular deep cleanings. There are Chamber members who can help with this.
- Post your cleaning plan so it's visible to everyone who enters. This shows the steps you're taking to ensure ongoing safety.
Advertise Your COVID-19 Plan

As businesses begin to reopen, consumers may have questions about changes in your mode of business. When you begin to advertise that you're again open for business, include your plan and new protocols. Customers will notice and feel confident they're entering a safe environment.

- Update your website, social media accounts, and any other advertising channels so that your COVID-19 plan is easily found.
- Make videos showcasing your COVID-19 plan in action.
- Have flyers or other handouts listing items available for delivery or curbside pickup.
- Ask customers for online reviews and let them know you'll appreciate them mentioning your store's cleanliness.
- Have fun with this process! Show pictures of you and your staff cleaning, smiling, and happy to be open once again.
- Plan a Grand Opening event and celebrate!
The process of reopening will continue to be revised as our federal, state, and local officials evaluate the current environment. Many people are ready for business as usual, but many others will remain cautious for quite some time. If you develop your plan toward cautious, consumers will respect your new procedures.

The lack of a COVID-19 safety plan will likely be noticed by customers. The faster we adhere to safety protocols, the quicker we can get back to business as usual.

For Public Health COVID-19 Reopening Guidance, visit www.IDPH.Iowa.Gov
Questions or Comments?
Let Us Know!

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