

COVID-19 Reopening Tribal Offices & Administrative Operations Specific Considerations

Prior to Resuming Operations:

1. Develop a comprehensive COVID-19 prevention plan and specific procedures that identify and incorporate the needs of the facility. Identify gating criteria and establish metrics and benchmarks to determine when and how to expand functions and adjust restrictions and mitigation measures.
2. Make sure employee health policies are in place, updated, communicated to employees, and easily understood.
3. Develop employee health screening procedures. This might include daily symptom self-checks and temperature checks upon arrival.
4. Evaluate your sanitizing and disinfecting plan. The frequency of cleaning and sanitizing should be increased in all employee and public areas with an emphasis on high traffic areas and frequent contact surfaces. Make sure employees have proper training, equipment, and access to products according to EPA's registry of disinfectants.
 - Cleaning agents should be reviewed to ensure they meet EPA guidelines, are approved for use and are effective against COVID-19 and other viruses.
5. Conduct environmental health and safety inspection and related maintenance activities. This is especially important for buildings that were closed and have been unoccupied. This may include inspecting the HVAC system and replacing filters, discarding any expired products (food, cleaning products, etc.), inspecting the fire and CO systems, identifying any leaks or mold growth, inspecting for presence of pests including rodents, etc. Also treat the water system and/or flush water lines by opening faucets and allowing water to run free for several minutes as stagnant water in pipes can lead to water quality issues. Pour water down any floor drains to keep sewage gas from coming into facility.
6. Reconfigure floor layout to facilitate physical distancing. This may include relocating desks so that chairs are at least 6 feet apart
7. Where practical, install Plexiglas partitions between places that visitors or clients walk up to interface with employees (like front desks).
8. Develop a routine evaluation and monitoring schedule to assess progress and address any concerns or challenges.
9. Consider restricting visitor access to the best degree possible, at least initially. Once visitors are allowed, determine visitor health screening procedures. This will likely include taking temperatures and asking visitors about COVID-19 symptoms.
10. Reduce high touch surfaces by installing ADA automatic door openers or similar devices.
11. Reconfigure smoking areas to ensure and enforce physical distancing. Consider using floor markings or signs.
12. Determine a protocol for responding to staff or a visitor who recently visited the facility with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection. Be as detailed as possible.

Considerations once Offices are Open:

1. All employees should receive training on COVID-19 prevention including personal hygiene (handwashing), physical distancing and wearing face masks properly. Also provide training on safety and sanitation protocols. This training should be done online to maintain physical distancing.
2. Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 and promote everyday protective measures like hand washing, physical distancing or wearing face masks (proper fit and how to wear). Also post signs near staff and patron entrances to discourage sick customers from entering the premises.

3. Masks should be worn by employees at all times when not at desks. If physical distancing cannot be maintained while at desks, staff should wear masks at desks as well.
4. Require or encourage visitors when allowed into facility to wear masks.
5. Implement daily health screening for all employees and visitors upon entering facility. This might include taking temperatures as well as asking about COVID-19 symptoms.
6. Staff should not come to work sick and leave promptly if they feel ill while at work. Isolate symptomatic and confirmed COVID-19 employees from premises for 14 days, or until they provide a negative test result.
7. Use communication boards or digital messaging to convey important staff-wide information like changes to procedures or local developments
8. Frequent and consistent sanitizing for high traffic touch surfaces and equipment. Ensure staff have access to materials and training to safely sanitize surfaces as appropriate
9. Clean and sanitize keyboards on communal computers or other shared equipment between users
10. Limit the number of doors for entry and exit
11. Cancel or postpone all nonessential travel. Be sure to define what essential travel is. For essential travel, if travel to/from an area where COVID-19 transmission occurred recently or areas with high incidence rate, workers should monitor themselves daily and if symptoms present, quarantine themselves for 14 days
12. Meetings should be held virtually as possible. If meetings are held in person, physical distancing should be enforced, if not possible, all staff should wear masks.
13. Staff who are able to telework should continue to do so.
14. Consider making accommodations or adjustments in duties for staff who are at-risk or live with/care for at-risk persons. For example: re-assigning staff who often interface with the public to do administrative tasks.
15. Consider where/how staff may store, prepare and eat lunches (cars, at desks, etc) and determine sanitizing protocols they must follow after touching food storage and preparation equipment/surfaces
16. Limit how many staff are allowed in break rooms at any given time
17. If you have a communal water jug or fill stations, limit congestion and enforce physical distancing. If able, consider temporarily offering bottled water (single serve) or encouraging staff to bring water bottles filled from home
18. Increase the frequency of air filter replacement and HVAC system cleaning, use at least MERV-13 filters, and maximize fresh air exchange
19. Consider staggering working hours to reduce the number of employees in the office at one time and also to reduce congestion of employees in common places such as at entrances and exits
20. Provide hand sanitizer stations as appropriate

References:

- WHO. (May, 10, 2020). "Considerations for public health and social measures in the workplace in the context of COVID-19". <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/considerations-for-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-workplace-in-the-context-of-covid-19>
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