

CHECKLIST:

Reopening Your Retail Store After the Coronavirus Shutdown

Cities around the nation are beginning to lift their COVID-19-related restrictions. For retailers that closed their brick-and-mortar locations, the following steps will help you plan for reopening while protecting customers and employees.

GENERAL STEPS

EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Stay abreast of current federal, state and local COVID-19 guidelines for businesses, as well as industry-specific guidelines. Sign up for updates from the [Centers for Disease Control](#), [the SBA](#), state and local health departments, and relevant industry associations.
- If you have multiple locations, be aware of COVID-19 related laws in each locale.
- Designate a COVID-19 team of one or more employees to oversee your COVID-19 response and reopening plan.

ASSESS YOUR FINANCES

- Create a [cash flow forecast](#) including optimistic, pessimistic and realistic models.
- Look for ways to cut expenses and add new revenue streams.
- Estimate increased costs for retrofitting space, deep cleaning, ongoing sanitation, etc.
- Keep updated on financial assistance available from lenders and government sources.
- Communicate with landlords, creditors, vendors and lenders.
- Ask your insurance agent about appropriate coverage to protect against lawsuits from customers or employees after reopening.

ADJUST YOUR BUSINESS MODEL

- Decide which elements to continue, add, discontinue or expand:
 - Selling products online via your website or other marketplace
 - Curbside contactless order pickup
 - Allowing customers to place phone orders for limited items
 - Providing delivery services
 - Selling gift cards
- Decide if you need to adjust business hours to enable social distancing or provide extra time for cleaning.
- Plan how to handle out-of-date merchandise (discount, liquidation, selling on eBay or other ecommerce site).
- Determine whether to limit quantities of items per customer to prevent hoarding.

PLAN YOUR STAFFING

- Decide if you will reopen in stages or all at once. Identify staffing needs for each stage of reopening.
- Understand how [COVID-19 related employment laws](#) affect your decisions. A [SCORE mentor](#) or local employment attorney can help.
- Update your [operations handbook](#) and [employee handbook](#) to reflect new policies and procedures consistent with public health guidelines.
- Contact employees to discuss their needs. Create a plan to help at-risk employees, parents or caregivers who may need special accommodations return to work.
- Create a [business continuity plan](#) and a [crisis communications plan](#) in case of an outbreak of COVID-19 at your business.
- Train employees on new procedures including cleaning, social distancing and health screenings.
- Cross-train employees so you have backup in place if some workers are absent.

SET UP A HEALTH SCREENING SYSTEM

- Educate employees about COVID-19 symptoms and the need to stay home when sick.
- Develop a policy for screening employees before coming to work and screening guests before they enter the building, including temperature and symptom checks.
- Plan your response if an employee or customer becomes ill in your workplace, including notifying employees and customers and [cleaning and disinfecting](#) the workplace.

MARKET YOUR BUSINESS

- Keep your website, Google My Business and other local search listings updated with current information and hours of operation.
- Create messaging explaining your safety measures.
- Create a [marketing plan](#) for your grand reopening that includes social media, email, website copy, texting and/or phone calls.
- Hang signage in your windows notifying customers of your plans.

KEEP YOUR STORE CLEAN

- Provide disposable disinfectant wipes, cleaners or spray meeting [EPA standards](#) for [cleaning and disinfecting workspaces](#), workstations, cash registers, payment terminals, shopping baskets, door handles, countertops, restrooms and shared equipment regularly.
- Set up hand sanitizer dispensers at store entrance, throughout the store, and in employee areas.
- Develop guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting workspaces and washing hands. Educate employees on these procedures and place relevant [signage](#) with instructions in key areas.
- Assign dedicated employees to cleaning and disinfecting the store regularly.
- Ensure restrooms are well supplied with soap, trash cans, tissue and paper towels.
- Provide masks and disposable gloves and train employees on their proper use.
- Secure sources for regular supply of cleaners, disinfectants and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Display signage asking customers not to bring reusable bags.
- Consider adjusting your return policy. If you will accept returns and exchanges, create a system for handling and disinfecting the items.
- If you plan to keep fitting rooms open, develop a process for disinfecting them before and after each use and for setting aside or disinfecting items after customers try them on.

IMPLEMENT SOCIAL DISTANCING

FOR EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS:

- Set store capacity limits and assign an employee to monitor the number of customers in the store.
- Move checkout counters at least six feet apart.
- Place acrylic barriers between customers and checkout clerks to further limit contact.
- Use floor markings at checkout counters to indicate proper social distancing for customers waiting in line.
- Use in-store announcements to remind customers of social distancing rules.
- Limit number of employees in the store by staggering shifts. Consider assigning employees in two to three teams and staggering schedules so teams never overlap their hours.
- Limit employee travel between multiple locations of your business.
- Limit the need to touch cash, payment cards or payment devices by adding touchless payment systems or allowing customers to pay with their smartphones.
- Consider reserving special shopping hours for at-risk customers such as seniors.
- Place signage at store entrance explaining your health guidelines and asking customers to follow them.
- Use in-store signage to promote the steps you're taking to keep employees and customers safe.
- Develop a plan for handling customers or vendors who refuse to comply with social distancing.

FOR VENDORS AND CONTRACTORS:

- Set up designated areas for third-party order pickup services and inventory delivery.
- Post signage asking delivery drivers and visitors to comply with state and local health guidelines such as wearing PPE and maintaining social distancing.
- Reduce in-person contact during deliveries by using contactless signatures.
- Develop a plan for handling and disinfecting deliveries.

GENERAL RESOURCES

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) [COVID-19 Resources for Business & Employers](#)
- CDC [Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools and Homes](#)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [Coronavirus and COVID-19 guidance](#)
- SCORE [Coronavirus Small Business Resource Hub](#)
- [State resources on COVID-19](#)
- Small Business Administration [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Small Business Guidance & Loan Resources](#)

RETAIL INDUSTRY RESOURCES

- National Retail Federation (NRF) [Coronavirus Resources for Retailers](#)
- Find [state retail associations](#)
- NRF [Operation Open Doors](#)
- Kroger [Blueprint for Businesses](#)