

Governor DeWine Announces Phase 1 of Responsible RestartOhio

The Columbus Chamber has formed a Return to Work Task Force comprised of members of all sizes across all industries. This group provides valuable insight into our recently submitted list of policy requests to the DeWine Administration to help guide the Governor's Return to Work strategy.

Your Chamber called on the Governor to give businesses the autonomy and flexibility to ensure the health and safety of their workers by limiting mandated government regulations and cost to comply. We urged that *all* businesses capable of adhering to a short list of health and safety standards should be permitted to open immediately. And amongst other things, we are working with the Ohio General assembly to request employer protections from liability for COVID-related claims where health and safety standards have been implemented and adhered to.

While not all of our recommendations were accepted, we are pleased to see the first round of business openings commence. We call on our members within those sectors to do so thoughtfully and safely, and in compliance with the Governor's latest executive order(s).

The details of the order are still being finalized, so please be aware that this document reflects the information available at the time of release. We will continue to provide additional updates as they become available and as conversations with the Governor's office continue. The Governor announced today that certain sectors may open according to the following timeline and requirements:

May 1: Medically necessary healthcare procedures that do not require an overnight stay, including regular doctor visits, out-patient surgeries, imaging procedures, and diagnostic tests, as well as dental and veterinary services.

May 4: All manufacturing, distribution, and construction, as well as general office environments. All employees that can are encouraged to continue working from home.

May 12: Retail establishments. See list of exceptions below. The Stay at Home order will remain in effect, so Ohioans are encouraged only to leave their home when necessary. Shopping malls and other retail locations like Easton may open under the Order, so long as businesses can comply with the other safety requirements listed below.

All businesses, including essential businesses that have maintained operations, must follow a new set of safety mandates in order to open or remain in operation. The State of Ohio has also issued a list of *recommended* actions that businesses take. While these are not mandated, they are strongly advised when feasible. Industry specific criteria can be [found online here](#), but include:

- In all workplaces, **all employees and customers must wear facial coverings**. Employers may opt to provide masks for their employees, or implement a policy requiring employees to supply their own. While local law enforcement and health department officials will be enforcing this requirement, store owners should require and enforce patron use of a face covering prior to entering the establishment.
 - **UPDATE 3 as of 4/29:** The Governor yesterday announced that wearing a mask is not a mandated requirement for customers entering retail establishments, but it is "strongly suggested". The face covering requirement remains intact in workplaces, with a few limited exceptions: it is not advisable by a healthcare professional, goes against industry best practices, or is not permitted by federal or state laws and regulations. This might include jobs working in extreme temperatures, for example. As mentioned above, we

continue to seek additional clarification on the details of this new order and will communicate them to our members as available. To clarify, the official order has not yet been released, so this guidance is based on information released by the Administration that does not have legal force and effect until the Order is signed.

- Businesses must implement **6 feet social distancing** for all workers and customers. Where this is not possible, barriers must be installed.
- Work stations and equipment must be **sanitized frequently**, and daily in some instances. Good hygiene must be reinforced and signage should be posted in common areas, such as [this one by the CDC](#).
- Employees must **conduct a daily symptom assessment** that includes taking their own temperature with a thermometer. Employers may check the temperatures of their workers before entering the premises, or implement a policy to require self-reporting by their employees before going to work each day.
- Large **gatherings of more than 10 people are still prohibited**, including staff meetings and events. Maximum capacity is now considered 50 percent of that specified in the building fire code, so ensure you will not be in violation of this new standard and adjust accordingly.

Schools and daycares, adult daycare and senior centers remain closed. Restaurants, salons and beauty establishments, gyms and country clubs, and places of public entertainment such as theatres, casinos, stadiums, zoos and museums, as well as sports gatherings cannot open until Phase 2. We understand the eagerness of these businesses to have clarity on when they will be permitted to open their doors, and are working to understand and provide input on which indicators the Administration will use to determine the time frame. **Update 2 as of 4/29: The Governor, in conjunction with the Ohio Legislature has formed three groups to look at the reopening strategy for salons, restaurants and daycares, to determine whether it is feasible for them to open sooner rather than later.**

Also under the new order, if a business experiences a confirmed case of COVID-19, they must:

- Immediately isolate and seek medical care for any individual who develops symptoms while at work.
- Contact the local health district about suspected cases or exposures.
- Shutdown shop/floor for deep sanitation if possible. The “if possible” language is another area on which we are seeking clarification and will provide additional guidance as available.
- It is also recommended that you work with your local health department to conduct contact tracing and testing.

As you encounter obstacles that might hinder you in this process, [please let us know](#). We continue to solicit input and provide feedback to the Administration on the needs and recovery of the business community. And we continue to listen to our members to help you come out on the other side of this pandemic stronger than ever before.