



Construction Overview

According to [Pennsylvania's Phased Reopening plan](#) and [Governor Wolf's construction industry guidance](#):

- During the **"Red"** phase, businesses in the construction industry in the Commonwealth, which include those in new construction, renovation, and repair, as well as land subdivision and design-related field activities, are permitted to maintain in-person operations.
- Upon entering the **"Yellow"** phase, businesses in the construction supply chain that are not currently considered a life-sustaining business may again begin operations.
- Upon entering the **"Green"** phase, construction activity may return to full capacity with continued implementation of state and CDC protocols.

These materials and any related updates are provided and intended for general public informational purposes and guidance. While intended to be timely and accurate, please note that federal and state regulations and directives are changing often. To that extent, please continue to monitor this site for any significant modifications and developments.

Businesses that have questions about whether this guidance applies to them may email the Department of Labor and Industry at RA-LIBOIS-BUILDINGS@pa.gov.

Employer Tips and Guidelines

The [Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry](#) requires that businesses in the construction industry [follow these guidelines](#), which include:

- A construction business is permitted to operate in its permanent work location, as long as the safety measures in the [DOH Business Safety Order](#) are followed. When possible, those who can telework should do so.
- Employers are required to provide you with the required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- If a person who is known to have COVID-19, or is presumed to have COVID-19, has visited the jobsite, screening (including temperature checks) is mandatory.
- Gloves and enhanced cleaning procedures are required for shared tools and equipment.
- Written safety plans are strongly encouraged for all businesses in operation, including all types of construction.
- All commercial construction projects including new construction, renovation, and repair are authorized to conduct in-person operations; however, enclosed projects, or portions of enclosed projects, may not permit more than four persons on job sites of 2,000 square feet or less. One additional person is allowed for each additional 500 square feet of enclosed area over 2,000 square feet.

- Residential projects must follow the residential guidelines, which state no more than four persons on the job site at the same time (even if the project is over 2,000 square feet).
- So long as architects and engineers are not directly engaged in construction activity and require only temporary access to the site, they may be excluded from the total number of individuals allowed on site, and do not count toward the limitation.

[As per the American Industrial Hygiene Association](#) (AIHA), construction employers should consider developing a team to monitor, assess, and implement new health-protection strategies as they become available. The AIHA also provides the following tips for returning to normal business operations:

- Develop a response plan for communicating to your employees the facts of SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease. Utilize posters visible in the workspace for quick takeaways.
- Complete a task-based risk assessment/mapping of each project site to determine best strategies for social distancing of at least 6 feet, and ensure staff have face coverings.
- Reduce the number of individuals to the site to essential staff to complete the work. Temporary spaces should be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Consistently monitor employee wellness and do not let anyone symptomatic onto the worksite. Revisit your leave or sick program to allow for this time off.
- For Temperature Checks: Employees can have their temperature taken using an infrared camera and answer a medical questionnaire prepared by HR to evaluate their current physical state before entering any job site.
- Employees who monitor their temperature at home should update their supervisor if they have a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit and stay home.
- Reduce tasks requiring large amounts of people to be in one area.
- Teams clean and disinfect their shared workstations and equipment after use.
- Eliminate non-essential visits, such as job tours, vendor demos, etc.
- Maintain a daily approved visitor log. This log should include the date, time, and contact information of the visitor.
- Stop employees from randomly walking floors, between floors, or buildings to reduce cross-contamination. Consider color code stickers on hard hats and restrict access to only the correct color for each building or space.
- Provide for several hand washing stations with soap and water in common areas and throughout the site, including portable wash stations and hand sanitizer in vehicles.
- Ensure break areas allow for social distancing (mark picnic tables with Xs to stop people from sitting nearby one another, remove chairs to prevent gatherings, disinfect areas regularly).
- Eliminate sharing personal hand tools, and large shared tools shall be cleaned before and after use.
- Encourage staff to wash clothes daily and face coverings daily on the warmest setting possible.
- For close-contact activities that cannot adjust for physical distancing, consider providing enhanced Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or a face shield with a face covering while fully considering all the potential OSHA requirements.

How Employees Can Protect Themselves

- If you feel unwell or have any of the symptoms associated with COVID-19, stay home. Note: Employer HR Policies, HIPPA guidelines and other laws should be followed at all times.
- If you are in a population particularly susceptible to COVID-19 and are directed by a medical professional or government official to quarantine or self-isolate, you may be eligible for paid leave.
- Self-monitor your temperature every morning. Employees who have a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should stay home and notify their supervisor.
- Understand workspace rules—no large gatherings.
- Employees should wear face coverings at all times. Maintain face covering if you are not able to maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet.
- Maintain good hygiene practice: washing hands with soap and water or utilizing a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Meetings should not be in person, but use video, chats, or other conference line-type systems.

If an Employee Tests Positive

- If the individual receives a positive test notification while at work, follow established Human Resources policy. If the individual receives a positive test notification while NOT at work, the individual should follow established Human Resources policy, stay home and self-isolate in accordance with Chester County Health Department guidance.
- Close off areas visited by the positive individual. Refer to the [CDC's general cleaning & disinfecting guidance](#) and [guidance in facilities where someone is sick](#).
- Determine who had contact with the positive individual during the time the individual had symptoms as well as 48 hours prior to symptoms. Notify employees who were in close contact with the confirmed individual while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
 - People who had close contact must self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of last contact with the positive individual.
 - “Close contact” is defined as having contact for more than 15 minutes, at a distance of 6 feet or less, with a positive individual.
- Individuals may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:
 - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since your fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medication
 - AND improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
 - AND At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- After returning to work, individuals should:
 - Wear a facemask at all times while at work until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer.
 - Be restricted from contact with individuals at a higher risk (e.g., older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness).
 - Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).

- Self-monitor for symptoms. Seek immediate re-evaluation from occupational health/primary care provider and do not work if symptoms recur or worsen.
- The Chester County Health Department will be notified of all confirmed cases through established disease reporting protocols and will follow-up with the individual appropriately. Contact the Chester County Health Department at 610-344-6225.

Supporting Customers and Clients

As per the AIHA, customers and clients can minimize the transmission of COVID-19 using these tips:

- Customers and visitors to the job site should follow practices of social distancing.
- Use a face covering when entering the job site and inspecting or meeting with workers.
- No handshake greetings.
- Do not share clipboards, but rather use a white board to demonstrate the concept in the field.
- Increase use of virtual technology for project tracking and updates to reduce site visitors.