



In-Home and Residential Services Overview

According to [Pennsylvania's Phased Reopening Plan](#):

- In the “Red” phase, only those services designated “life-sustaining” by the state may operate. Those who have questions about whether this applies to their business may email: ra-dcedcs@pa.gov.
- In the “Yellow” and “Green” phases, services that are not life-sustaining may resume operations provided they follow state and CDC guidelines. Telework is encouraged whenever possible.

According to the [American Industrial Hygiene Association](#) (AIHA), non-healthcare in-home and residential service providers include a wide range of services such as: Appliance Repair Technicians, Carpenters, Computer Repair Technicians, Electricians, Household Cleaners/Maid Service, HVAC Technicians, Landscape Workers, Painters, Pest Control Specialists, Plumbers, and Telecommunications Technicians.

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.

Employer Tips and Guidelines

The AIHA provides the following tips for employers to protect themselves and their customers while resuming business operation:

- Employers should consider developing a team of professionals to monitor, assess, and implement new COVID-19 transmission risk mitigation strategies as they become available.
- Consistently monitor employees' symptoms; temperature should not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Revisit your leave or sick program to allow for time off if necessary.
- Employees who monitor their temperature at home should update their supervisor if they have a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit and stay home.
- Educate employees on common residential high-touch surfaces and develop strategies to minimize contact and wash hands/utilize hand sanitizer before and after touching.
- Establish a payment system that discourages the use of cash or checks. Instead utilize alternatives such as pre-payment or app-based systems.
- Implement procedures to avoid customer contact with service provider (e.g. if a signature is required from the resident, have them use their own pen).
- Provide employees with face coverings, gloves, shoe covers and hand sanitizer. Ensure these employees are trained on proper use and limitations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

- Consider additional disposable barriers where appropriate (e.g. plastic sheeting for covering the resident's floor or table in work area).
- Employees should carry out all trash and waste using a plastic sealable bag.
- Ask any customer that intends to be in the same room as the at-home service provider to wear a face covering.
- Establish a disinfection routine (especially for equipment, tools, or vehicles that must be shared):
 - Ensure disinfection protocols follow product instructions for application and contact time.
 - Provide hand sanitizer in work van/trucks and ask employees to apply prior to touching interior surfaces.
 - Ensure that employees use appropriate disinfectants on the surfaces they touch within the customer's home.
 - If allowed by customer, disinfect work area and surfaces interacted with prior to work starting.
 - Use disposable products when possible.
 - If reusable products are used, ensure that these products are maintained, handled, and cleaned as instructed in product instructions.
 - Consider using a checklist or audit system to track when and how cleaning is conducted.
- Require employees to disinfect tools (including any electronic devices) following each service visit.
- Eliminate sharing of tools or equipment where possible.
- Encourage employees to wash and dry clothes and face coverings daily on the highest setting allowable for the fabric.
- Communicate to customers in advance of the at-home service provider's visit on what the service provider is doing to protect the resident and its employees.
- Employers should ensure that employees are comfortable when leaving a customer site when there is a concern of transmission of COVID-19.
- Perform as much of the pre-work consultation as possible before arriving on a customer site. Encourage any additional on-site communication to occur outdoors when possible.
- Request, upon arrival and departure, that the customer opens the door and steps back 6 feet from the door before the service provider enters/exits the residence.
- Ask that customers cancel or reschedule any non-emergency service if they are COVID-19 positive, have been in contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, or are living with someone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- Employees should, at minimum, wash their hands when they arrive at work, after touching their face covering, and when they leave work.
- Employees should wear a face covering at all times.
- Employees should carry a towel to use if they get the urge to sneeze or cough. They should cover the nose, mouth, and mask. Towels should never be placed on a surface within a customer's home and should be kept in a sealable bag.
- Employees should attempt to plan bathroom breaks before and after site visits to limit the use of a customer's bathroom.

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.
- Self-monitor your temperature every morning. Employees who have a temperature exceeding 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should notify their supervisor and stay home.
- 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

According to the AIHA, customers should follow these tips when working with in-home service providers:

- If you or someone in your home is sick, or have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, reschedule your service appointment.
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the service provider at all times. If your presence is not necessary, do not remain in the immediate area during the service.
- Wear a face covering at all times.
- At minimum, wash your hands prior to your service appointment, after touching your face covering, and after the service provider has left.
- Minimize interactions between at-home service personnel and other occupants to the greatest extent possible.
- Isolate pets prior to at-home service personnel arriving and during work.