

# RECOVERY READINESS

## FOR MEDICAL OFFICES

GUIDELINES, CONSIDERATIONS  
AND RESOURCES FOR LANDLORDS  
AND PROPERTY MANAGERS

Version 1.0

# SECTION 01

## GENERAL BUILDING SYSTEMS & OPERATIONS

1.A. HVAC .....	5
1.B. PLUMBING AND WATER TREATMENT .....	6
1.C. FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY.....	6
1.D. VERTICAL TRANSPORTATION .....	7
1.E. THIRD PARTY SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	7
1.F. CONSIDERATION/DISCUSSION POINTS.....	7
1.G. RESOURCES .....	7

# SECTION 2

## OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

2.A. BUILDING ENTRY .....	9
2.B. VISITOR PROTOCOL.....	9
2.C. ELEVATOR LOBBIES / ELEVATORS .....	10
2.D. DELIVERIES / FREIGHT .....	10
2.E. AMENITY AND COMMON AREAS SPACES .....	11
2.F. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FOOD/RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS.....	11
2.G. CLEANING.....	12
2.H. INTERIOR CONSTRUCTION AND CONTRACTORS .....	12
2.I. BUILDING/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL .....	13
2.J. RESOURCES .....	13

# SECTION 3


## TENANT COMMUNICATIONS & GUIDELINES

3.A. TENANT COMMUNICATIONS .....	15
3.B. PROPERTY-PROVIDED GUIDELINES.....	17
3.C. CDC GUIDELINES .....	18

This document provides guidelines to help maintain a safe business environment, and support property operations post COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place and Safer-at-Home Orders. These guidelines were created to minimize impact to tenants and landlords while providing a foundation for messaging, resources and topics for discussion.

The intention is not to create a definitive blueprint, which is impossible to do given idiosyncrasies of each property and various federal, state and local requirements. Rather, this document establishes the foundation of ideas and recommendations upon which we can begin to facilitate customized plans.





# GENERAL BUILDING SYSTEMS & OPERATIONS



With the spread of the pandemic and stay-at-home mandates, properties have been adapting to reduced occupancy loads. The following guidelines aim to ensure smooth transition to increased occupancy loads with respect to building systems. Cushman & Wakefield is recommending following CDC, ASHRAE and OSHA guidelines as it relates to HVAC, plumbing and fire/life safety operations.

## 1.A. HVAC

### **GENERAL SYSTEM CHECK/ PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE**

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- Review all building HVAC systems using your current preventative maintenance program to understand current state of HVAC maintenance. Make necessary adjustments and/or repairs based upon predicted occupancy load..

### **VENTILATION AND FILTRATION**

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- Inspect all outside air and ventilation systems and ensure they are operational. Consider increasing ventilation rates and maximizing outside air intake where systems allow. Follow ASHRAE guidelines on increasing ventilation. It's important during this time to understand and be able to articulate each building's fresh air design rates and sequence of operations.
- Inspect current air filters and replace based on HVAC operating protocols during reduced operations, maintenance history and filter inspections. If replacing, consider using higher efficiency filters. MERV 13 or highest rating possible is preferable if compatible with the manufacturer's recommendations and the building system. When replacing filters, refer to the manufacturer's recommendations and [Cushman & Wakefield's guidance](#) document for filter replacement.

### **COOLING TOWERS**

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- Verify operation of the cooling towers, associated pumps and heat exchangers. Work with your water treatment provider to monitor the treatment levels and condition of water. Follow [Cushman & Wakefield's Water Treatment Discipline](#) to monitor and restore proper water treatment chemistry and performance standards.
- Ensure that the tower and basin are free of visible slime or biofilm, working with your water treatment provider as needed to ensure safe operation of the system.
- **Legionella Control:** Ensure appropriate testing in all high-risk locations as per the ASHRAE 188 standard, including both domestic and process water systems.

### **BUILDING AUTOMATION SYSTEMS**

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- Update settings and schedules to ensure they are set appropriately for the higher occupancy levels.
- Monitor operations of all systems including remotely to ensure systems are operating correctly under new operating protocol.
- Ensure system alarms including critical alarms and alerts are functioning as designed.
- Consider implementing trend logs to monitor inside conditions: temperature, humidity, CO2, etc.

## 1.B. PLUMBING AND WATER TREATMENT

- Flush all toilets and urinals in the building. Ensure proper operation.
- Ensure all floor drains, p-traps and water seals are full of water. Consider using a commercial drain trap product that won't evaporate. Include tenant kitchens, cafés and fitness centers.
- Turn every faucet on and run water for at least 30 seconds. Include tenant kitchens, cafés and fitness centers.
- Run water lines to dispensers, and clean and replace filters. Flush ice machines by running two rounds of ice through ice makers. Ensure plan to communicate to tenants to flush their water lines, ice makers, specialty equipment, etc.
- Inspect all hot water heaters, boilers and circulation pumps. Make sure water temperature settings are appropriate and hot water reaches the programmed set point.
- Ensure that all maintenance activities are carried out according to the manufacturer's instructions or by licensed professionals.
- Clean all decorative water features, such as fountains and ensure they are free of visible slime or biofilm. Follow the guidelines of [Cushman & Wakefield's Water Treatment Discipline](#).
- Ensure safety equipment including fire sprinkler systems, eye wash stations, and safety showers are clean and well-maintained
- Ensure that the risk of Legionella growth is minimized by regularly checking water quality parameters such as temperature, pH, and disinfectant/treatment levels.

## 1.C. FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

- A complete site/building walkthrough should be completed to ensure all systems are normal, all exit doors and critical/sensitive areas appear normal, and alarm systems still activated. This includes all dry systems, fire pumps, generators and transfer switches.
- Perform fire extinguisher, AED required checks.
- Test emergency communication systems and elevator emergency phones.
- Ensure building fire panel(s) indicate "All Systems Normal" and there are no troubles nor alarms.
- Test all remote monitoring phone lines including fire alarm, security systems and elevator phones.
- Check that all exit signs and emergency lighting systems are operational.



## 1.D. VERTICAL TRANSPORTATION

- If elevators/escalators have been shut down for more than two weeks, consult with elevator contractor to determine what checks/maintenance should be performed prior to placing units back in operation. Ensure they are working properly prior to reopening.
- To plan for efficient and quick transfer of occupants, consider having the elevator maintenance company set the dispatchers to “home” at the lobby rather than the standard dispatcher setting of having elevators scattered amongst the building. Performance will be impacted slightly but it will assist in quickly moving occupants from the lobby.
- Ensure elevator exhaust fans are operational.
- Consider limiting occupants in elevator cabs and using floor decals to identify where each person should stand. Buildings with multiple elevators may consider identifying some cabs reserved for social distancing and others for normal use.
- Consider opening stairwells if allowed by local code. If opened, ensure roof access and full floor tenant access is not granted. Moreover, ensure security protocols are not breached and potential new security threats are addressed. Set up stairwells with appropriate traffic control protocols (e.g. up vs. down).

## 1.E. THIRD-PARTY SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Reach out to all third-party service providers to ensure their return to work plan is in sync with your property plan. Verify that your third-party service providers (especially janitorial) have essential building supplies on hand and place orders for such.
- Inquire about any service changes/limitations and plan accordingly.
- Ensure any new building rules relative to mask protection, path of travel, point of entrance or other specific measures are effectively communicated and acknowledged.

## 1.F. CONSIDERATIONS/DISCUSSION POINTS

- Assign tasks using building work order system to allow for tracking progress and documenting completion.
- Build timeline of all tasks required to completion. Assign responsibility and target dates.
- Complete a full inventory of all building supplies and essential replacement parts (cleaning, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, office), and place orders accordingly, understanding shipment delays and backorders.

## 1.G. RESOURCES



**BACK-TO-WORK**  
**BUILDING CHECKLIST**



**VENDOR RECOVERY**  
**READINESS LETTER**

# OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES



All guidance from Federal and State Governments; OSHA; and Local Building Departments shall prevail. Ensure actions taken are approved by the Landlord and in accordance with lease requirements.

## 2.A. BUILDING ENTRY AND SECURITY

- Should the local jurisdiction allow, consider minimizing open entrances to help regulate number of people entering the property at once and to discourage congregation in elevator bank(s). If possible, designate one entry and a separate exit rather than allowing two-way traffic.
- For larger lobbies, consider implementing a clockwise or counterclockwise traffic flow.
- Install signage, directional arrows on floors and stanchions to advise occupants of the pattern. The pattern will ensure occupants do not pass one another and will keep distance.
- Consider installation of portable hand washing stations at building entrance and exit along with signage encouraging/requiring washing as people enter and exit the facility.
- Consider mask protocol in common areas according to executive orders and ownership desires.
- Security officer(s) should be trained to politely and firmly encourage tenants to maintain 6 feet distancing and possible mask protocol. Be clear as to protocol around dissent.
- Consider labeling floors at security for staging of visitors.
- Consider strategically posting signs promoting social distancing per CDC guidelines at building entrances, lobby, security desk, loading docks, and amenity centers.
- Determine protocol for tenants who have lost their ID. Consider waiting outside or at a predetermined location while their company designated escort arrives.
- Tenants may choose to perform temperature or thermal scanning for their offices but execution and enforcement should be left to the tenants.

## 2.B. VISITOR PROTOCOL

- Tenant visitor protocol should be updated or established. For example, tenants shall provide a "LIST OF VISITORS" in advance to building management via email or visitor management system outlining visitor NAME and estimated TIME OF ARRIVAL.
- Ensure security guards and daytime building staff, including day porters, are informed of protocol. Security guards should have step-by-step instructions.
- Clearly communicate procedures to tenants and ensure tenants provide their visitors with a phone number to call in the event of an anomaly.
- Tenants should be encouraged to inform their visitors of procedures in advance of visit to diffuse potential misunderstandings and negative experiences.

## 2.C. ELEVATORS/ELEVATOR LOBBIES

- Signs encouraging social distancing should be displayed in elevator lobbies in highly visible areas, including tenants' elevator corridors.
- Depending upon the size of the elevators, limit number of passengers to a number that allows for appropriate social distancing. Consider signage in the cabs and floor markings indicating where tenants should stand.
- Hand sanitizing stations are to be placed in elevator banks and tenants are to be encouraged to sanitize hands prior to touching elevator call pads.

## 2.D. DELIVERIES & FREIGHT

- Tenants should be encouraged to minimize the amount of deliveries and ensure they are on premises to accept packages on the delivery date.
- Freight car operators, where applicable, are to control the freight car traffic by minimizing number of passengers to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- When a freight operator is not available, restrict access and collaborate with security or building staff to provide access.
- Consider limiting food deliveries for the time being to minimize unnecessary traffic.



## 2.E. AMENITY SPACES

- Consider temporary closure or mandatory distancing within common/amenity areas such as gyms, lounges, game rooms, etc. until further notice.
- Consider removing or relocating chairs to maintain 6 foot spacing in conference areas.
- Establish protocol for any amenity/conference areas that remain open to ensure social distancing. Ensure that such areas are stocked with disinfectant wipes and that there is time allotted for appropriate cleaning between uses. All occupants are to adequately wipe down the area after use.
- Practice a clockwise flow in all amenity spaces and conference rooms.
- Inquire if client would like to turn off vending machines, coffee machines, water and ice machines.
- Encourage tenants to develop their own protocols internally around conference room uses, coffee/lunch areas, phone booths, and shared workstations.
- Establish increased common area/amenity cleaning protocol with specific instructions.

## 2.F. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR FOOD/RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

- Discourage groups of people from gathering inside and at entrances.
- Manage lines inside and outside by keeping customers 6 feet apart. If space is limited, allow only a limited number of customers inside at a time.
- Limit access to retail spaces when occupancy reaches 25% maximum capacity to reduce crowding and lines.

## 2.G. CLEANING

- Ensure common areas, entry points to the property, elevator lobbies, elevators and common corridor restrooms are frequently cleaned and disinfected and have visible presence of cleaning personnel.
- Pay particular attention to door handles/knobs, light switches, staff rooms, desktops, washrooms and other high touch surfaces.
- Ensure that the cleaning provider and its staff are following the latest CDC guidelines for proper cleaning and maintenance of workspaces.
- Review and prepare plans for client/owner approval regarding changes to cleaning scope or any additional services in response to COVID-19 protection.
- Post [CDC signs](#) encouraging handwashing in all common corridor restrooms.
- Place hand sanitizing dispensers in all common corridor restrooms.
- Determine optional tenant desired cleaning enhancements and associated charges. Seek owner approval to provide service and bill back. Recommend distributing a predetermined “price list” with various options to tenants.

## 2.H. INTERIOR CONSTRUCTION & CONTRACTORS

- Signage should be posted to encourage social distancing and good hygiene.
- Establish when construction workers should enter/exit building to avoid congestion during high traffic hours.
- Property managers should be notified of scheduled inspections and security alerted.
- Consider providing hand sanitizers, surgical masks and disinfectant wipes in construction zones.
- Building common areas and elevators should be disinfected following use by construction workers.
- Update building rules and regulations around construction protocol to address masks, breaks, access and post-construction cleaning. [Cushman & Wakefield General Contractor](#) notification should be delivered to contractors and written acknowledgment received prior to work commencing.



## 2.I. BUILDING/PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

- All building employees are to be tasked with maintaining necessary distancing with each other and when interacting with tenants and contractors.
- Consider staggered staff schedules (hours, shifts, and days worked).
- Consider specified work and seating assignments for employees to ensure minimum work distances being adhered to by staff.
- Limit in-person meetings with third party contractors.
- Ensure there is adequate supply of face masks, hand sanitizers and disinfecting products available on site.
- Ensure all building personnel are wearing face masks if mandated by executive order
- Order face shields for engineering personnel and ensure that they are worn when they are working near each other.
- Develop protocols for accepting and training temporary workers should some of your workforce be unavailable to return to work.
- Clean and disinfect all shared equipment, tools, radios, IT equipment and spaces before and after use. Ensure that disinfecting supplies are available in each area.
- Consider locking management and engineering offices and encourage tenants to contact team by phone or email and submit requests through work order system.
- Coordinate time for Engineers to complete work requests in a tenant space to ensure distancing. If not possible, work to be scheduled after hours with ownership approval is there is an associated added cost.
- Encourage employees to practice the following preventive measures:
  - Wash your hands often and well.
  - Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - Continue to clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.
  - Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.

## 2.J. RESOURCES



**GENERAL CONTRACTOR  
READINESS LETTER**



**RECOVERY READINESS  
RE-ENTRY PLAN TEMPLATE**



# TENANT COMMUNICATIONS & GUIDELINES

Over the next several weeks and months, as areas stabilize from the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place restrictions are lifted, organizations will begin to bring workers back into the physical workplace. The migration from the work from home (WFH) environment back to places of business will look different for every organization. The mix of the returning employees will vary, and in some cases, a percentage of the workforce may never return to the office.

The following guidelines divided into three sections, Tenant Communications, Property-Provided Guidelines and CDC Guidelines, aim to assist tenants in developing their internal plans and protocol. It is important to note that World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the respective health organizations and government bodies, should be any organization's primary sources for guidance on COVID-19 and other health-related issues.

### 3.A. TENANT COMMUNICATIONS

The intent of this section is to partner with tenants not only keep them informed of our new protocols and operating procedures but to understand their re-entry plans and associated timing.

- Provide communication with a proper cadence, once per week or whatever is appropriate for your managed asset. Incorporate the [Safe Six Checklist](#) as a tool they can use to begin planning their return to the property.
- Ensure that property management office is aware of all updates to property access and tenant personnel based on terminations/layoffs during stay at home mandate.
- Tenants should designate a re-open representative(s) to coordinate with the building regarding syncing their plans.
- Tenants should be informed of building's visitor check-in procedures and should inform guests of those procedures in advance of scheduled meetings.
- Provide Section 3 Tenant Communications & Guidelines to tenants for their consideration when establishing their internal protocols.

### CONSIDERATIONS/DISCUSSION POINTS

- Installation of lobby desk clear shields.
- Does the lobby require increased security presence in order to provide proper guidance on distancing?
- Training of security officers on how to best handle non-compliant tenants and visitors.
- Tenant awareness of all building protocols to ensure maximum compliance and avoid any negative experiences from enforcing them.
- If a property has large screen monitors in lobby, consider programming to air specific protocols and prevention measures.
- Examine the reasons for ID collection other than to match the picture with pre-registered visitor name and explore ways to have an alternative to such protocol.
- Explore capabilities of building visitor systems (Building Engines, Workspeed, Angus, etc.) for tenants to upload photo of visitors when registering visitors through the system. Some providers have already started modifying their systems to allow for this feature.
- Explore simple and inexpensive applications such as [ProxyClick Systems](#) that provide self-check in alternatives.
- Appointing a security officer to operate elevator call pads on lobby level.
- Establish protocol for in person leasing tours and path of travel associated with same.
- Exploring applications available for non-proprietary systems that integrate use of personal cell phones for floor selection.
- Do you place a hand sanitizer on every floor or just in the lobby/common elevator bank areas?
- Disinfection of packages upon entering building.
- How should building cafeterias operate?
- Electro-static spraying of disinfectants considering effectiveness, practicality and cost implications.
- Explore avenues to express appreciation for all site employees whose dedication has helped us get through the pandemic thus far.
- Encourage tenants to share challenges and/or fears related with coming to work and obtain guidance/consult accordingly.
- Determine a centralized place for disposal of discarded protective clothing and supplies and establish protocols on how this should be discarded. Used masks, gloves and such should be placed into sealed bags and disposed of.

## Resources



### **TENANT RECOVERY READINESS LETTER**



### 3.B. PROPERTY-PROVIDED GUIDELINES

Ensuring tenants understand what the workplace will be like upon return is critical. Some tenants may expect nothing will change, while others will assume everything should be different. Preparing tenants will ease anxiety on their first day back in the office.

Recommended practices for consideration include:

- **Early communication.** As return to work plans are forming, keep the tenant population informed as soon as appropriate.
- **Proactive virtual training.** Creating a path for understanding the new normal for the workplace may be addressed through virtual training. Organizations should not underestimate the value of creating training content for topics that typically are communicated through email or static messaging alone.
- **Reinforced training.** Upon returning to work, providing methods of additional training to reinforce messaging and changes in the work environment. In a changing environment, repetition will help tenants acknowledge the important messages and information we want them to retain.
- **Connection to a Vision.** As changes in protocol and policies are unveiled, find a way to center those messages back to a central vision. Understanding the “why” is a great way to reinforce the “what.”

Many organizations have made their company policies more flexible, especially those related to time off, remote working and flexible work schedules. Property managers will work with a representative from each tenant to discuss and communicate changes in relevant building and tenant protocols.

### ISSUE INFORMATION ON THE CHANGES AS THEY RELATE TO



Building hours of operation



Change in processes for tenants to enter the building and access space



Change in protocols for visitor access



Change in protocols for contractor, vendor and delivery access



Change in cleaning procedures



Reporting of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases



Social distancing protocols for workspace, meetings, lobbies, common areas/ amenities, elevators, tenant service, maintenance, etc.



Staggered property management staffing



Use of PPE

In addition, property managers should collaborate with the landlord on tenant lease responsibilities and any modifications needed due to revised building guidelines around social distancing.

### Considerations/Discussion Points For Tenants

- Develop protocols that follow state and local government policies as well as landlord guidelines.
- Develop COVID-19 specific workplace plans outlining strategies and tactics to help prevent the spread of the virus in workplace.
  - Consider limiting in-person meetings of 10 or more people and reduce conference room seating by 50% for additional distancing.
  - Hold team/staff meetings via conference call or digital conferencing/meeting platform
  - Maintain social distancing when conversing with team members.
  - Face coverings mandated as per your state's executive orders.
- Reporting requirements for notifying employer of illness as well as isolation of sick employees, close contact tracing in the office and coordination with janitorial company for work area disinfecting
- Consider staggering your employee work hours to assist building management that has elevators as a mode of transportation. For example, consider staggering employee start times in four teams – A, B, C & D.
  - Team A might start work at 7:30 am; Team B 8:00 am; Team C 8:30, Team D 9:00 am.
  - The same approach would need to be observed with lunch.
  - Departure times would also need to be aligned.
  - For those individuals that require workplace time flexibility, they can choose alternate times.
- Communicate the changes in building processes and procedures to your employees.
- Communicate your plan with the landlord, including phasing, modified work schedules and safety initiatives for employees and visitors.

## 3.C. CDC GUIDELINES

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are an excellent source for all federal guidelines related to COVID-19 both for personal and commercial use and can be accessed [here](#).

Develop or enhance guidelines for the prevention of virus transfer based on CDC recommendations. Implement good hygiene and infection control practices, including:

- Encourage hand hygiene and proper etiquette at the entrance to the workplace via posters, digital signage or other mediums as well as in other workplace areas where messages are likely to be seen through CDC provided [signage templates](#).
- Place hand sanitizers in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene.
- Encourage tenants to stay home if they are sick.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down by tenants before each use.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- If possible, provide complimentary personal protective equipment such as face coverings and hands-free tools to employees.

## Key CDC References for Tenants



**RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES  
AND EMPLOYERS**



**CLEANING AND DISINFECTING  
YOUR FACILITY**



**PREVENT GETTING SICK**



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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