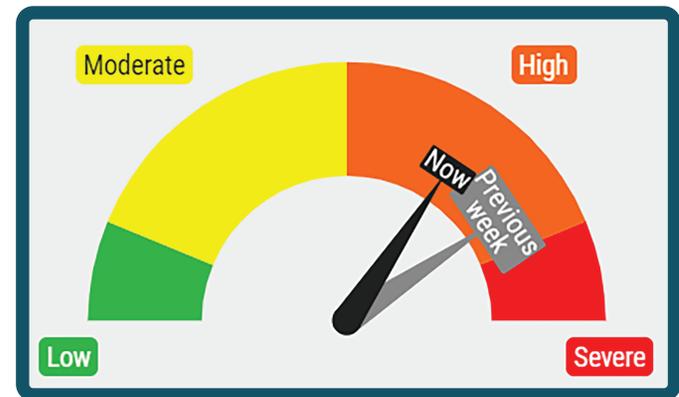


# COVID-19 Risk Dial & Business Guidance

[COVID19.lincoln.ne.gov](https://COVID19.lincoln.ne.gov)



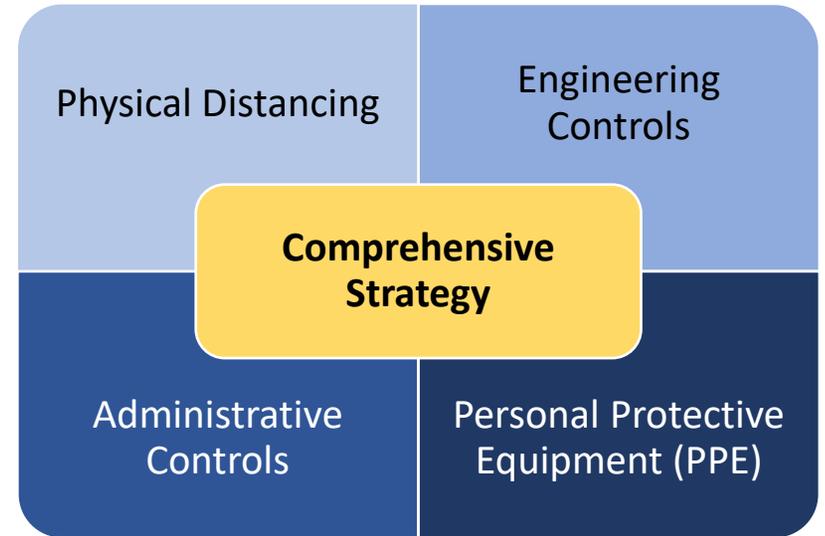
Comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation strategies for the workplace

# COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies for Employers and Workplace Settings

This site provides local business a framework to develop and implement strategies to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in their workplace based on where our community is at in this pandemic.

The following four strategies are based on a modified hierarchy of controls developed by the John's Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

- **Physical Distancing**: Limiting close, prolonged contact with others is one of the best ways of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Examples include staying 6 feet away from other people and not gathering in groups.
- **Engineering Controls**: Creating physical barriers between people and using technology to reduce close contact are proven strategies to reduce illness and injury.
- **Administrative Controls**: Administrative controls are training, procedures, policies, or shift designs that lessen the risk to individuals or an entire workforce. Examples include: enhanced sick leave policies, requiring sick staff to stay home, staggering shift change times, and training in disinfection and hygiene protocols.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**: PPE is clothing or equipment designed to protect workers from infection, exposure or injury. This includes cloth face coverings, disposable gloves, respirators (i.e. N95, FFR), and face shields.



The most effective mitigation plan will incorporate strategies from all four of these areas.

Two other factors that should be considered are **contact frequency** and **contact intensity**. Think through your business operations in terms how frequently people interact and how long and close the contact is. Actions that reduce either contact frequency or intensity will reduce risk of exposure.

The COVID Risk Dial provides a context for where Lincoln and Lancaster County is in the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a tool that can help businesses know what steps to take to protect the health of employees, customers and our community. Each color on the COVID Risk Dial provides specific guidance. Special guidance is included for people who are most at risk and vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus. This tool will help you better understand our local situation and how it affects your workplace. The COVID Risk Dial is updated weekly.

### **COVID Red – Severe Risk of COVID-19 Spread**

- For businesses and industries remaining open, strategies will focus on strict adherence to wearing masks, physical distancing, and engineering controls such as shielding. If modifications cannot ensure physical distancing or adequate shielding, strong consideration should be given to discontinuing that specific practice or duty. Employers must be focused on ensuring sick employees stay home. Employees and customers should be required to wear face masks anytime 6 feet of distance cannot be assured and maintained, or when interacting or in public areas of the business. Curbside, drive-through, and delivery business is strongly encouraged. Telework and/or working from home is strongly encouraged.

### **COVID Orange – High Risk of COVID-19 Spread**

- Strategies continue to focus on adherence to physical distancing. If modifications cannot ensure physical distancing, strong consideration should be given to discontinuing that specific practice or duty. Employers must focus on ensuring sick employees stay home. Employees and customers should wear face coverings. Curbside/drive-through business is strongly encouraged. Telework and/or working from home is strongly encouraged.

### **COVID Yellow – Moderate Risk of COVID-19 Spread**

- Physical distancing, while eased compared to Red or Orange, must still be employed. Monitoring of employees for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 is still strongly encouraged. Employers should continue to focus on ensuring sick employees stay home and keeping at-risk employees and customers safe. Telework and/or working from home is strongly encouraged for at-risk employees.

### **COVID Green – Low Risk of COVID-19 Spread**

- While there is little or no spread of COVID within the community, employers should develop long-term strategies to limit impacts of COVID-19 or another pandemic illness on their business, employees, and customers. Some level of physical distancing should remain, and modifications will likely be the “new normal”. Focus will be to continue to protect the at-risk population and prepare for future outbreaks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed a set of [‘General Business Frequently Asked Questions’](#) as well as [‘Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to COVID-19’](#) that provide more specific guidance for workplace settings.

## GENERAL GUIDANCE TAB

COVID Red – Severe Risk of COVID-19 Spread	
Control Type	General Guidance for Essential Businesses and Industry Employers
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep workers at least 6 feet apart while working through workspace/desk spacing</li> <li>Install signage for distancing</li> <li>Require distancing at clock-in/check-in</li> <li>Require distancing in outdoor smoking areas</li> </ul>
Engineering Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install physical barriers (such as shielding) between workers where 6-foot distancing is not possible or practical</li> <li>Utilize a ‘no-touch’ or ‘touchless’ clock-in/check-in</li> <li>Close meeting rooms and break rooms</li> <li>Where possible, leave doors open to minimize touch</li> <li>Provide sanitizing stations or portable handwashing stations in areas with high volume foot traffic or high touch surfaces</li> <li>Increase air exchanges in the HVAC system to provide increased fresh air intake and air dilution</li> </ul>
Administrative Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screen employees upon arrival for COVID signs and symptoms and dismiss employees with the following symptoms. Refer sick employees for medical follow-up and direct them to follow <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fever &gt;100.4°F, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sick employees should not be allowed to return to work until they meet <a href="#">criteria for discontinuing home isolation</a></li> <li>Where possible, provide paid leave for employees who test positive for COVID-19, or who display COVID symptoms (e.g. sick leave or emergency paid sick leave under FFCRA)</li> <li>Reduce or limit the number of people in any single space (offices, common areas, elevators, etc.)</li> <li>Prohibit employees from entering work areas where access is not necessary, and from intermingling in other work areas</li> <li>Use of web- or phone-based platforms for meetings (e.g. Zoom, Webex, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, conference call, etc.)</li> <li>Follow the <a href="#">CDC’s recommendations for cleaning and disinfection</a> using products that meet <a href="#">EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2</a></li> <li>Encourage frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and provide hand sanitizer if and where possible</li> <li>Establish policies/protocols limiting non-essential visitors and strongly discouraging non-essential personal travel</li> <li>Require single occupant travel in company vehicles, and suspend all non-essential work-related travel</li> <li>Stagger breaks and lunch</li> <li>If your business has an in-house cafeteria, provide food ‘to-go’</li> <li>Close areas that cannot be modified for distancing</li> </ul>
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face masks required for all employees, customers, and visitors (personal or company provided)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disposable mask; or</li> <li><a href="#">Cloth face covering</a> (sewn mask, etc.) laundered or washed daily</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disinfectants provided and encouraged to be used for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Mouse, keyboards, pens, other high contact surfaces</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>At-Risk and Vulnerable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For older adult employees and customers and anyone with underlying health conditions (diabetes, cancer, heart disease, lung disease, etc.), employers should consider the following protections for <a href="#">people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19</a>, in addition to the <b>General Guidelines</b> and any <b>Workplace-Specific Guidance</b>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <u>Physical Distancing</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Provide options to work from home or telework</li><li>▪ Offer a temporary workspace with greater distancing from customers and other employees</li><li>▪ Offer curb side, drive-up, or no-contact delivery service for vulnerable customers</li><li>▪ Consider options to reduce contact frequency or intensity</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Engineering Controls</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Offer to install physical barriers between vulnerable workers and others, even if 6-foot distancing is provided</li><li>▪ Establish designated points of ingress/egress for vulnerable workers and customers</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Administrative Controls</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Offer duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees</li><li>▪ Discourage vulnerable workers, customers, and visitors from sharing elevators</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ If medically approved, supply vulnerable workers with higher level PPE (such as N95 mask)</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

## COVID Orange – High Risk of COVID-19 Spread

Control Type	General Guidance for Employers
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep workers at least 6 feet apart while working through workspace/desk spacing</li> <li>• Install signage for distancing</li> <li>• Require distancing at clock-in/check-in</li> <li>• Require distancing in outdoor smoking areas</li> </ul>
Engineering Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install physical barriers between workers where 6-foot distancing is not possible or practical</li> <li>• Utilize a ‘no-touch’ or ‘touchless’ clock-in/check-in</li> <li>• Close meeting rooms and break rooms</li> <li>• Where possible, leave doors open to minimize touch</li> <li>• Provide sanitizing stations or portable handwashing stations in areas with high volume foot traffic or high touch surfaces</li> <li>• Increase air exchanges in the HVAC system to provide increased fresh air intake and air dilution</li> </ul>
Administrative Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen employees upon arrival for COVID signs and symptoms and dismiss employees with the following symptoms. Refer sick employees for medical follow-up and direct them to follow <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fever &gt;100.4°F, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sick employees should not be allowed to return to work until they meet <a href="#">criteria for discontinuing home isolation</a></li> <li>• Where possible, provide paid leave for employees who test positive for COVID-19, or who display COVID symptoms (e.g. sick leave or emergency paid sick leave under FFCRA)</li> <li>• Reduce or limit the number of people in any single space (offices, common areas, elevators, etc.)</li> <li>• Prohibit employees from entering work areas where access is not necessary, and from intermingling in other work areas</li> <li>• Use of web- or phone-based platforms for meetings (e.g. Zoom, Webex, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, conference call, etc.)</li> <li>• Follow the <a href="#">CDC’s recommendations for cleaning and disinfection</a> using products that meet <a href="#">EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2</a></li> <li>• Encourage frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and provide hand sanitizer if and where possible</li> <li>• Establish policies/protocols limiting non-essential visitors and strongly discouraging non-essential personal travel</li> <li>• Require single occupant travel in company vehicles, and suspend all non-essential work-related travel</li> <li>• Stagger breaks and lunch</li> <li>• If your business has an in-house cafeteria, provide food ‘to-go’</li> <li>• Close areas that cannot be modified for distancing</li> </ul>
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face coverings strongly recommended for all employees, customers, and visitors (personal or company provided)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disposable mask; or</li> <li>○ <a href="#">Cloth face covering</a> (bandana, sewn mask, etc.) laundered daily</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disinfectants provided and encouraged use for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mouse, keyboards, pens, other high contact surfaces</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## At-Risk and Vulnerable

- For employees and customers over the age of 65 and anyone with underlying health conditions (diabetes, cancer, heart disease, lung disease, etc.), employers should consider the following protections for [people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#), in addition to the **General Guidelines** and any **Workplace-Specific Guidance**:
  - Physical Distancing:
    - Provide options to work from home or telework
    - Offer a temporary workspace with greater distancing from customers and other employees
    - Offer curbside, drive-up, or no-contact delivery service for vulnerable customers
    - Consider options to reduce contact frequency or intensity
  - Engineering Controls:
    - Offer to install physical barriers between vulnerable workers and others, even if 6-foot distancing is provided
    - Establish designated points of ingress/egress for vulnerable workers and customers
  - Administrative Controls:
    - Offer duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees
    - Discourage vulnerable workers, customers, and visitors from sharing elevators
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
    - If medically approved, supply vulnerable workers with higher level PPE (such as N95 mask)

## COVID Yellow – Moderate Risk of COVID-19 Spread

Control Type	General Guidance for Employers
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep workers at least 6 feet apart while working through workspace/desk spacing</li> <li>• Install signage for distancing</li> <li>• Strongly recommend distancing at clock-in/check-in</li> <li>• Strongly recommend distancing in break rooms and smoking areas</li> </ul>
Engineering Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install physical barriers between workers where 6-foot distancing is not possible or practical</li> <li>• Utilize a ‘no-touch’ or ‘touchless’ clock-in/check-in</li> <li>• Reduce chairs in meeting rooms and break rooms to provide 6-foot distancing</li> <li>• Where possible, leave doors open to minimize touch</li> <li>• Provide sanitizing stations or portable handwashing stations in areas with high volume foot traffic or high touch surfaces</li> <li>• Increase air exchanges in the HVAC system to provide increased fresh air intake and air dilution</li> </ul>
Administrative Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen employees upon arrival for COVID signs and symptoms and dismiss employees with the following symptoms. Refer sick employees for medical follow-up and direct them to follow <a href="#">CDC recommendations</a>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fever &gt;100.4°F, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sick employees should not be allowed to return to work until they meet <a href="#">criteria for discontinuing home isolation</a></li> <li>• Where possible, provide paid leave for employees who test positive for COVID-19, or who display COVID symptoms (e.g. sick leave or emergency paid sick leave under FFCRA)</li> <li>• Reduce or limit the number of people in any single space (offices, common areas, elevators, etc.)</li> <li>• Prohibit employees from entering work areas where access is not necessary, and discourage intermingling in other work areas</li> <li>• Use of web- or phone-based platforms for meetings (e.g. Zoom, Webex, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, conference call, etc.)</li> <li>• Follow the <a href="#">CDC’s recommendations for cleaning and disinfection</a> using products that meet <a href="#">EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2</a></li> <li>• Encourage frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and provide hand sanitizer if and where possible</li> <li>• Establish policies/protocols limiting non-essential visitors, and discouraging non-essential personal travel</li> <li>• Consider reductions in multiple-occupant travel in company vehicles, cautious non-essential work travel</li> <li>• Stagger breaks and lunch</li> <li>• If your business has an in-house cafeteria, provide food ‘to-go’</li> <li>• Close areas that cannot be modified for distancing</li> </ul>
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face coverings recommended for all employees, customers, and visitors (personal or company provided) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Disposable mask; or</li> <li>○ <a href="#">Cloth face covering</a> (bandana, sewn mask, etc.) laundered daily</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Disinfectants provided and encouraged use for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mouse, keyboards, pens, other high contact surfaces; and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Meeting room tables, breakroom counters, greeting counters, etc.</li></ul>
<b>At-Risk and Vulnerable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● For employees and customers over the age of 65 and anyone with underlying health conditions (diabetes, cancer, heart disease, lung disease, etc.), employers should consider the following protections for <a href="#">people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19</a>, in addition to the <b>General Guidelines</b> and any <b>Workplace-Specific Guidance</b>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <u>Physical Distancing</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Provide options to work from home or telework</li><li>▪ Offer a temporary workspace with greater distancing from customers and other employees</li><li>▪ Offer curbside, drive-up, or no-contact delivery service for vulnerable customers</li><li>▪ Consider options to reduce contact frequency or intensity</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Engineering Controls</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Offer to install physical barriers between vulnerable workers and others, even if 6-foot distancing is provided</li><li>▪ Establish designated points of ingress/egress for vulnerable workers and customers</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Administrative Controls</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Offer duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees</li><li>▪ Discourage vulnerable workers, customers, and visitors from sharing elevators</li></ul></li><li>○ <u>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</u>:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ If medically approved, supply vulnerable workers with higher level PPE (such as N95 mask)</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>

COVID Green – Low Risk of COVID-19 Spread	
Control Type	General Guidance for Employers
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage workers to remain at least 6 feet apart while working</li> <li>• Redesign workspaces with consideration for airborne transmission of COVID, influenza, or other airborne illnesses</li> </ul>
Engineering Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical barriers may be removed, but should not be discarded</li> <li>• Maintain readiness to reemploy engineering controls in the event of COVID resurgence, or other airborne illness outbreak (seasonal or pandemic)</li> </ul>
Administrative Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition to a ‘new normal’ mode of operation</li> <li>• Create or modify pandemic plans for future needs</li> <li>• Where possible, provide paid leave for employees who test positive for COVID-19, or who display COVID symptoms (e.g. sick leave or emergency paid sick leave under FFCRA)</li> </ul>
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a plan for PPE needs relevant to COVID or other airborne transmitted illnesses</li> <li>• Develop a schedule to periodically examine PPE, discard expired PPE, and re-stock as necessary</li> </ul>
At-Risk and Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For employees and customers over the age of 65 and anyone with underlying health conditions (diabetes, cancer, heart disease, lung disease, etc.), employers should consider the following protections for <a href="#">people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19</a>, in addition to the <b>General Guidelines</b> and any <b>Workplace-Specific Guidance</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Physical Distancing</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide options to work from home or telework</li> <li>▪ Offer curbside, drive-up, or no-contact delivery service for vulnerable customers</li> <li>▪ Consider options to reduce contact frequency or intensity</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <u>Administrative Controls</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offer duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees</li> <li>▪ Discourage vulnerable workers, customers, and visitors from sharing elevators</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <u>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If medically approved, supply vulnerable workers with higher level PPE (such as N95 mask)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>