



Manufacturing Risk Advisor

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Considerations for Continuing Production During the Coronavirus Pandemic

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak continues to impact businesses and individuals alike, businesses are temporarily closing or allowing their employees to work from home. However, many manufacturers provide essential goods and may maintain operations during the COVID-19 outbreak.

As a result, manufacturers have to strike a balance between maintaining operations and protecting the health and safety of their staff. To safeguard your business and its people from COVID-19, consider the following strategies:

- **Discourage sick employees from reporting to work**—Some employees may be reluctant to admit they're showing signs of COVID-19 for fear of getting fired or losing steady income. However, any employee who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, chills or fatigue) should stay home. Individuals experiencing such symptoms should be instructed to consult [guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on seeking medical care.
- **Educate your employees on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19**—It's important to train supervisors and employees on symptoms of COVID-19 to promote a "see something, say something"

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safety culture. Identifying potentially infectious individuals and isolating them is one of the best ways to control the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

- **Encourage social distancing**—Social distancing is the practice of deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. In terms of COVID-19, social distancing best practices for manufacturing businesses can include:
 - Staggering shift start and stop times, break times and lunch hours to minimize the number of individuals in one area.
 - Zoning your facility and prohibiting employees from wandering into zones where they do not need to be to perform their job.
 - Identifying key personnel without whom the factory cannot operate. Isolate these personnel from each other and the rest of the workforce to try to minimize exposure.
- **Instruct employees to practice good hygiene**—Employees should clean their hands often, either with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, or soap and water. Hand sanitizers should contain at least 60%-95% alcohol, and employees should wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. It's also a good idea to strategically place hand sanitizer and hand-washing stations around the job site.
- **Cross-train employees**—Prepare for an increase in absences by cross-training employees on essential job functions needed to keep your operations running.
- **Screen visitors to your facility**—In general, you should prohibit nonessential personnel from visiting your facility. This can help keep the number of individuals at your facility to a minimum.

While the strategies highlighted above can help you protect your workers from COVID-19, it's important to follow CDC guidance at all times. For more information, click [here](#).