



# **COVID-19/ REOPENING GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESSES**

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# COVID-19 Reopening Guidelines for Businesses

## Introduction

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), COVID-19 is an infectious disease by a newly discovered coronavirus.
- COVID-19 (a.k.a. coronavirus disease 2019) is defined as an illness caused by a novel coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.
- COVID-19 was initially reported to the WHO on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009.
- The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharges from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- COVID-19 has caused global economic turbulence and forced governments and businesses to apply physical distancing measures to mitigate its spread.

## Symptoms



**Fatigue**



**Dry Cough**



**Fever**



**Headache**



**Loss of Taste/Smell**



**Nausea**



**Sore Throat**

## COVID-19 Statistics (as of July 10, 2020)

Recorded Cases

**12,604,913**

Fatalities

**561,778**

Recovered Cases

**7,318,299**

## Global Economic Impact

Global Trade (Q2 2020)

**-27%**

Commodities (Q2 2020)

**-20.4%**

Global Growth (f2020)

**-5.2%**

## BUSINESS REOPENING STRATEGY/PILLARS

### Work Environment Maintenance

Measures taken by businesses, based on their operational structure, to prepare for the reopening/resumption of their operations

### Workforce Wellness

Measures to elevate the workforce morale and maintain their safety

### On-Premise Personnel Protective Measures

Measures to be maintained during operational working hours

### Business Continuity Measures

Measures set forth to mitigate operational related risks



- Due to the current pandemic situation and with governments worldwide starting to reopen their economies on varied capacities and bases, businesses should start setting their reopening strategies based on four pillars; (1) work environment maintenance, (2) on-premises personnel protective measures, (3) business sustainability measures and (4) workforce wellness.
- Strategies should take into consideration daily/weekly/monthly monitoring both domestic and international updates essential for the sustainability of their businesses while mitigating infection risks that could threaten their workforces.
- Businesses should develop different scenarios to ensure the continuation of their respective supply chain in the cases of infection clusters, market turbulences, and seasonal pandemic waves.
- With consumer behavior shifting towards electronic integration and remote interaction, businesses should also adjust their digital strategy to cope with developing communications and market trends.

# I. Work Environment Maintenance



## Identify/Assess High-Risk Areas

- Develop the business reopening plan for offices/outlets/plants based on the density, footfall, ventilation, and frequency of customers/visitors to its facilities.
- The plan should grade and divide the workplace areas with different measures to be adopted to manage face to face interactions- if any- with visitors.
- The identification of each area should include a set plan for periodical inspection and monitoring on capacity, sanitization, and physical distancing.



## Ventilation Assessment

- Evaluate the usage of centralized ventilation/air-conditioning systems and limit their usage as much as possible.
- Promote inhaling open (outdoor) air and maintain swift monitoring over humidity and temperature control.
- Increase air filtration through the placement of specialized units around the venue while inspecting filter housing and racks within the ventilation system periodically
- Ensure proper ventilation through exhaust fans inside restrooms while limiting the capacity as possible within working hours.



## Workspace Management

- Reschedule working hours among different teams to organize the inflow/outflow of employees and visitors within the workplace .
- Ensure the availability of an infection control team (physician, infection control officer, sanitization workers) and allocate an isolation closed-venue on premises for suspected cases.
- Reorganize desks and workplace furniture to ensure a safe distance of no less than 1.8 meters between desks. If this is not possible, ensure the allocation of plastic/wooden temporary partitions between employees.
- Limit the usage of common areas (dinning halls, waiting areas, reception areas) while monitoring their capacities at all times.

## II. On-Premise Personnel Protection Measures

### Mandate Personal Protective Equipment

- As per local regulations, businesses should mandate and monitor the usage of masks at all times.
- The usage of single-use hand-gloves and faceshields should be promoted, when necessary.

### Prohibit Physical Contact

- Maintain a 'no-physical contact' policy will help curb the spread of the infection and limit the formation of clusters between different teams.
- Prohibit physical contact and greetings between employees.

### Promote Hygiene Awareness

- Promote self-hygiene awareness within the establishment through maintaining regular communication channels with employees, including using e-newsletters/publications.
- Provide regular hygienic tips, such as regular hand-washing and respiratory etiquette (sneezing/coughing).

### Regularly Check Body Temperature

- Maintain body temperature clearance upon entry/exit of the company facilities.
- Medical and other related records of employees should be maintained.

### Avail In-House Transportation

With the economy looking to expand the reopening capacities, businesses should consider availing dedicated company transportation with appropriate physical distancing measures to curb the risk of employees' infection during their commute.

### Pre-Scheduled Breaks

- Encourage employees to pre-schedule their breaks with their in-team peers to assist in avoiding high densities.
- Encourage breaks in open-air venues.

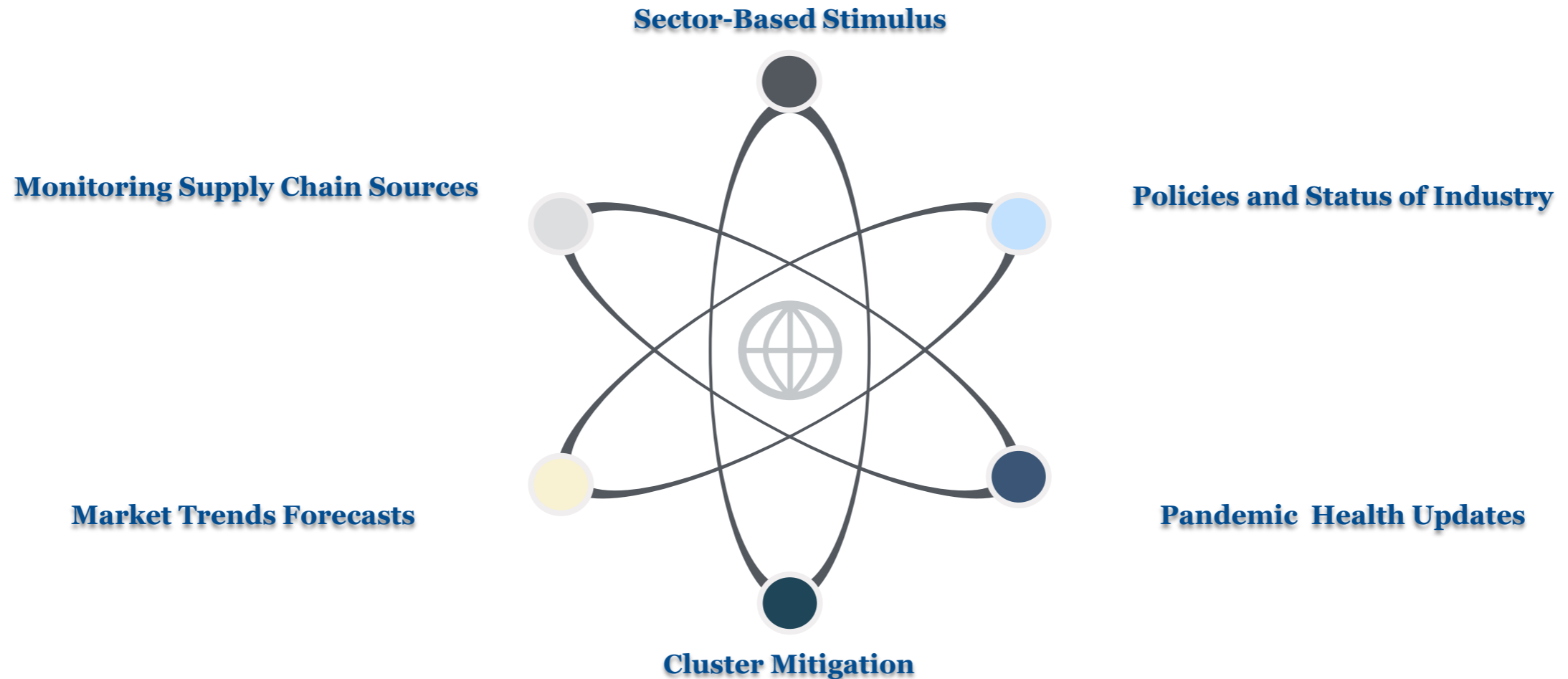
### Limit Physical Meeting Capacities

- Promote virtual meeting tools while limiting- as much as possible- in-person meetings.
- This includes preparing meeting rooms with adequate PPE, limiting the number of meeting participants, and maintaining adequate physical distancing.

### Mapping Workforce

Monitor the areas of local pandemic clusters and cross-reference with the residencies of employees as a measure to avoid infection spread within the workplace.

### III. Business Sustainability Measures (1/2)



- Moving forward with the new normal and to ensure the sustainability of business development, ‘business sustainability measures’ should include six pillars; (1) monitoring the pandemic situation in supply chain sources, (2) focusing on market trends and forecasts, (3) cluster mitigation and crisis management, (4) reviewing policies and evolving status of the industry, (5) processing sector-based stimuluses, and (6) monitoring weekly updates on the pandemic situation.
- These pillars have been considered to be critical to the performance of businesses since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis as businesses struggle to maintain financial stability.
- These measures shall be regularly reviewed to ensure their proper implementation and business efficiency.

### III. Business Sustainability Measures (2/2)

#### Monitor the Pandemic's Impact on Supply Chains

- Businesses should monitor closely the status of supply chain source countries while developing substitute sources to ensure the continuity of their operations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to apply pressure on global manufacturer production capacities and global supply chains. Therefore, a continuous assessment of developments and the impact this crisis has on shipping and logistics as well as on sourcing of essential and strategic supplies is necessary.

#### Cluster Mitigation and Crisis Management

- Businesses should regularly review their strategies to ensure their ability to adapt to evolving crisis situations, including COVID-19 infections within the workplace.
- Different scenarios should be put in place while ensuring maximum operational flexibility to adapt to sudden changes.
- Regular vocational and technical training programs should be provided to employees to prepare alternative teams for each business operation.

#### Monitor Policy and Economic Indicators

- Businesses should closely monitor economic indicators, evolving policies by government authorities and updates on the status of their industries to enhance their capacity to conduct operations and mitigate risks and challenges.
- Businesses should enhance their communications with the relevant government bodies to convey their policy advice based on global best practices, in addition their needs and priorities during times of crises.

#### Maximize Benefit from Industry-based Incentives

- Businesses should continue to monitor and maximize benefit from incentives and industry support measures adopted by the government authorities to support companies in mitigating the economic and health impact of COVID-19.
- This includes benefiting from financing facilities and stimulus packages for defaulting and expanding businesses, payment facilitation measures of financial dues, and discounted interest rates on payments.

#### Regular Review of Market Trends and Forecasts

- Digital transformation, consumer behavior, emerging market trends, supply chain developments, evolving policy and regulatory frameworks as well as the mitigation efforts and market strategies of competitors, should be closely monitored and regularly assessed.

#### Monitor Pandemic Developments

- Businesses should closely monitor the scientific and medical developments of the pandemic on both the local and global scales, while aligning the business sales and marketing strategies with evolving developments, as required.
- Businesses should closely monitor updates on COVID-19 vaccination efforts and adjust their business strategy accordingly.
- Channels of communication should be maintained and enhanced with relevant health authorities and medical providers.



## IV. Workforce Wellness



### Enhance Accessibility to Healthcare

- Businesses should maintain pro-active access to healthcare services for employees to enhance their ability to address arising health related challenges during this crisis.
- This includes setting up isolation areas on premise, updating the business' corporate insurance policies for employees, and engaging healthcare providers for instant services when needed.



### Support High-Risk Employees

- Businesses should maintain regular checkups for their “higher risk employees,” such as elderly members, employees with previous medical conditions and those undergoing maternity.
- Healthcare providers should be consulted for special services to be provided in time of need



### Convene Regular COVID-19 Mitigation Awareness Sessions

- Businesses should conduct regular awareness sessions/briefings for employees on means of addressing the health related aspects of COVID-19, including handling symptoms, undergoing home isolation when in contact with a COVID-19 case, and providing a step-by-step approach to dealing with a COVID-19 infection.



### Improve Mental Health Support Channels

- Businesses may seek to provide in-house counseling services for employees to enhance their capacity to deal with the economic and health repercussions of COVID-19.
- This may include organizing regular discussions between the business' senior management and employees to enhance flow of information and provide support as necessary.



# Thank you

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