

Social Distancing Policy (Explanation)

Why use this policy?

During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, workplaces have been instructed to implement social distancing protocols to help stop the spread of the virus.¹ In the state of Oregon, employers are actually required to establish, implement, and enforce a social distancing policy.² Use this policy to comply with government orders to implement social distancing measures in your workplace, and also to instruct employees about their responsibilities to maintain an appropriate distance from others while working.

Social distancing means maintaining a minimum distance between two individuals; its purpose is to reduce the possibility that one person will pass the virus to another person. The federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that individuals should stay a minimum of six feet away from each other to avoid the spread of COVID-19.³ For this reason, this policy has been written to comply with the CDC's recommendation that effective social distancing means staying six feet away from others at all times.

How to use this policy

The policy below provides the basic framework for what should be addressed by a social distancing policy, but it needs to be tailored to address the specific locations in your facility. To ensure that you have addressed the social distancing measures that need to be implemented, you should conduct a thorough walk-through of your facility and include site-specific protocols as necessary. Consider using colored tape throughout your facility to easily mark six-foot perimeters around areas where employees frequently work (e.g. desks, work stations, specific positions on a manufacturing line, etc.). You should also consider implementing other engineering controls, such as partitions or barriers between work stations, to further separate employees from being in close contact with each other. For additional information on evaluating your workplace and reducing possible COVID-19 exposure for your employees, review the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)'s "[Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)."

¹ California Office of the Governor, [Executive Order N-33-20](#) (March 19, 2020); Director of Idaho Dept. of Health and Welfare, [Order to Self-Isolate](#) (March 25, 2020); Montana Office of the Governor, [Directive Implementing Executive Orders 2-2020 and 3-2020](#) (March 26, 2020); Oregon Office of the Governor, [Executive Order No. 20-12](#) (March 23, 2020), Washington Office of the Governor, [Amending Proclamation 20-05](#) (March 23, 2020).

² Oregon Office of the Governor, [Executive Order No. 20-12](#) (March 23, 2020).

³ "Social distancing means remaining out of congregate settings, avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible." ([CDC website](#), March 27, 2020).

Social Distancing Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with *[insert name of state and/or government order that requires implementation of social distancing protocols (e.g. "Governor Kate Brown's Executive Order 20-12")]*, and to keep employees safe while working at *[insert name of Company]*.

The general goal of this social distancing policy is to ensure that employees and business-critical visitors stay at least six feet away from each other at all times, if possible. While there may be occasions when individuals need to come within six feet of each other to complete an assigned task, employees and visitors must use all possible efforts to ensure they maintain a minimum safe distance of six feet apart while working. Employees who intentionally or repeatedly violate this social distancing policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination *[optional: insert reference to your company's discipline policy]*.

[Note: Oregon employers must designate an individual to establish, implement, and enforce the location's social distancing policy.] [Insert name and/or title of designated individual] is the person designated to establish, implement, and enforce this Social Distancing Policy. If employees have questions or concerns about the protocols listed below, or have additional suggestions for implementing social distancing at work, they should contact either their manager or *[insert name and/or title of designated individual]*.

We have established the following protocols to ensure social distancing in our facility:

Visitors:

- Only business-critical visitors will be allowed to enter the facility; all other visitors are prohibited from entering.
- A "business-critical visitor" is anyone who *[fill in a definition of visitors that are considered essential to continue operations]*.
- All visitors must receive and read a copy of this Social Distancing Policy.
- Any visitor who violates this Social Distancing Policy must immediately be removed from the premises.
- *[Determine whether you need to limit the number of visitors in a given area in order to comply with social distancing protocols; if so, describe.]*

Meetings:

- If possible, meetings must occur by means other than face-to-face (i.e. video or phone conferencing).
- If a meeting must occur face-to-face, the meeting organizer will ensure:
 - Participants in the meeting remain six feet apart from each other at all times;
 - Participants do not make physical contact with each other (e.g., no shaking hands); and

- Any individual who is coughing, sneezing, or exhibiting any signs of illness, must be removed from the meeting immediately.

Restrooms:

- *[You will need to establish protocols for all of the restrooms in your facility. If feasible, you should ensure that only one person occupies a restroom at any given time. Consider having a sign system at the door that signals someone is using the restroom and to wait outside, at least six feet from the door.]*
- All employees and visitors must thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving the restroom.

Lunch/break rooms:

- *[You will need to establish protocols for using break rooms during meals and rest periods. Will employees be allowed to use these rooms or will they be closed completely? If use is permitted, what limitations will there be on the number of people allowed per room at any one time? How will you ensure that people using the room will remain six feet away from each other at all times (e.g., limit the number of people who can sit at a table at any one time).]*
- Communal food, such as donuts or homemade baked goods, are prohibited from being placed anywhere in the facility.
- Individuals may not share food or drinks with each other.
- When using *[insert name of communal equipment, such as coffee pots, hot water dispenser, or microwaves]*, individuals must wipe down such equipment after each use with *[describe cleaning products provided, e.g., disposable antiseptic wipes]*.

Hallways, catwalks, and elevators:

- *[You should evaluate your hallways, catwalks, elevators, or any other tight space where employees would pass close to each other under ordinary circumstances. Determine whether employees can pass through these areas while staying six feet apart. For elevators, only one person should be allowed in at a time. For catwalks and hallways that are in a loop, consider allowing people to walk in only one direction so employees don't need to pass each other and can space themselves apart while walking in the same direction. If these walkways aren't arranged in a loop, then you may need to direct people to step aside as much as possible and face in the other direction while the individuals pass by.]*

Changing rooms:

- *[If employees need to don or doff protective clothing or other equipment, evaluate the changing space and determine how to keep employees at least six feet apart from each other while donning/doffing].*

Areas where employees form lines:

- *[You should identify areas in your facility where lines may form, such as at the time clock, restrooms, vending machines, or health screenings (if being performed), and address how employees should line up to ensure that they stay six feet away from each other while waiting].*

Common use workspaces:

- *[You should identify workspaces that are used by multiple employees, such as conference rooms, communal computer terminals, or shared work stations, and determine ground rules for employees to use those spaces. Protocols should include how employees switch off in using the common space and how they should clean it after each use].*

Travel for work:

- No air or train travel is allowed under any circumstances.
- Other work travel is permitted only if considered critical to continue operations of the business.
- Travel is considered critical to continue business operations when *[fill in definition of travel that is considered critical to continue business operations]*.
- If work travel is permitted, only one employee is allowed in the vehicle at any given time. If an employee uses a company vehicle for work travel, the vehicle must be thoroughly cleaned after each use.