

On April 26, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced a phased approach to reopen industries and businesses in New York in phases based upon a data-driven, regional analysis. On May 4, 2020, the Governor provided that the regional analysis would consider several public health factors, including new COVID-19 infections, as well as health care system, diagnostic testing, and contact tracing capacity. On May 11, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced that the first phase of reopening would begin on May 15, 2020 in several regions of New York, based upon available regional metrics and indicators.

In addition to the following standards, both essential and non-essential businesses must continue to comply with the guidance and directives for maintaining clean and safe work environments issued by DOH.

Please note that where guidance in this document differs from other guidance documents issued by New York State, the more recent guidance shall apply.

Standards for Responsible Construction Activities in New York State

No construction activity can occur without meeting the following minimum State standards, as well as applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to such minimum standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The State standards contained within this guidance apply to all construction activities – both essential and non-essential – in operation during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State.

The following guidance is organized around three distinct categories: people, places, and processes.

I. PEOPLE

A. Physical Distancing

- For any work occurring indoors (e.g. construction within an existing building), no more than 1 worker per 250 square feet is allowed on site, excluding supervisors, unless additional personal protective measures are implemented; or
- A distance of at least six feet must be maintained among workers at all times, unless safety of the core activity requires a shorter distance (e.g. dry walling, glazing, lifting). Any time employees must come within six feet of another person, acceptable face coverings must be worn. Employees must be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within six feet.
 - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose.
 - However, cloth, disposable, or other homemade face coverings are not acceptable face coverings for workplace activities that typically require a higher degree of protection for personal protective equipment due to the nature of the work. For those activities, N95 respirators or other personal protective equipment (PPE) used under existing industry standards should continue to be used, as is defined in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
- The number of work stations and employee seating areas, and their use, may be modified or restricted, so that workers are at least six feet apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when

facing one another) and are not sharing workstations without cleaning and disinfection between use. When distancing is not feasible between workstations, the use of face coverings or physical barriers (e.g. plastic shielding walls, in lieu of face coverings in areas where they would not affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation) must be provided and required.

- Physical barriers should be put in place in accordance with [OSHA guidelines](#).
- Physical barrier options may include: strip curtains, plexiglass or similar materials, or other impermeable dividers or partitions.
- The use of tightly confined spaces (e.g. elevators, hoists, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time, unless all employees in such space at the same time are wearing acceptable face coverings, should be prohibited. However, even with face coverings in use, occupancy must never exceed 50% of the maximum capacity of the space or vehicle, unless it is designed for use by a single occupant. Ventilation with outdoor air should be increased to the greatest extent possible, while maintaining safety protocols, and additional measures to prevent congregation in elevator waiting areas and limit density in elevators, such as enabling the use of stairs, should be taken.
- Measures should be put in place to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using tape or signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces, and post signage and distance markers denoting spaces of six feet in all commonly used areas and any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations, etc.).
- Signs must be posted throughout the site, consistent with DOH COVID-19 signage. Customized signage specific to a workplace or setting can be developed and used, provided that such signage is consistent with the Department's signage. Signage should be used to remind employees to:
 - Cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when six feet of social distance cannot be maintained.
 - Properly store and, when necessary, discard personal protective equipment.
 - Adhere to physical distancing instructions.
 - Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so.
 - Follow hand hygiene and cleaning guidelines.

B. Gatherings in Enclosed Spaces

- In-person gatherings (e.g. shapeups, toolbox talks, safety meetings) must be limited to the greatest extent possible and other methods such as video or teleconferencing must be used whenever possible, per CDC guidance "[Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)". When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, meetings should be held in open, well-ventilated spaces and it should be ensured that individuals maintain six feet of social distance between one another (e.g. if there are chairs, leave space between chairs, have employees sit in alternating chairs).
- Practices for adequate social distancing in confined areas, such as restrooms and breakrooms, must be put in place, and signage and systems (e.g. flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy when social distancing cannot be maintained in such areas should be developed; and
- Schedules should be staggered for employees to observe social distancing (i.e., six feet of space) for any gathering (e.g. coffee breaks, meals, and shift starts/stops).