

Employers: How to create a more COVID-safe work environment



Employers are responsible for reducing the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace. Businesses have an important role in protecting both their employees and customers from COVID-19.

WHAT TO DO IF AN EMPLOYEE IS CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED TO HAVE COVID-19

- Encourage employees to **get tested and stay home from work** if they have COVID-like symptoms.
- The law requires employers to let workers use **accrued sick leave or vacation time** if they test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has the virus (RCW 49.46 and WAC 296-128).
- Refer workers to available resources found at: kingcounty.gov/covid/workers

It is against the law for any employer to fire or retaliate against a worker for reporting concerns about health and safety.

HOW TO CREATE SAFER BREAKS

The place where workers go to relax on the job can be a high-risk location for transmission of COVID-19. Employers can take important steps to keep workers safe during breaks.

- **Break locations:** If space is available, encourage workers to take breaks outdoors, or allow workers to take breaks in additional rooms that are well-ventilated.
- **Capacity:** Limit break room occupancy to no more than 50 percent.
- **Break times:** Stagger break times to decrease groups of workers gathering.
- **Social Distancing:** Workers should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others at all times, including during breaks. Space tables and chairs so employees are at least 6 feet apart when seated (more space is better).
- **Ventilation:** To decrease airborne transmission of the virus, consider taking steps to improve ventilation in the workplace, in consultation with an HVAC professional.
- **Mask use:** Remind workers to wear masks when they are not eating or drinking.
- **Signage:** Place signs reminding employees to wear face coverings, maintain physical distancing, practice frequent handwashing, and monitor personal health.

**FOR RESOURCES ON CREATING A SAFER WORK ENVIRONMENT
VISIT [KINGCOUNTY.GOV/COVID/BUSINESS-TOOLKIT](https://kingcounty.gov/covid/business-toolkit)**