



ARE THE PROPER COVID CONTROLS IN YOUR WORKPLACE?



As State agencies consider bringing more and more employees back into the workplace, it is crucial that they provide COVID controls to the greatest extent possible. Especially now, when we are seeing spikes in COVID across the State and across the country. Otherwise, as workplace density increases, so does the risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19.

Experience up till this point has been that workers are just as productive, if not more, working remotely during this pandemic. Lower density in the workplace is a major control measure for COVID. It allows for greater social distancing and less potential for exposure to the virus. But now it seems that the State is intent on bringing all the workers back. Even though at this point there has been an increase in COVID cases across the state, and a vaccine is not expected until 2021. Sadly, the restrictions and guidelines the State has for private sector businesses are not used for their own worksites. Their “Reopening New York Office Based Work Guidelines” still require businesses to be at 50% capacity. State Agencies should follow the same guidelines (seen here <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/OfficesSummaryGuidelines.pdf>).

In the [PEF Toolkit for PEF Activists](#) for return to work activities, there are more details of what should be in place for a safer return to work following the lockdown. Our Health & Safety and Labor/Management Committees have been using that Toolkit to push for concrete information from management representatives as workers are being brought back into the workplace. But we need your help.

Employees deserve to feel safe in their workplace. Teachers across the country have lifted their voices in their “Not Until It’s Safe” campaign — fighting for protections for their members. So are we. If the State continues on this ill-advised path, and you are in an agency that has returned more people to the worksite, you can help us fight for your safety and health by providing us with details from your workplace using the new COVID Controls Checklist on the following pages.

A picture is worth a thousand words, and a thousand voices can be heard for miles. So use the checklist to document what is happening in your workplace, and if COVID controls, especially masking, social distancing, and barrier methods, are in place or not. Let us know what you are walking into! Document your workplace draw a picture, write a summary or audio blog it. BE CAREFUL NOT TO VIOLATE ANY WORK RULES IN DOING SO. Contact your PEF Steward or Field Representative with any questions on what you can or cannot do.

The information you are providing is crucial for PEF address COVID concerns in your workplace. Your PEF Local Leaders and Statewide Representatives will use this information to address concerns at both your workplace and on a statewide level. This will involve your Local Council Leader, Stewards, Labor Management and Health and Safety Committees.

The latest information on COVID and other issue important to you are sent out through the PEF Action Network. If you are not receiving those emails, you may sign up at <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/sign-up-for-email-notifications>. To update your information, call PEF at 800-342-4306 or 518-785-1900, or email jcarpenter@pef.org. Please only use your personal cell phone and email for contact information.

COVID CONTROL CHECKLIST

DATE _____

AGENCY _____

WORK LOCATION _____

NAME OF PERSON FILLING OUT FORM _____

POSITION HELD IN UNION (if applicable) _____

CONTACT (personal phone and email) _____

Please answer the questions below to the best of your knowledge. If you do not know the answer, leave it blank.

When you have completed the checklist, **keep a copy for yourself, give a copy to your local PEF Steward, Executive Board Member and Council Leader, and send a copy to HealthAndSafety@pef.org.**

Does your agency have a phased-in plan Yes No

How much notice were you given _____

Do you feel that was adequate notice for a return to work Yes No

What percent (estimated) of the total workforce is back in your workplace _____

How many days a week are employees in the office _____

Is there a dedicated entrance and exit for employees Yes No

Is the entrance marked for social distance Yes No

Are the elevators limited to 50% capacity (but no more than 4 passengers) and allow for social distancing between passengers Yes No

Are the floors marked for 6' distances where people may congregate Yes No

Are workstations 6' or more apart (pay attention here to set up – if 2 people share a 12' space, but furniture takes up some of that space, then they are NOT 6' apart) Yes No

Are there dividers or barriers in between close spaces (these should be at least 5' high) Yes No

How are cubicles occupied?

- side to side Yes No
- back to back Yes No
- facing each other Yes No

Are tight spaces, narrow hallways, and aisles marked as one way directional traffic Yes No

Are spaces well-ventilated Yes No

What is the MERV rating for HVAC filters _____

What are the ventilation settings for

Fresh Air Intake _____

Air Exchanges per Hour _____

Are staff meetings or other organizational meetings held virtually Yes No

For in-person meetings or trainings

- are meeting spaces restricted to no more than 50% capacity Yes No
- Do they allow for at least 6' of distance between occupants Yes No

Are signs posted for

- Face Coverings Yes No
- Hand Hygiene Yes No
- Social Distancing Yes No

Are face coverings provided Yes No

Is hand sanitizer made available Yes No

Are cleaning and disinfection supplies available for individual work spaces Yes No

Are high touch areas cleaned and disinfected at least daily Yes No

Is there a log posted that notes the dates/times of cleaning done Yes No

Are face coverings policies enforced Yes No

Are social distancing policies enforced Yes No

Do you or your co-workers take mass transportation to work Yes No

Are adjusted work schedules made available to allow for avoidance of rush hour on public transportation Yes No

Is there a system for reporting workplace concerns Yes No

Has training been provided for

- Basic COVID information Yes No
- The agency–specific COVID plans and controls Yes No
- Proper mask wearing, social distancing, and hand hygiene practices Yes No
- Screening and symptom monitoring Yes No
- Proper cleaning and disinfection procedures Yes No

Do you know who your PEF Steward is and how to contact them Yes No

Do you know who your PEF Council Leader is and how to contact them Yes No

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR FACILITY-BASED WORKSITES

Please indicate by letter the function that best represents your title a) healthcare b) direct care c) educational/vocational d) counseling/social service e) other

Have you been provided with the proper PPE for your job duties Yes No

If you are required to wear an N95 Yes No

Have you been fit tested Yes No

Does the facility have designated zones for Quarantine and Medical Isolation Yes No

Does the facility have a plan for restricting or closing programs during a resurgence Yes No

When you have completed the checklist, **keep a copy for yourself, give a copy to your local PEF Steward, Executive Board Member and Council Leader, and send a copy to HealthAndSafety@pef.org.**

You may use this link to find out who your Council Leader and Executive Board Members are <https://www.pef.org/member-resources/executive-board/>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON COVID-19, PLEASE SEE

<http://www.pef.org/covid>

Produced by the New York State Public Employees Federation

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