Gov. Tom Wolf and state Secretary of Health Rachel Levine issued an order for Mitigation, Enforcement, and Immunity Protections that took effect November 27, 2020, and replaced all earlier orders. The order requires all entities to conduct telework unless it is impossible, and if conducting in-person operations, to follow the procedures in the order, which are outlined below. Temporary orders impacting gathering limits and business capacity were in effect from December 12, 2020 until January 4, 2021 at 8 a.m.

Because COVID-19 is easily transmitted in group settings, it is important to protect public health to slow the spread of the virus. Even asymptomatic people can transmit the disease. The virus can also spread if a person touches his or her mouth, nose, or eyes after touching a surface or object that has been contaminated.

Consider the possibility that township employees may be caregivers for a family member who is in an elevated at-risk category for contracting the virus or may be in an elevated at-risk category themselves. Having a virus mitigation and decontamination plan in place will ensure that township employees feel safe when returning to work in the office.

**Protecting Employees: Mitigation Measures**
- Townships must implement the following mitigation measures:
  - Take each employee’s temperature before they enter the township building and send home those who have a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Ensure that employees practice social distancing while waiting to have their temperatures screened.
  - Inform employees that if they have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath), they must notify their direct supervisor and stay home.
  - Prevent large groups from entering or leaving the building by staggering work start and end times.
  - Limit the number of people in employee common areas, such as locker rooms or break rooms, to ensure that employees can maintain a physical distance of six feet; tell employees not to eat across from each other; and clean these areas frequently.
  - Conduct staff meetings and trainings by phone or virtually or limit the number of attendees to meet the indoor cap of no more than, 10 percent of indoor capacity for less than 2,000 and 15 percent of outdoor capacity for less than 2,000.
  - Provide handwashing facilities, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes and schedule handwashing breaks as necessary.
  - Provide masks for employees to wear and require masks to be worn while at work and around other people unless the employee is eating or drinking or for other exemptions to the universal mask order, such as safety. Employers may approve the masks that employees obtain.
  - Make sure the facility has enough employees as applicable to follow these protocols and conduct business effectively and safely.
  - Prohibit non-essential visitors from entering the township office. Conduct business with residents by phone or email, rather than in-person.
  - Communicate these procedures to all employees to ensure that everyone knows how to be safe.

Townships must have a plan in place that includes the taking of employees’ temperature before they enter work and sending home those who have a reading of 100.4 degrees or higher.
Protecting Employees: Decontamination Plans

It is critical not only to have decontamination plans in place to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus but also to communicate to township employees that there is a plan in place to ensure their safety in the workplace.

Townships must have a decontamination plan in place for when there is an exposure to COVID-19 that includes the following:

- Securing and decontaminating affected areas. Open outside doors and windows and use fans to air out the areas for at least 24 hours before thoroughly cleaning all areas visited by the infected person.
- Identifying employees who were in close contact (within about 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with a person with COVID-19 from the period 48 hours before symptom onset (or 48 hours prior to test date if asymptomatic) to the time at which the patient isolated.
- Sending home any employees who were identified as close contacts to quarantine in accordance with state Department of Health guidelines and recommending or requiring that the employee receive a COVID-19 test.
- Requiring sick employees and those who test positive for COVID-19 to follow CDC-recommended steps, including not returning to work until the CDC or Department of Health criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with health care providers and state and local health departments.
- Implementing liberal paid time off for employees who do not return to work for the reasons set forth above, if possible.

Townships must require all members of the public to wear masks when visiting the township building.

Protecting Township Employees and the Public

Township employees must not only practice safety precautions to the extent practicable but also adjust the way the township interacts with the public. This will help ensure their safety and make them feel comfortable interacting with the township. Follow these practices:

- Prohibit non-essential visitors and conduct business with the public by phone or email or by appointment only.
- Modify office hours if needed to ensure that there is adequate time to clean and disinfect high-traffic areas.
- Install shields or other barriers to physically separate township employees from the public.
- Require all members of the public to wear masks when visiting the township building or other township facilities.
- Post signs noting the current maximum building capacity at each entrance (75 percent of maximum capacity) and that physical distancing and use of face coverings are required. The township should also place markings to indicate six-foot distances to help maintain physical distancing where appropriate.

For more guidance, go to www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/business-guidance/.

Other Resources

- www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/

Signage

- CDC Stop the Spread
- CDC What You Should Know About COVID-19