



Considerations for Reopening and Resumption of Operations



Responsible measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak have led thousands of facilities, including synagogues, community centers, schools, senior centers, camps, and workplaces to cease or severely limit their operations. Organizations and facilities must consider how to reopen so they can efficiently and safely resume fulfilling the vital roles they play, offering social and spiritual services to our community and the public at large. This guidance — along with a comprehensive suite of materials currently in development — is intended to assist organizations as they consider when and how they will reopen.

How to Use this Document

This document presents initial considerations for facilities planning or considering reopening and resuming all levels of operations. It should be considered illustrative of the most common issues, concerns, and focus areas that organizations and facilities are working to address. Utilized as part of a comprehensive strategy around safety, security, health and welfare, this document can be a valuable tool in outlining key considerations. It will be updated as new best practices and information dictate and allow, to include U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state, and local guidelines, as they are made available.

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Determining When to Reopen

Just because guidance from health officials has shifted or facilities are allowed to reopen does not necessarily mean that they should or are prepared to do so. Care and concern should be given not just to regulations and rules, but also to public health guidance, medical advice, local conditions, and your capacity to provide a safe space for your staff and visitors. Moreover, organizations and communities should think through their decisions and strategies prior to reopening to ensure an effective, safe transition.

Designate a Recovery Team and Point Person — Identify key staff, lay leaders, and volunteers to prepare the organization to resume operations and to lead it through its recovery. Designate one of these people to serve as the Recovery Manager to lead the team.

- This team may include members from Facilities, Human Resources (HR), Information Technology (IT), Communications/Marketing/Public Affairs, Security, senior leadership, and operations staff or lay leadership.
- Assign members of your recovery team as liaisons to external agencies — Public Health, Police, Fire/EMS, Utilities — to stay up-to-date on new information and to keep those entities informed of your plans.
- Develop a communications plan. The team should be announced to the organization and should provide periodic reports on plans and preparations, decision points, and assist in the development of the recovery plan and resumption of normal or modified operations. This will keep people informed and help manage expectations.

Determine When You Can Reopen — Making the decision to reopen will be dependent on several factors:

- Guidelines for resumption of public activities will be issued by Federal, state, and/or local public health authorities. Expect each state and many localities to issue additional guidelines and timetables, sometimes conflicting with each other, for resumption of public activities.
- Consider your capacity to resume organizational activities in compliance with public health guidelines in a safe and effective manner. Each function of your organization may need a separate timetable for reopening in order to comply with local laws, ordinances, and regulations.
- Consider the readiness of your staff and membership to resume activities in the facilities. In particular, do you have key staff or volunteers who are immune-compromised and will not be able to perform their duties in an in-person environment? If so, does this impact your ability to reopen? Communication with members and staff will be critical to ensure their concerns are heard, their needs are met, and they support your plans and efforts.
- Consider the financial implications of reopening. It may be that you are allowed to begin operating at a certain level, but that the cost of providing adequate health and safety measures makes it prohibitive.
- Consider availability of necessary supplies (cleaning chemicals, masks, gloves, personnel, etc.)

Determine Recovery Goals — Determine how quickly you want to be up and running again and what level of functions and services you want to achieve to consider yourself operational.

- Consider resuming operations and functions in steps or phases rather than all at once. This may give you experience with new health and safety guidelines before a full opening.
- When you return to ordinary operations, what will be your initial level of functions and services?
 - What operations are critical or most urgent to restore first?
 - What operations can you most safely restore first?
 - In what order will you re-establish the remaining functions?
 - What will be your stages and timing to increase those functions?

Always bear in mind what is right for the facility, organization, and community.



Preparing Your Facility to Reopen

The Recovery Team should ensure the facility is ready to resume operations, with considerations of habitability, safety, and functionality. If you are in a shared facility, as landlord or tenant, this should be coordinated with all organizations affected. Those plans, progress, and results should be widely communicated to members and staff.

- What clean-up and disinfection are needed? What repairs or adjustments are needed? How long will clean-up, disinfection, and repairs take? What is the timeline for procuring needed equipment and supplies?
- What changes to the facility, operations, or maintenance are needed to adapt to continuing COVID-19 concerns once the facility is open, notably enhanced workplace cleaning?
- Do work and gathering spaces need to be reorganized or marked off to encourage distancing for infection control, to include controlling the number of people, the flow of people (i.e., one-way circulation), and the distancing of people (increment marking)?
- How will you limit, control, or adjust access control and touch point issues (e.g., doorknobs, remove shared/unnecessary items from the workspace)?
- Rethink shared spaces, common areas, kitchen and meal preparation facilities as well as how these will operate, if at all.
- Stock the workplace with adequate cleaning and health supplies, and create a process to track them.
- Criteria for people to return to facilities will likely be determined by local health authorities.
 - What are the criteria for our area?
 - What, if any, additional criteria should we set for return of our membership, staff, or the public to the facility?
 - How will we administer screening of persons for return or entrance?
- Train and communicate with all staff, membership, and others in the facility on new workplace rules, where applicable.



Reopening a Safe and Secure Facility

Your organization may face new threats, vulnerabilities, and risks resulting from the closing and reopening, including from new safety procedures. Consider the risks posed by the new situation and develop plans to minimize those risks. Changes in facility operations may alter your risk profile. Reopening after having been closed for an extended period grabs the attention of potential bad actors. Ensure you have your safety and security plans and resources in place before reopening.

- Review your most recent security threat, vulnerability, and risk assessment, and your security plans. How has your situation and security posture changed?
 - Scapegoating of our community may result in targeted violence towards individuals, organizations, and your facility.
 - Be alert to suspicious activities in your area and stay in regular contact with local law enforcement.
- Determine what security staff and measures need to be in place for each step of your return to operations.
 - Do you have the staff necessary to address new or routine safety and security challenges? If you laid off security staff, can you rehire the same staff, or will you need to hire and train new staff?

- Ensure necessary resources are available to support a safe and secure workplace. In your planning, allocate funding for staff and equipment needed to implement any new safety measures to allow persons back into the facility.
- Disgruntled staff may act out to delay reopening, or in revenge for closure or layoffs. Assess risks and concerns arising from staff that have been laid off or who have declined to return to the workplace and develop risk management plans for each.
- Notify your local law enforcement of your plans to reopen. Ask them about any crime trends in your area, including hate/bias crimes, while you were closed. Ask them to visit the facility with you and to increase their frequency of patrols in your area if feasible.



Deciding Who and How People Will Return

General

- Consider what you will require for people who wish to return (temperature checks, symptoms checks, certifications or doctor's notes, etc.); consult with recent updates to local, state, and national rules and regulations, to include recent CDC and EEOC guidance.
- Consider whether you will require use of face coverings and/or gloves; will these be provided?

Return of Staff — Considerations around who may be able to return and when (based on restrictions), who will be prohibited (those experiencing symptoms, those in isolation, etc.), and how to handle high-risk employees and those with caretaking obligations will all be required.

- Consider training for reopening and how you will track this (use of face masks, travel policies, etc.).
- Ensure all staff know your policies on remote work, leave, and pay, and how the reopening affects the employee, especially those at high risk.
- Some staff may be immediately ready, if not eager, to return to the facility.
- Depending on the length of the period of remote work, some staff may need additional time to reorganize their lives in order to return to the office.
- Some staff may have come to prefer remote work and will need time to reintegrate into the office environment.
- Consider how staff travel/commute to the office and how this may impact people.
- Some staff may have residual anxiety about the safety of the facility.
- Anticipate ongoing HR concerns resulting from the closure and reopening.
- Sensitize managers and supervisors to recognize indicators of staff members facing challenges.
- Identify Employee Assistance and Resource program support to assist staff in adapting to the changes.
- Consider returning staff in stages, even within business units, rather than all at once.

Return of Congregants, Members, and Guests — When the facility is ready to resume services to its membership, congregants, and their guests:

- Publicize and communicate the status of the facility, the new safety measures that have been put in place, and the requirements to be met for persons to return to the facility.
- Provide a forum for questions and feedback about those procedures.
- Re-evaluate those procedures regularly after the first week, then monthly until you have reached your new normal operating status.
- Create a clearly articulated plan for all of the 'what ifs'; for example — a member who refuses to wear a mask or gloves; non-compliance with health/safety protocols, etc.



Monitoring Progress and Planning for the Next Incident

Once operations have resumed, the planning process begins all over again.

- Consider what you have learned from closing and reopening the facility and what you will do if we have a resurgence requiring us to close again.
- Use the lessons you learned to revise plans and to train your staff and membership for the next time.

**If you or your organization has any questions
or you need to report a non-emergency issue, please contact:**

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Who Developed this Document

This document was developed by a national Resumption of Operations and Organizational Reopening Working Group, convened by the Secure Community Network. The Working Group is comprised of a group of professionals and subject matter experts from the public, private, non-profit, and academic sectors, representing Jewish Federations, national organizations and movements as well as security, emergency management, public health, and former law enforcement officials, to include individuals who currently work to address security matters within the Jewish community. The purpose of this Working Group is to identify, discuss and make recommendations surrounding best practice policies and procedures regarding the resumption of operations and the reopening of organizations and facilities, given the current and anticipated environment around COVID-19.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is intended to offer guidance regarding current best practice considerations in addressing the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). It is intended to assist partner and stakeholder organizations, facilities and decision-makers with top line guidance when dealing with a range of matters related to COVID-19. This Guidance and the considerations it provides reflect the best available information at the time the Guidance was prepared. It is possible that the strategies and concepts outlined in this document may change as our understanding of unique challenges that COVID-19 poses evolves. As such, information herein should not be considered as rigid, nor is it intended to supplant judgment based on observed conditions. This document was developed with information from publicly available sources, including public, private, non-profit and academic entities, as well as subject matter experts from each of these sectors. As the current pandemic is an ongoing, rapidly developing situation, SCN encourages its partners and stakeholders to monitor publicly available information and to always follow federal, state and local health organization guidance and government mandates. SCN does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of the Guidance and assumes no responsibility for any injury or damage to persons or property arising out of or related to any use of this Guidance or for any errors or omissions.

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and saves the world, one person at a time, every day.*

