



**SECTOR SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SAFETY STANDARDS FOR
RETAIL BUSINESSES TO ADDRESS COVID-19
Updated as of June 19, 2020**

Purpose

These updated workplace safety standards for Retail Businesses are posted in advance of the Governor's initiation of Phase 2 Step 2 to allow businesses time to prepare to operate in compliance with these mandatory health and safety standards. These updated workplace safety standards that provide the opportunity to operate fitting rooms on an appointment only basis will be effective on June 22, 2020, when Step 2 of the Phase 2 Re-Opening plan commences.

These sector specific COVID-19 workplace safety standards for Retail Businesses are issued to provide owners and operators of Retail Businesses and workers and customers with instructions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19 as retail stores transition from curbside pickup and delivery only to browsing and in-store transactions with restrictions.

These standards are minimum requirements only and are not exclusive or exhaustive. The public health data and matrix upon which these guidelines are based can and does change frequently, and the owner or operator for each retail business is accountable for staying abreast of any updates to these requirements.

Standards for Responsible Retail Businesses in Massachusetts:

No activity in Retail Businesses can occur without meeting these sector specific COVID-19 workplace safety standards for Retail Businesses. These standards apply, until rescinded or amended by the State, to all Retail Businesses except for Farmers' Markets, which shall continue to be governed by Department of Public Health Guidance. These standards supersede and replace existing Department of Public Health guidance governing grocery stores and pharmacies.

The following workplace specific guidance is organized around four distinct categories covering Social Distancing, Hygiene Protocols, Staffing and Operations, and Cleaning and Disinfecting.

I. Social Distancing

- Each retail store must monitor customer entries and exits and limit occupancy at all times to the greater of the following:
 - 8 persons (including store staff) per 1,000 square feet of accessible, indoor space; or
 - 40% of the retail store's maximum permitted occupancy as documented in its occupancy permit on record with the municipal building department or other municipal record holder
 - Retail stores for which no permitted occupancy limitation is on record may rely on the 8 persons per 1,000 square feet method

- Operators of enclosed shopping malls and other indoor, multi-tenant retail spaces must monitor customer and worker entries and exits to common areas and limit occupancy of common areas at all times to 40% of maximum permitted occupancy levels.
- All occupant counts and calculations shall include customers and workers
- Within enclosed shopping malls and other indoor multi-tenant retail spaces:
 - Retailers or restaurants serving food and beverage may only provide take-out or delivery service
 - Any seating areas, including food courts, must be closed
 - Any children’s play areas must be closed
 - All arcades must be closed
- Stores must put markers outside of the store to ensure 6 feet of distance for customers who are waiting outside to enter
- If the store offers delivery, curbside pickup capabilities, or limited “appointment only shopping,” customers should be encouraged to use those methods before coming into the store
- Grocery stores and retail stores with a pharmacy department must provide dedicated hours at least one hour each day of operation, in the early morning, for adults 60 years of age and older. These hours must be conspicuously posted
- Other retail stores are encouraged to offer exclusive hours or other accommodations for those in high-risk populations as defined by the CDC
- Ensure separation of 6 feet or more between individuals where possible:
 - Close or reconfigure worker common spaces and high density areas where workers are likely to congregate (e.g., break rooms, eating areas) to allow social distancing
 - Physical partitions must separate workstations that cannot be spaced out (partitions must be at least 6 feet in height)
 - Install physical barriers for checkout stations where possible, otherwise maintain 6 feet distance where not possible
 - Install visual social distancing markers to encourage customers to remain 6 feet apart (e.g., lines outside of the stores if applicable, lines to make payments, lines to use the restroom)
- Establish directional aisles to manage customer flow for foot traffic, if possible, to minimize contact (e.g., one-way entrance and exit to the store, one-way aisles). Post clearly visible signage regarding these policies
- Improve ventilation for enclosed spaces where possible (e.g., open doors and windows)
- Stagger lunch and break times, regulating max number of people in one place and ensuring at least 6 feet of physical distancing
- Require face coverings for all workers and customers, except where unsafe due to medical condition or disability
- Contactless payment methods are encouraged
- Retailers must close salad bars and any other self-serve prepared or other open good stations, and must eliminate any open free samples or tastings
- Retailers may not permit sampling or application of personal goods (i.e., make-up, perfume, lotion)
- Encourage fitting rooms to remain closed and customers to not try on clothes. Fitting rooms may only be operated on an appointment-only basis. Any clothes tried on by a customer must either be quarantined for 24 hours or thoroughly steam cleaned prior to returning to the floor

II. Hygiene Protocols

- Disinfect shared equipment, such as cash registers, intercoms, tagging machines before use by another employee
- Ensure access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water, wherever possible and encourage frequent handwashing; alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used as an alternative
- Supply workers at workplace location with adequate cleaning products (e.g., sanitizer, disinfecting wipes)
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol should be made available at entrances and throughout floor areas for both workers and customers
- Avoid sharing equipment and supplies between workers
- Post visible signage throughout the site to remind workers of hygiene and safety protocols
- Prohibit the use of reusable bags; stores are permitted to use plastic or paper bags

III. Staffing and Operations

- Provide training to workers on up-to-date safety information and precautions including hygiene and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission, including:
 - Social distancing, hand-washing, proper use of face coverings
 - Self-screening at home, including temperature or symptom checks
 - Importance of not coming to work if ill
 - When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe
 - Which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting and suffering from a severe case of the virus
- Adjust workplace hours and shifts (leverage working teams with different schedules or staggered arrival / departure) to minimize contact across workers and reduce congestion at entry points
- Businesses should reduce operating hours to allow for on-going off-hour sanitation and cleaning
- Limit visitors and service providers on site; shipping and deliveries should be completed in designated areas
- Workers must stay home if feeling ill
- Workers who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- Workers are strongly encouraged to self-identify symptoms or any close contact to a known or suspected COVID-19 case to the employer
- Encourage workers who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to the workplace employer for purposes of cleaning / disinfecting and contact tracing. If the employer is notified of a positive case at the workplace, the employer shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) in the city or town where the workplace is located and assist the LBOH as reasonably requested to advise likely contacts to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other workers may be recommended consistent with guidance and / or at the request of the LBOH
- Post notice to workers and customers of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in the Commonwealth's [Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplace](#)
- For in-home delivery of products, such as furniture and appliances, screen customers for symptoms prior to workers entering the house. Delay delivery if customer indicates potential COVID-19 positive person in the household

IV. Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection of site (at least daily and more frequently if feasible)
- Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning
- Conduct frequent disinfecting of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, bathrooms, baskets, carts, staff break rooms)
- In event of a positive case, shut down site for a deep cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace in accordance with current CDC guidance

Additional worker safety guidelines and resources (with hyperlinks to web pages) are available below:

U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):

[OSHA – COVID-19 Webpage](#)

[OSHA – Enforcement Guidelines Webpage](#)

[OSHA Fact Sheet – Protecting Workers During a Pandemic](#)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

[CDC – Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)

[CDC – Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease \(Updated 3/21/20\)](#)

Additional Information:

Massachusetts State Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website
[mass.gov/covid19](https://www.mass.gov/covid19)

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>