

What are best practices for employers regarding coronavirus?

Updated as of March 8, 2020:

- Stay current regarding the status of the virus and recommendations issued by relevant agencies, such as [OSHA](#), the [CDC](#), the World Health Organization, the [EEOC](#), and local public health organizations.
- Assess business needs as it relates to travel and, in particular, travel to destinations that have Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notices as identified by the CDC.
- Consider taking steps to request travelers to destinations that have Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notices in place to self-quarantine for the incubation period.
- Educate your workforce. Misperceptions about the disease fuel employee fear. Prepare materials for your employees listing relevant CDC information and contact numbers.
- Allay employee fears. Reaffirm that the company is committed to protecting the wellbeing of employees and will take all appropriate measures to the extent allowed by law. Also, offer tips for prevention, such as: receiving vaccinations; washing hands frequently; covering one's nose and mouth when coughing/sneezing; avoiding sharing cups, utensils, water bottles, and other personal items; disposing of tissues appropriately; and the like.
- Consider appointing a human resources representative to serve as an ombudsperson to receive complaints.
- Allow employees who show signs of the virus to leave work and telecommute during the incubation period of the disease. Likewise, consider allowing employees with conditions that put them at a higher risk for complications resulting from a disease (e.g., employees with weakened immune systems, employees who are pregnant, etc.) to telework as a reasonable accommodation to reduce their chances of infection.
- Prepare business continuity plans and review applicable policies in anticipation of the potential closure of work locations or a move to wide-scale remote working.
- Issue instructions for employees regarding what to do if they show symptoms of coronavirus or if a family member in their home has been diagnosed with coronavirus.
- Evaluate your time off policies and determine when the company will pay for absences related to coronavirus.
- Evaluate your workers' compensation policies to assure your organization has adequate insurance coverage.
- If applicable, consider seeking counsel from a competent medical professional with experience in infection control to offer medical advice on the coronavirus.