

Keeping your factory virus-free and safe

If you are an essential manufacturer staying open, your top priority must be to keep you employees safe and protect them from COVID-19. Here are some ways to consider doing that.

I am sure that many of you have found that you supply essential goods or are part of the essential good supply chain. If you are staying open, please consider this advice from Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) – more details can be found [here](#):

“Lt. Gov. Husted said the best advice for essential businesses is that they read the order (see [Section 15](#)) and be able to explain their rationale for remaining open, if questioned -- and to be prepared to demonstrate how the company is complying with the order's directives to protect employee health.”

Some manufacturers locally and around the world are going to great lengths to protect themselves and their employees. Here are some of the things that others are doing. Please note that we are giving you the best ideas we have seen to figure out what will work for your company. More details and complete guides can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

- All office teams work remotely (sales team, marketing teams and finance teams as well as back-office). When this isn't possible, spread out remaining staff as far as possible and hold not in-person meetings – use remote tools even room-to-room.
- People should keep 6 feet distance when they talk and even some things are being rearranged in the plant to accommodate others working 6 feet from one another if possible. As this may become the new normal, any steps you take now to spread areas out will likely be good for the future too.
- Temperature checks before entering the factory gate (use IR scanning thermometer that does not require touching skin or ear temperature with an alcohol swab in between). Note: there are legal implications for this ([see here](#)). A person who shows temperature above 99.5 degrees is not allowed to enter.
- Wearing a masks or other PPE while in the factory (there is a shortage now, so this is not likely useful).
- All doors are left open or even removed when appropriate to eliminate surfaces.
- Increase ventilation rates and increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system

- Buy all no-touch disposal receptacle or remove lids that require contact to open.
- Disinfect all touched surfaces between each shift.
- Eliminate all routine shift hand-off meetings or limit them to just particular people or do them virtually.
- If you can move from 1 or 2 shifts to 3 shifts and keep each shift with the same people each day, then if one shift is sick the others are protected. This arrangement can also work by having one crew for part of the week and one crew for the other part of the week. This may also accommodate shifting child care schedules.
- Stagger shift start/stop times, break times, and lunchtimes to minimize congregations at the time clocks or break areas.
- Zone the factory and prohibit employees from wandering into zones where they do not need to be to perform their jobs.
- Isolate key personnel without whom the factory cannot operate (e.g., boiler operators, wastewater treatment engineers, lead electricians, maintenance, etc.) to prevent them from getting ill.
- Shutdown the plant when production is not needed (even if you ramp on and off on a daily basis). Every bit of time not spent around other people may eliminate the spread of the virus.

These are all in addition to the specific guidelines from Ohio's Executive Order that include:

- Allow as many employees as possible to work from home by implementing policies in areas such as teleworking and video conferencing
- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home until they are free of fever
- Separate employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms from other employees and send them home immediately. Restrict their access to the business until they have recovered.
- Reinforce key messages – stay home when sick, use cough and sneeze etiquette and practice hand hygiene – to all employees, and place posters in areas where they are most likely to be seen. Provide protection supplies such as soap and water, hand sanitizer, tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.
- Frequently perform enhanced environmental cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, such as workstations, countertops, railings, door handles and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

If you are looking for signage to put inside here plant, please [click here](#).

In these difficult times, we hope that you find the best way to keep all of your employees and your colleagues safe. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our team if you would like help or have a question – we don't know everything, but we will sure try to find you a good answer.

Also, if you think that you can help produce needed PPE for our healthcare providers, we are leading an effort to help retool manufacturers – please let me or anyone from MAGNET know.

Sincerely,

Ethan & the MAGNET Team

We have created this [list of practical things manufacturers need to be thinking about and do today to prepare for COVID-19](#).

Please, also check out our [message of hope](#) during these trying times.