EL PASO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Re-opening Checklist for Retail Businesses

As businesses consider reopening their doors, it is important that they engage in a careful, considered process to ensure the safety of their workers and the public. Here is a suggested checklist for businesses to help them organize their efforts to reopen.

EMPLOYMENT
- o **Appoint a Return to Work Team**. Consider a variety of staff from multiple departments at all levels of the organization. Identify new roles and responsibilities and document new practices and protocols that are based on guidance.
- o **Make a Transition Plan**. Understand State, County, and City orders and how they apply to your industry. Determine whether a full re-opening or a phased approach is best for you and your team. Ensure your logistics staff and partners are ready to assist you in accordance with your needs.
- o **Ensure Safe and Effective Staffing**. Determine how many staff will be allowed to work at once in accordance with occupancy limits. Check in with staff to understand how best to schedule hours and return to work dates. Screen employees to make sure it is safe for them to return to work and have policies in place for employees that may be identified as high risk. Also consider whether certain positions can or should be kept remote for now. If you need to hire new employees, consider necessary changes to your hiring practices.
- o **Consider Adjusting Company Policies**. Examine whether your organization should make changes to PTO and sick leave policies, leaves of absence, complaint procedures and expense reimbursements (e.g, PPE).
- o **Plan for Refusal to Work and Requests for Accommodations.** Be ready to interact with employees who are hesitant to return to work due to health risks or other logistical barriers such as closed schools and understand how this affects their eligibility for unemployment benefits. Determine what kinds of accommodations the company is able to provide at-risk groups.
- o **Establish a Clear Protocol for Dealing With Suspected or Confirmed Cases of Covid-19.** Determine when employees are required to report important health risks and to whom. Establish how health information will be kept and distributed within the organization and identify which, if any, entities with which the company should share such data.

LOGISTICS/OPERATIONS

- o **Decide Which Locations to Open.** Analyze a locations' performance leading up to Covid-19 and determine revenue expectations in light of the risk of future outbreaks. Take a close look at the tenant landlord relationship, including lease termination costs, and also look into the feasibility of subleasing or other real estate options. What are the costs to retrofit the location to meet health and safety requirements?
- o **Prepare for Store Opening.** Obtain early access to your site to make it ready for resumed operations. Inspect facilities for any damage or neglect during vacancy, clean and prepare necessary equipment, review possible upgrades to air ventilation, circulation and purification. Establish a protocol for measuring and monitoring store occupancy.
- o **Install Appropriate Signage.** Understand new signage requirements and needs. Signage can help with customer flow, maintaining social distancing guidelines, the promotion of delivery or pickup services to reduce contact, and more.
- o **Evaluate Supply Chain and Inventory.** Investigate supply chain options and how to use existing relationships with vendors and where you may need to find new or temporary vendors. Put in place protocols for obtaining and distributing cleaning products and PPE and make sure to frequently monitor inventory and usage. Determine any additional challenges with shipping outside the country or continental U.S.
- o **Review Business Hours.** Set business hours to accommodate and support the guidelines and requirements of social distancing and occupancy limits.
- o **Install Protocol for Non-employees/Vendors.** Notify vendors that you are reopening and explain any new or revised procedures in regards to store entry, delivers, paperwork, etc. Determine whether it is necessary to limit or revoke access to the store or to switch to e-signatures.
- o **Review Security Operations.** Adjust security protocol to conform to state and local health directives (e.g. store occupancy). Consider automating auditory announcements to help inform customers of traffic flow and queueing protocols. What changes may be needed to your shoplifting procedures? How can employees engage in safe de-escalation in the case of theft or of a customer violation of health and safety precautions?
- o **Promote Safe Shopping Practices and Options.** Continue to promote online shopping, self-checkout, pickup and delivery services. Encourage contactless payment methods.
- o **Re-evaluate Merchandise Practices.** Consider modifying or suspending merchandise returns or exchanges. If such practices will continue, establish protocols for the acceptance, storage, disinfection and restocking of returns or exchanges. If fitting rooms are reopened, ensure that such areas are sanitized before and after any customer usage and encourage customers to use sanitizer/wipes prior to trying on items. Determine method for storing and disinfecting fitting room items.

HEALTH POLICY

- **Social Distancing**
  - Place signage to promote social distancing in conspicuous, high-traffic locations (e.g. entrances/exits, checkouts)
    - Ask customers who are sick or have felt sick in the last 72 hours not to enter the store.
    - Encourage all personnel, customers and vendors to maintain six feet of separation at all times.
    - Install one way signs at entrances, exits, aisles, etc.
    - Post CDC recommendations or other public health notices.
    - Information on pickup/delivery options.
  - Program in-store messaging to remind customers of social distancing protocols.
  - Consider installing Plexiglas at checkout counters which do not provide six feet of separation between employees and customers.
  - Establish distance markers for queuing outside the store for when store is at capacity limit.
  - Stagger employee shifts and meal breaks to avoid crowding.
  - Widen high traffic areas as allowed.
- **Face Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - Encourage or require employees and customers to wear approved facial coverings, gloves, and PPE at all times, if possible.
  - To the extent possible, offer customers masks or PPE who enter without their own.
  - Designate receptacles for discarded face masks and PPE.
- **Cleaning/Sanitization**
  - Obtain cleaning products that are on the EPA's List N: Disinfectants for Use Against Sars-Cov-2.
  - Offer hand sanitizer for customers and employees throughout the store at all times.
  - Station cleaning kits throughout store in easily accessible areas, especially around stations or areas that will be cleaned throughout the day. Kits can include disinfectant wipes or sprays, disposable gloves, paper towels, masks and PPE, hand sanitizer, etc.
  - Implement a cleaning regimen that targets high use areas, equipment, or merchandize.
    - Shopping carts and baskets
    - Door and drawer handles
    - Light and other power switches.
    - Shared tools such as pricing guns, pallet jacks, box cutters, etc.
    - Chairs, tables and benches.
    - Frequently used appliances, especially in employee breakroom.
    - Restroom doors, handles, faucets, toilets, paper towel holders.
    - Checkout equipment including register, pin pads, conveyor belts, dividers, cabinet pulls.
- **Consider Covid-19 Related Employee Training**
  - How to interact with other employees and customers to ensure that social

distancing guidelines and expectations are met.
- o How to self-monitor personal health and family health at home including temperature checks.
- o Proper use and sanitization of PPE, face masks, etc.
- o Cleaning protocol, including how to safely use cleaning supplies.

The County is committed to assisting businesses as the community continues to navigate the Covid-19 pandemic. For more local resources visit covid19.epcounty.com. Recommended checklist provided by the National Retail Federation.