



*NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM/AGENCY /BUSINESS*

# **COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN TEMPLATE**

***Are You Ready?***

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*Prepared by the  
Greenwich Department of Health  
3/2020*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) template provides guidance for your location to perform its essential functions as part of a COOP capability. Each organization has an ethical responsibility to ensure the safety of their employees and the community that they serve. They also have a legal obligation to operate in a prudent and efficient manner, even during an impending threat or following a disaster. Based on the location of your operation and size, each exhibit contained within can be tailored to your needs.

During a pandemic, employers can expect a high number of employee absences, service delivery interruptions, and interrupted supply and delivery schedules. However, with proper planning, businesses and operations – large and small – can protect their employee’s health and safety while limiting the negative impact of the illness on their operations and delivery of services. An excellent place to start in this planning (in addition to following this template) is to respond to the Centers for Disease Control website for additional guidance in business continuity while facing a COVID-19 pandemic type situation:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fguidance-business-response.html)

Other useful resources:

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/575/Health-Department>

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

## **PLAN OBJECTIVES:**

- To reduce transmission of the pandemic virus strain among employees, clients, vendors and partners.
- To minimize illness among employees, clients, vendors (especially those who are at increased risk of infection).
- To reduce absenteeism among employees, clients, vendors and partners.
- Maintain critical operations and services.
- Minimize the economic impact of the emergency i.e. pandemic on other entities in the supply chain.

## What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

## Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



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For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

## **PREPARATION PHASE**

### **NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**

**Your first step is to identify the need to have a COOP plan and assign someone in your program operation to be a Plan coordinator. The Plan coordinator must work toward developing a team of employees who will have assigned responsibilities for preparing the Plan.** As an example, the pandemic flu outbreak of the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus impacted the operations of many businesses and industries. Past practice proves it is essential that we identify which operations are important. You may also need to seek outside assistance to help you design the plan. Community leaders from various sectors such as health and safety, security, communications and possibly human resources could assist the planning team. Other focus areas in your plan may need to be included, such as legal matters and labor issues. Plan processes will need to be thought out, so consider ways to activate the Plan, shift operation supervision and communicate with employees, clients and health officials. Training and preparing an ancillary workforce to keep essential services going should also be considered. Who can step in to make decisions if key personnel are absent for lengthy periods of time? Who will be responsible for paying employees should business office personnel become ill? All these issues need to be outlined and planned for.

**EXHIBIT A: COVID-19 PANDEMIC COOP PLANNING TEAM**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Name Of Person Assigned:</b>	<b>Name Of Back-up Person Assigned:</b>	<b>E-mail:</b>	<b>Cell Phone Number:</b>	<b>Emergency Contact Number:</b>
Business Continuity Plan Coordinator					
Information / Communication Leader					
IT Leader					
Human Resources Leader					
Financial Leader					
Legal Responsibilities Leader					
Data Security Leader					
Building/Infrastructure Leader					
Security Leader					
Health and Safety Officer Leader					
Other Leaders as needed					

*Make it a point to meet regularly until the Plan outline is completed. As a matter of good practice, review, practice and update the Plan yearly.*

**Regular Meeting Times:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Projected Plan Completion Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Plan Exercise Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **EXHIBIT B: AUTHORITY & PROTOCOLS**

### **LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION**

During a pandemic event, you should be prepared to delegate important responsibilities. Use the format below for all major functions and operations identified in your business and appoint at least two people as back up to run the operation.

**Example:** Management of the organization is delegated to the following persons in the order of succession shown below:

<b>Name of Primary Person to Manage Business/Agency/Department/Program:</b>	<b>Title of Current Position:</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>
_____	_____	_____
<b>1. Name of First Back Up:</b>	<b>Title of Current Position:</b>	<b>Title of Current Position:</b>
_____	_____	_____
<b>2. Name of Second Back Up:</b>	<b>Title of Current Position:</b>	<b>Title of Current Position:</b>
_____	_____	_____

It should be noted that if a designated individual is unavailable, authority will pass to the next individual on the list. "Unavailable" may be defined as:

- Incapable of carrying out the assigned duties for several reasons including: illness, family obligations due to illness or inadequate response.
- Unable to be contacted within [#] minutes or [#] hours.
- Already assigned to other emergency activities and unable to take on more responsibility.

The designated individual who is assigned duties and responsibilities during a time like this, will be obligated until officially relieved by their supervisor. In addition, they will continue to perform the duties of their regular job, unless advised otherwise.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS**

During a pandemic it will be important to maintain complete and accurate records. This will ensure a more efficient response and recovery.

**DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

Ensure that all designated backup personnel are properly trained and given appropriate authority to carry out their assigned tasks.

**RESPONSE PLAN ACTIVATION**

The primary person in charge (Operation Leader) of the business/agency/program/department **or** in some cases, their successor, will activate the Plan when it is necessary to manage the operations under a crisis situation. This decision will be made in consultation with key leaders of the business/agency/program/department, including the designated Continuity of Operations Plan Coordinator. The following is a list of key business operation leaders:

<b>Name of Operation Leader(s):</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>
<b>Primary:</b> _____	<b>Primary:</b> _____	<b>Primary:</b> _____
<b>Back Up:</b> _____	<b>Back Up:</b> _____	<b>Back Up:</b> _____

*List more Back Up Operation Leaders here:*



## **OPERATIONS ASSESSMENT**

The next step is to identify all essential business/agency/program/department services and/or functions, essential jobs or roles and critical elements (e.g. raw materials, suppliers, sub-contractor services/products, logistics, services provided and to whom) that are required to maintain operations.

It will be important to assess changes (increase/decrease) in service demands and product/staff use during a pandemic. Clients/customers may limit their activities during this time and choose to avoid person-to-person contact. You should be prepared to compensate for these actions (e.g. provide services that can be accessed from home or an alternate location and/or during off peak hours, etc.). Identify alternative ways for customers/clients to access your products and services (e.g. expand on-line and self-service options, if possible). If your organization needs to alter its routine practices of service delivery during a pandemic, you may need to extend business hours to accommodate off peak hour demand or arrange for services to be provided via phone, fax or on-line. Assess whether your security needs may change to safeguard personnel, supplies, records or buildings?

Assess the financial processes. Identify ways to make purchases, pay bills, pay employees any other processes that may be necessary or unforeseen during pandemic.

**EXHIBIT C: ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS**

List all operations/functions/services that have been deemed essential for your organization to function ideally. Then determine at what threshold of absenteeism (20%, 35% and 50%) those operations/functions would be threatened. This would allow planners to think about more aggressive measures to implement for protecting continuity if absenteeism escalates:

<u>Essential Daily Business Operation/Function/ Services</u>	<u>Unit Responsible</u>	<u>Description of Operation/ Function</u>	<u>Number of Staff Needed</u>	<u>Normal Absenteeism Numbers With Functioning Capacity</u>	<u>Ability to function at this level of absenteeism:</u>		
					<u>Circle Yes or No for each</u>	<u>20%</u>	<u>35%</u>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
5. _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N

*Add more Operations/Functions/Services as needed*

**SECONDARY OPERATIONS THAT CAN BE SUSPENDED**

List all operations that can be suspended temporarily when there is a high rate of absenteeism. This action will free up staff to concentrate on more important functions and services

<u>Operations/Function/Services that Can Be Suspended</u>	<u>Time Period</u>
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

*Add more Operations/Functions/Services that can be suspended as needed*

**CUSTOMER/CLIENT DEMAND CHANGES**

If some of the products or services you normally provide become low demand due to the crisis, evaluate your needs and ways to re-deploy assets/staff to areas that experience increased demand. Use the chart below to identify both high and low service/product demands:

**High Demand:**

**High Demand Service/Product**

**Staffing Needs**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Add more High Demand Services/Products as needed*

**Low Demand:**

**Low Demand Service/Product**

**Staffing Needs**

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Add more High Demand Services/Products as needed*

**Staff Reassignment**

List out employees that can be re-deployed to other essential operations/functions/services when needed. This change will enhance efficiency. Cross training of staff may be necessary:

<b>Name of Reassigned Employee:</b>	<b>Current Position and Duties:</b>	<b>Reassigned Position and Duties/Responsibilities:</b>
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____

*Add additional rows as needed*

## **ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS/DUTIES**

Identify essential job functions/duties required to maintain operations during a pandemic when absenteeism equals 20%-50%. Consider the critical staff skills and number of employees required to keep essential functions/services operating. At what level will certain operations stop? What changes in staff will be needed to operate essential functions/services? Assess skill requirement needs and identify core/essential staff. It may be advantageous to assemble an ancillary workforce to fill essential job functions. Consider other human resources (e.g. volunteers, retirees) that could be used if there was an excessively high rate of absenteeism.

You will want to identify which job functions/duties could be done off-site during a pandemic. Consider the possibility of employees working from home with appropriate security and information technology. Also, train employees on how they will be expected to carry out their part of the Plan. Cross-training employees will give you flexibility to shift staff into other job functions/duties as needed. If your business is unionized, it will be important to discuss this issue openly with union representatives, so that employees working under a crisis situation can take on other responsibilities as assigned. Finally, make sure that the Plan you develop and other pertinent emergency management information is known and accessible to all.

**EXHIBIT D: ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

The table below details the job positions within your organization. It outlines the number of individuals currently at a job level, the essential operations that are carried out by each of these skilled employees and the number of employees required to maintain essential services during normal circumstances and under crisis situation.

Example

<b>Job Position/Title</b>	<b>Number of employees in this position.</b>	<b>Employee Skill Needed</b>	<b>Essential operations/services</b>	<b>Number of employees needed to maintain essential services</b>	<b>Number of employees needed when there is a decrease in demand</b>
<i>0. Auto Mechanic</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Auto Repair</i>	<i>Maintain the fleet of business vehicles</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

Each employee should have a job description complete with a clear outline on how to perform his or her essential job function. Each job description should identify the job title and general responsibilities of the position. All responsibilities should be broken down into priority categories based upon critical needs of the business operation. This should include immediate or most important responsibilities and intermediate or secondary responsibilities. Extended tasks to be performed by the assigned individual can also be added.

All job descriptions in your program should be attached to Exhibit D.

**CROSS TRAINING**

Cross training of workers for essential job functions/duties most likely will be necessary. List out all job positions that need or might need cross-training. This should be based upon how many people you have than can perform job function/duties.

**CROSS TRAINING FOR ESSENTIAL POSITIONS**

Person(s) Assigned to Conduct Training	Contact Information
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

Job Positions that Need Cross-training	Person(s) Currently Assigned to the Job	Duties/Functions of Job
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

*Add more rows as needed*

Employees Who Could Be Cross-Trained	Duties/Functions the employee can be cross-trained to perform
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

*Add more rows as needed.*

## **PERSONNEL POLICIES**

It will be important to work with your Human Resources to establish emergency personnel policies that allow for employee compensation and sick leave absences unique to a major incident or pandemic (personal illness, family member illness, transportation issues, etc.). Consider issues that pertain to employees having no vacation and sick leave. Do your existing policies encourage sick employees to stay home in an effort to keep the rest of the workers well? How will you respond to employees who are too afraid to come to work because they believe they will get sick from others? Policies for possible travel restrictions should also be considered.

Work with Human Resources to develop emergency policies that address the following:

- ❖ Alternative ways for employees to work (e.g. telecommuting) and with flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts, extended shifts).
- ❖ Mental health services that allows for employee consultation.
- ❖ Restrictions on travel that will protect employees from illness.
- ❖ Employee leave policies that are flexible in allowing workers to stay home when needed without fear of losing their jobs.
- ❖ Employee pay and benefits during a major incident or pandemic.

The following is a sample policy/protocol for an employee who becomes ill. All policies and protocols should be tailored to your business:

### **SAMPLE PROTOCOL FOR EMPLOYEES WHO BECOME ILL WITH COVID-19**

- Upon feeling ill, all employees are to notify their supervisor and health and safety officer team leader. Symptoms of illness should be discussed and recorded.
- Employees who have a fever and/or respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately. Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).
- All ill employees who exhibit COVID-19 illness symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) should be considered a potential COVID-19 case.
- Employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 should be advised to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants).
- Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms to validate their illness as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation.
- Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member.



## **EXHIBIT E: COVID-19 SPECIFIC BUSINESS POLICIES**

Use the questions listed below to assist you in developing work policies during a pandemic.

### **Employee Sick Leave**

- ✓ Some employees may try to hide their symptoms because they do not want to use personal leave or take a leave of absence when they most likely have the illness. How will you encourage people to go home and stay home when this happens? Will sick leave be mandatory? Explain why it is important to go home immediately and not healthy to come to work ill.
- ✓ If the local health official quarantines or requires isolation of an employee, family member or business due to confirmed COVID-19 illness, will the employee be required to use sick or vacation time during the period they are asked to stay home? What if they do not have any sick or vacation days?
- ✓ How will you deal with employees who stay home to care for ill family members? What if they have used up all their vacation and sick leave? Will healthy employees who choose to stay home to care for someone be penalized if they do not have any personal leave time?
- ✓ If schools, day care centers, etc. are closed and employees must stay home to care for their children will they be required to come to work? If they have no personal leave time?
- ✓ What if an employee believes they have not been given the proper personal protective equipment (e.g. gloves, protective masks) to keep them from becoming infected and refuses to come to work? How will you cope with employees who will not want to work without the PPE, even though the PPE is not advised.

Developing policies/protocols during this time requires thinking “*out of the box.*” The ultimate goal is to keep employees from getting ill, spreading the disease and to keep essential services/functions in operation.

### **Principles of Policy Development**

- \* Develop policies that allow for flexible worksites (telecommuting/alternate location) and work hours (staggered shifts, extended shifts) to ensure that work can get done.
- \* Consider policies for “essential workers” and “non-essential workers.” Identifying essential functions/operations will make this task easier.
- \* Develop a policy that addresses employees who are more at risk for infection or complications from a respiratory illness like COVID-19. Think about giving special assignments or reassignments to these employees, if necessary, in an effort to limit person-to-person contact. Good hygiene and healthy respiratory practices will reduce everyone’s risk of getting ill.
- \* Develop a policy that provides access to mental health services. Contact non-profit organizations in the community (i.e., United Way) to inquire about mental health service support.

## **EXHIBIT F: MANAGEMENT OF ILL EMPLOYEES**

An effective way to limit the spread of disease is to ask sick individuals to stay home.

1. Post notices at entry points advising staff and visitors not to enter if they have COVID-19-like symptoms (Fever, cough, shortness of breath).
2. Advise employees to call the designated health and safety officer leader and/or team member if they become ill (be sure all employees know the team leader, the team staff and policies).
3. Ensure that everyone knows the protocol for dealing with illness in the workplace.
4. Ensure that employees are well before coming back to work after a sick leave.
5. Insist on everyone practicing good hygienic measures. This will help keep the work environment safe and healthy.
  - Employees should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Alternately, alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol could be used.
  - Cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, otherwise use an arm or a sleeve.
  - Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

### **What to Do If You Are Sick With Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

- If you are sick with COVID-19, isolate at home during the illness. Restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home. As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people. Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick.
- If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- Wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid sharing personal/household items such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day. High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Monitor your symptoms. Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.
- Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

## **PRODUCT AND SERVICE VENDORS**

You will need to identify business vendors that provide critical products and services to maintain your essential operations. Have supplier and service vendor contact information up to date and accessible to initiate communication if necessary. Supplement your existing inventory of products for at least 2 weeks beyond what you normally have.

Discuss with vendors their plan for providing ongoing services, products and/or shipments in the event they experience absences, shortages, etc. Illness in their company may cause disruptions in the transporting system (e.g. truck, train, aircraft). This situation will decrease product production and cause inability of suppliers to meet demands. Identify other businesses or organizations that can provide essential services and supplies if your regular vendor cannot. Look for vendors in different geographic locations as some regions may experience waves of illness or a regional incident at different times.

**EXHIBIT G: PRODUCT & SERVICE VENDORS**

Your organization may rely on a variety of products and services to maintain operations. List contact information for all vendors and clients that provide products and services. Also list alternative vendors/clients that may assist you if necessary.

**PRIMARY PRODUCT/SERVICE VENDOR AND/OR CLIENT**

<b>Company name:</b>	_____
<b>Address:</b>	_____
<b>Telephone:</b>	_____
<b>Fax:</b>	_____
<b>E-mail:</b>	_____
<b>Primary contact name:</b>	_____
<b>Alternate contact name:</b>	_____
<b>Account/contract:</b>	_____
<b>Materials or products provided:</b>	_____
<b>Frequency of delivery:</b>	_____
<b>Notes:</b>	_____
	_____
	_____
	_____
[Insert additional rows if needed]	
<b>Alternative Product and Service Vendor and/or Client.</b>	
<b>Company name:</b>	_____
<b>Address:</b>	_____
<b>Telephone:</b>	_____
<b>Fax:</b>	_____
<b>E-mail:</b>	_____
<b>Primary contact name:</b>	_____
<b>Alternate contact name:</b>	_____
<b>Materials or products provided:</b>	_____
<b>Frequency of delivery:</b>	_____
<b>Notes:</b>	_____

[Copy and attach additional forms.]

ESSENTIAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

PRODUCTS

Business name/operation unit

It is important to list all products and services that are essential to your company. By making this list, you will be prioritizing your needs.

Example

Products	Quantity Needed	Usage (Daily-monthly)	Required for which Essential Services	Existing Inventory	Time frame Required for 2 weeks extra stockpile	Name of Vendor/Client Provider	Frequency of Delivery
<i>Car Hoses</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Maintenance of small vehicle fleet</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>14 days</i>	<i>Chad's Auto Equipment</i>	<i>1 x per month</i>

[Copy and attach additional forms as needed]



## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication is an important component of the Plan. Establish a communication plan that provides information to everyone in your organization. Identify who will design and disseminate the information. Ensure that communication systems (teleconferencing, telecommuting, email, facsimile services, desktops, laptops, radios, PA System) are operational and interoperable with other systems. Make sure they are secure and able to handle increased and constant use. Face-to-face communication may not be desirable during a pandemic situation and exclusive use of communication systems may be advised. Letters, memos, fact sheets, brochures and newsletters are a few ways to package correspondence.

As an employer, you have an important role in protecting employee health and safety. All employees should be educated on good hygiene practices, washing hands, coughing and sneezing etiquette and social distancing techniques (staying at least 6 feet apart from each other). Work practices may, spacing of employee stations and the use of work-at-home options). All practices should be communicated clearly.

The communication policy should provide frequent updates about the outbreak to all employees. Use the local health authority (Greenwich Department of Health) as a resource along with other public health agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of CT Department of Public Health for information. Include in the Plan a mechanism for developing, finalizing and authorizing dissemination of all communications. Be sure to use multiple dissemination techniques to ensure that all employees receive the message. There may be a high level of fear and anxiety as the major incident or sickness causes absenteeism. Rumors and misinformation regarding the incident can do a lot of damage when it comes to employees reporting to work. Sharing information from a reliable source on a regular basis will help reduce staff distress. Always ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Communicate each employee's responsibility in the Plan and guide employees on how to develop a personal/family emergency plan of their own. During a pandemic, implementation of strict infection prevention and control measures (hand washing, respiratory etiquette, etc.) in the workplace to protect the health and safety of all employees is very important.



## **EXHIBIT H: INFORMATION DISSEMINATION PLAN**

### **RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY**

#### **Information Development by the Communication Team**

The following individual(s) assigned to the Information and Communication Team will be responsible for creating and/or coordinating the development of communications.

<b>Assigned Communication Team Employee</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Section/Unit/ Department</b>	<b>Assign Task on Communication Team</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Alternate Employee</b>
<b>Name:</b> (Leader)					<b>Name:</b>
<b>Name:</b> (Member)					<b>Name:</b>
<b>Name:</b> (Member)					<b>Name:</b>

*Add rows as needed*

#### **Bestowed Authority (Approval)**

The following individual(s) will be responsible for authorizing communication information that is developed and approved for dissemination.

<b>Employee Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Section/ Unit/ Department</b>	<b>Responsibility To Approve</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>

*Add rows as needed*

## MODES FOR COMMUNICATING INFORMATION TO PRIMARY AUDIENCES

Mode of Dissemination	Audience				Good for urgent communication	Strength/Weaknesses
	Employees	Partners	Customers Clients	Vendors		
<b>Telephone System</b>						
Internal Organization Information Line	✓				Yes	A voice message can be pre-recorded and updated off site. (Good for relaying instructions on reporting to work.)
External Information Line	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	
Mass Voice Mail Message	✓				Maybe	Some employees may not have a designated phone with voice mail. Also outages may cause disruptions.
Call center/contact person	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Some individuals may prefer speaking to a live person
Call-down tree	✓				Yes	A call-down tree can be used for relaying simple and short information by phone. Each person is designated to call another once they have received the message.
<b>Electronic</b>						
Mass E-mail message*	✓				No	Some employees may not have a designated e-mail address or be able to access e-mail at home.
Website Posting*	✓	✓	✓	✓	Maybe	Not all people will have access to a computer.
Intranet *	✓				No	Not all employees will have access to a computer.
On-line chat			✓			Not all people will have access to a computer.
<b>Hard Copy</b>						
Mailing*	✓	✓	✓	✓	No	Delivery may take a few days. May be costly.
Interoffice Mail*	✓					Not all employees will have a mailbox.
Mass Faxes*		✓		✓	Yes	Database with fax numbers and mass fax system required.
Notice Board Posting*	✓		✓		Maybe	Not everyone will see message
Pay check mailing*	✓				No	All employees will receive information.
<b>In Person</b>						
Meeting/Presentation	✓	✓			Maybe	During some stages it may not be advisable to hold gatherings
Training	✓				No	May take time to coordinate and teach.
<b>Media- TV, Radio, Newspapers</b>						
Press release*	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Will be received. Follow up with phone call
Press conference	✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes	Message will be clearly stated with question asked

\* Examples of informational content include letters, memos, fact sheets, brochures, newsletters and guidelines from the local health officials.

## **INFECTION CONTROL AND PREVENTION MEASURES DURING A PANDEMIC**

Infection control and prevention measures will be essential to keeping your business operating. Provide employees information on how to stop the spread of disease (e.g. hand washing with soap and water or alcohol based hand cleaners when water is not available, cover a cough or sneeze with a sleeve or tissue, use disposable protective masks only when necessary, etc.). Employers should maintain a supply of infection control products (e.g. soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand gel - *Optional*, etc.)

Develop a protocol, if there isn't one, for cleaning/sanitizing work areas on a regular basis with cleaning supplies capable of disinfecting.

Discuss and list ways to reduce the frequency of face-to-face contact (e.g. telecommuting, teleconferencing) and ways to limit the transmission of disease when direct contact cannot be avoided (no hand shaking, hugging, kissing, limiting shared workstations etc) among employees and customers/clients. Educate your employees, clients and vendors about social distancing techniques (avoid crowded areas, limit close contact to ill persons, keep a minimum distance of 6 feet between each other).

## **EXHIBIT H: INFECTION CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

### **HYGIENE**

Employees should be educated and reminded of good hygiene practices that help limit the spread of disease:

- Apply proper respiratory etiquette (e.g. covering cough or sneeze with a tissue or sleeve).
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand cleaner when water is not available (hand washing is the preferred method).
- Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact with others, such as shaking hands, kissing and hugging.
- Keep hands away from nose, face and mouth.
- Stay home when ill and do not send ill children to school or day care if they are ill.
- Discard all soiled tissues into wastebasket.
- CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
- Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.

Other measures that will assist in helping to reduce the spread of disease:

- Remove magazines/papers from waiting rooms and common areas.
- Supply hand sanitizers in waiting rooms and common areas.
- Provide tissues and trashcans in waiting rooms and common areas.
- Hang posters outlining ways to reduce the spread of disease in various locations in the office/building.

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

Social distancing is a control strategy that includes methods of reducing the frequency and closeness of contact between people, in an effort to limit the spread of infectious diseases. Utilize the following social distancing strategies to reduce close contact among individuals:

1. **Telecommuting.** The number of employees who have the technological capability to telecommute from home and can adequately perform their primary functions.
2. **Teleconferences.** Teleconferences *can* be held to complete assigned work. List where teleconferences can be used or not used.
3. **Staggering work shifts.** Where operationally allowed, shift changes should be managed as follows: when one shift goes off duty, there should be an interval before the next shift begins so that the worksite can be thoroughly ventilated. As a matter of routine, the work environment should be cleaned with disinfecting cleaning solutions.

4. **Face-to-face barriers.** When needed, face-to-face interaction can be limited by using telephone, fax machines, computers, etc. Make a list of those operations in your company that can apply this while keeping business status quo.

Additional social distancing strategies may include:

- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, workshops and training sessions.
- Bring lunch and eat at your desk or away from others. Introduce staggered lunchtimes to reduce crowds in the lunchroom.
- If face-to-face meetings are unavoidable, minimize the meeting time. Choose a large, well ventilated meeting room and do not sit close to each other if possible; avoid shaking hands or hugging.
- Set up systems where customers can pre-order/request information via phone, email, fax and have order or information ready for pick-up or delivery.
- Encourage employees to practice social distancing outside of the workplace if they are feeling ill.

## **INFECTION CONTROL SUPPLIES**

Employers should have infection control supplies on hand during a possible COVID-19 outbreak.

<b>Supplies</b>
Soap and hot water within bathrooms and kitchen areas
Disposable kitchen utensils and cups
Alcohol based hand cleaner (60-95% alcohol content)
Paper towels in bathrooms/sinks
Tissues
Telephone and computer cleaning wipes
Garbage bags and trash cans
Office cleaning supplies for maintenance staff (details under recommended disinfectants)
Personal protective equipment (only as necessary for specific job professions)
Disposable gloves

## **WORKPLACE CLEANING**

The workplace should be routinely cleaned using disinfecting cleaning agents. It is important to clean those surfaces that are touched frequently by many people (e.g. door knobs, sinks, handles, railings, counters, windows and computer keys) on a regular basis. Filters of the air conditioning systems should be cleaned and changed regularly and telephones within the office should not be shared by staff.

When a person with suspected COVID-19 is identified and has left the workplace, it is important that their immediate work area be cleaned and disinfected. It is not necessary to close down the workspace, the place of business or stop working in order to clean. To disinfect, use any of the disinfectants listed in the table below and follow the manufacturer's recommendations. The person cleaning and disinfecting should use gloves if available and wash hands thoroughly after cleaning.

## RECOMMENDED WORKPLACE DISINFECTANTS

Sanitize/Disinfect	Recommended use	Precautions
Commercial disinfectant or bleach (sodium hypochlorite) /water solution on surfaces. 1 part per 100 of available chlorine (1/4 cup bleach for 1 1/2 gallons of water)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinfection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be used in well-ventilated areas.</li> <li>• Utilize gloves while handling and using bleach solution.</li> <li>• Do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas.</li> <li>• Corrosive to metals and certain materials.</li> </ul>
<b>Alcohol</b> (e.g. Isopropyl 70%, ethyl alcohol 60%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinfection</li> <li>• Smooth metal surfaces, tabletops and other surfaces on which bleach cannot be used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flammable and toxic. To be used in well-ventilated areas. Avoid inhalation.</li> <li>• Keep away from heat sources, electrical equipment, flames, and hot surfaces.</li> <li>• Allow it to dry completely, especially when using diathermy</li> </ul>
<b>EPA-Approved Products</b> Many products available (See product container for appropriate quantities)	Follow directions on label	Follow precautions on label

See below link for EPA’s Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19

<https://ceha.wildapricot.org/resources/EPA%20Approved%20Disinfectants.pdf>

## **RESPONSE PHASE DURING A MAJOR INCIDENT OR PANDEMIC**

Stay informed by checking with the **Greenwich Department of Health** (<https://www.greenwichct.gov/575/Health-Department>), **CT Department of Public Health** (<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH>), and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)).

Assess your ability to provide essential services with staff and material resources, changes in consumer demand, and the need for any new or alternative services. As needed, reallocate resources and suspend non-essential operations as staff resources become limited and/or material resources (e.g. gasoline) must be rationed.

Assess the number of absent employees and job functions lost or reassigned. Track when ill employees will be expected to return to work. Reassign personnel to essential or prioritized job functions and provide clear instructions for performing duties. Provide just-in-time training or refreshers to alternate staff taking over new job functions.

Activate applicable policies i.e. employee leave, flexible work schedules, travel instructions, health care, management of ill employees, etc. Notify staff of policy changes and provide them with any necessary claim forms.

Provide regular (e.g. daily, weekly, bi-weekly) updates to staff on pandemic status and any applicable policy changes, infection control measures, job reassignments, illness reporting etc. that apply during that stage of the outbreak. Communicate regularly with staff to promote confidence in personal safety in the workplace. Inform suppliers and service vendors of any changes in supply/service needs. Inform customers/clients of any changes to services or products. Activate and ensure that communication systems (e.g. teleconferencing, telecommuting, facsimile services, radio, internet) are in working order.

- ❖ Disseminate information to staff on how to prevent infection at home and at work. Post hygiene notices at entrances, washrooms, hand washing stations, and public areas.
- ❖ Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
- ❖ Ensure that supplies of hygiene products (e.g. soap and/or hand sanitizer, paper towels) are available.
- ❖ Implement social distancing strategies (e.g. telecommuting, teleconferences).
- ❖ Apply appropriate office sanitation especially to workstations where staff report illness.
- ❖ Remind employees to inform their supervisor when they become ill and follow the protocol for managing staff that becomes ill at work.
- ❖ Make sure to remind all employees to **STAY HOME FROM WORK IF THEY FEEL ILL.**



## **RECOVERY PHASE**

- Notify assigned planning team leaders and staff of changes in pandemic status and return to operations as normal.
- Conduct an evaluation of your response and update your **Continuity of Operations Plan** as needed.
- Ensure that employees have access to mental health services well after the major incident has stopped.
- Notify product and service vendors as well as customers and clients of return to operations as usual.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>COVID-19 (AKA Novel Coronavirus)</b>	Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.
<b>Contact</b>	A contact is a term used to refer to someone who has been in close proximity with an individual who is, or is suspected of being, infected with an infectious disease like influenza.
<b>Hand hygiene</b>	Hand hygiene is a term that applies to the cleaning of one's hands. This is usually done with soap and water, hand sanitizer, or hand wipes. To kill an influenza virus hands must be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds and hand sanitizers or wipes must be used for 10 seconds and have an alcohol content of at least 60%.
<b>Human-to-human transmission</b>	Human-to-human transmission refers to the ability of an infectious disease to be passed continuously from one person to another. Some viruses can be transmitted animal-to-animal, animal-to-human (and vice versa), and human-to-human.
<b>Infection control</b>	Infection control is broad term used to describe a number of measures designed to detect, prevent, and contain the spread of infectious disease. Some measures include hand washing, respiratory etiquette, using personal protective equipment (PPE), isolation and quarantine.
<b>Infectious disease</b>	An infectious disease or communicable disease is caused by the entrance of organisms (e.g. viruses, bacteria, fungi) into the body, which grow and multiply to cause illness. Infectious diseases can be transmitted by direct contact with an infected individual, their discharges (e.g. breath), or with an item touched by them.
<b>Influenza</b>	Influenza is a viral disease that causes high fever, sore throat, cough, and muscle aches. It usually affects the respiratory system but sometimes affects other organs. It is spread by infectious droplets that are coughed or sneezed into the air. These droplets can land on the mucous membranes of the eyes or mouth or be inhaled into the lungs of another person. Infection can also occur from contact with surfaces contaminated with infectious droplets and respiratory secretions.
<b>Isolation</b>	Isolation is when sick people are asked to remain in one place (e.g. home, hospital), away from the public, until they are no longer infectious.
<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>	PPE is specialized clothing or equipment worn to protect someone against a hazard including an infectious disease. It can range from a mask or a pair of gloves to a combination of gear that might cover some or all of the body.
<b>Quarantine</b>	A quarantine is when people who have been in close proximity to an infected person, but appear healthy, are asked to remain in one place, away from the general public, until it can be determined that they have not been infected.

<b>Respiratory etiquette</b>	Respiratory etiquette, or good coughing and sneezing manners, is one way of minimizing the spread of viruses which are passed from human-to-human in the tiny droplets of moisture that come out of the nose or mouth when coughing, sneezing, or talking. Healthy and sick people should cover their nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing, or blowing their nose and then put the used tissue in the trash to prevent the spread of germs.
<b>Seasonal influenza</b>	Seasonal influenza, commonly referred to as the flu, is an infectious disease. In the United States, flu season usually occurs between December and March. The influenza virus is one that has the ability to change easily; however, there is usually enough similarity in the virus from one year to the next that the general population is partially immune from previous infection or vaccination. Each year experts monitor the influenza virus and create a new vaccine to address changes in the virus. For this reason, people are encouraged to get a flu shot each year.
<b>Social distancing</b>	Social distancing is an infection control strategy that includes methods of reducing the frequency and closeness of contact between people to limit the spread of infectious diseases. Social distancing refers to the avoidance of gatherings with many people.