

Guidelines on Creating a Safe, Sterile Environment for Your Patients

As you anticipate returning to your practice, here are some guidelines to help you to make sure you are creating a safe, sterile office environment for your patients.



#1 Make Sure you Have a Preparedness Plan in Place

Prepare or update your current preparedness plan using guidance from your federal, state and local health agencies. Make sure that your response plan has proper protective actions against situations concerning COVID-19 in response to situations that may arise if an outbreak occurs, or your office has been exposed to the virus. Having a comprehensive plan in place will put not only your staff at ease, but your patients as well.



#2 Preparing Basic Infection Prevention Measures

Keeping you, your staff and patients safe during office hours will be important and necessary for your practice. Make sure that your staff has access to personal protective equipment, such as masks and alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Also promote frequent hand washing in the office and discourage staff members from using other people's phones, desks or tools when possible. Have accessible tissues and trash bins for your patients around the office, and encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes. If a staff member is sick, they should stay at home. Also, your office should maintain frequent cleaning practices, such as disinfecting surfaces, equipment, etc.



#3 Develop Policies and Procedures for Prompt Identification of Sick People

Identifying and isolating potentially sick people will help protect everyone who enters your office. Employees should be monitoring themselves in relation to how they feel, and to report when they show any possible symptoms of COVID-19. A procedure should be in place to isolate anyone with signs or symptoms away from other staff members and patients.



#4 Develop and Communicate Workplace Flexibilities

Make sure that your sick leave policies are updated to provide flexibility that is consistent with public health guidance. Communicate to your staff on these updated policies and make sure you are encouraging sick employees to stay home. Recognize that your staff with ill family members may have to stay home to take care of them. Be ready to address your staff's concerns about pay, safety and health, leave and other issues that may arise. Work with your insurance company to provide information to your staff regarding medical care in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

For More information visit: [osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov)