

Draft City Hall Reopening Plan

As city halls in Southern California begin to reopen to the public over the next couple of weeks, cities are considering ways of imposing anti-viral protocols meant to control the spread of the new coronavirus. The push, part of the state's move to gradually restart public life, doesn't mean a return to pre-pandemic normal. The City of Carson wants to open for routine public business, such as applying for building permits or paying for business licenses, as well as eventually returning to providing parks and recreation services and the opening the Community Center and its programs.

At some city halls, residents will be allowed to enter but only after they are tested by a no-contact, infrared thermometer. This is the same protocol used by the City of Carson for the past month for its own employees.

Visitors also must wear face masks and use service counters one at a time. Plexiglass dividers will now serve as sneeze guards between city staff and members of the public, and extra masks and hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrance to assist with compliance. This will be the "new normal" in Carson as well.

Arrows on the City Hall floor will mark an ideal flow of foot traffic to encourage six feet of space between people, and City workers will have to follow the same rules.

Contact tracing is crucial to slowing the chain of transmission and ending the stay at home order. Contact tracing is a process of identifying persons who may have come into contact with an infected person and quarantining or isolating those individual(s), so they do not infect others.

In addition to the physical changes in the building, the City will need to examine a number of its employment policies regarding telecommuting, illness reporting and quarantining, use of sick leave, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and public access to the building.

Below is an outline of the elements of a return-to-work program that tries to encompass a description of necessary building changes, changes to cleaning protocols, a rethinking of how work is done in the building, changes to interaction with the public, and an internal (employee-focused) and external (public-focused) communication strategy to inform all the stakeholders about what has changed and what has remained the same.

This guide is for City Hall only, but will be adapted with further guidance from the CDC, the State of California, and the Los Angeles County Health Department on public assembly areas such as parks and the Community Center, and guidelines will be drafted specific to those facilities.

Opening City Hall to the Public

CITY HALL ENTRY/RECEPTION

The City will implement guidelines to control building ingress and egress and promote ongoing safety and precautionary measures at those points. These include:

Managing the Number of People in the Building

1. While City Hall, if open, needs to remain available to all members of the public, in order to maintain social distancing practices, a visitor protocol should be established. For example, Departments shall provide a "LIST OF VISITORS" in advance to reception via email outlining visitor NAME and estimated arrival time. Visitors who intend to visit City Hall should contact either the relevant department or the main City Hall number and receive an appointment time from the receptionist.
2. Ensure security guards and receptionists are informed of protocol. Security guards should have step-by-step instructions. Security officer(s) should be trained to politely and firmly encourage visitors to maintain 6 foot distancing and mask protocol. Be clear as to protocol around dissent.
3. Clearly communicate procedures to departments and ensure departments provide their visitors with a phone number to call in the event of an anomaly. Departments should be encouraged to inform their visitors of procedures in advance of visit to diffuse potential misunderstandings and negative experiences.
4. Guests will be asked to register at reception desk and wait outside the building to be called by the department.

Entrance Protocol

1. Reduce the number of entrances to direct occupants to use monitored and protected routes. All visitors will be required to enter the main entryway by the receptionist desk and proceed to the receptionist. The door facing Carson Street and Founders Fountain will once again be closed to the public, except for ADA access.
2. Face coverings or face masks must be worn at all times by employees and visitors according to City and County orders. Provide masks to building guests if they do not have their own.
3. Temperature screening. Public and employees will be allowed to enter only after they are tested by a no-contact, infrared thermometer. Anyone found to have a temperature at or above 100.4 degrees will be turned away.

LOBBY/PUBLIC SPACES

1. Social distancing in lobby and public areas will be enforced, as noted above.
2. Hand sanitizer shall be provided at doorways, both inside and outside.
3. Ensure that hot water is provided in all restrooms to promote proper handwashing.
4. Reconfigure reception desk to avoid guests leaning over receptionists or install plexiglass screens between guests and reception personnel.
5. Install plexiglass screens at HR/Business License Counter, City Treasurer's Office, Building & Safety Department, Planning/Engineering Counter, and City Clerk's Office.
6. Remove lobby furniture to reduce public touch-points.
7. Floor mats will be regularly sanitized.
8. Implement a clockwise or counterclockwise one-way circulation routes. Designate and signpost the direction of foot-traffic in main circulation paths: corridors, stairs, and entries.
9. Mark increments of acceptable social distance on floors where queues could form.

10. Elevators

- Signs encouraging social distancing should be displayed near elevator
- Limit number of passengers to a number that allows for appropriate social distancing. Consider signage in the cab and floor markings indicating where users should stand.
- Hand sanitizing stations are to be placed near elevator and users are to be encouraged to sanitize hands prior to touching elevator call pads.
- Review of elevator cleaning processes, and updates to ensure on-going cleaning of high touch surfaces like elevator panels / buttons

11. Signage

- Explain building access rules and other protocols that impact how occupants use and move throughout the building
- Install signage, directional arrows on floors and stanchions to advise occupants of the pattern. The pattern will ensure occupants do not pass one another and will keep distance.

- Consider strategically posting signs promoting social distancing at building entrances, lobby, security desk, loading docks, and amenity centers.
- Remind staff how to stay safe and keep others safe in the workplace by maintaining social distancing, following new meeting guidelines, hand washing reminders, the use of virtual collaboration tools rather than meeting rooms and so forth
- Encourage employees to practice the following preventive measures:
 - Wash your hands often and well.
 - Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Continue to clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.
 - Stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill.

SPACE USE/DENSITY MONITORING IN WORK SPACES

1. Work from Home for non-essential employees to reduce the density of personnel.
2. Add panels between desks including height adjustable panels for sit/stand desks
3. Specify seat assignments for employees to ensure minimum work distances
4. Implement a strict clean-desk policy so that non-essential items are not stored on the desk, but rather enclosed in cabinets or drawers
5. Unless stringent cleaning protocols are enforced, and if possible, avoid sharing of desks

In-person meetings

1. Coach employees to critically evaluate the requirement for in-person meetings.
2. Limit the number of attendees at in-person meetings and limit to spaces that accommodate safe distances and consider eliminating in-person meetings with external guests.
3. Host large team/staff meetings via video conference rather than in-person.

Individual seats

1. If desks or work areas are shared, advise individuals to sanitize all surfaces upon arrival at that seat. Supply disinfectants in the immediate proximity of each desk
2. Add desks to spaces previously used for group activities (convert training or meeting rooms into desk areas)

3. Add places for individuals to store and secure their own items separately from others (i.e., individual coat hooks rather than coat closets used by the group)
4. Increase space between desks

Meeting and shared spaces

1. Decommission or re-purpose large gathering spaces, or reduce capacity of spaces—e.g., remove some chairs from large meeting rooms
2. Prohibit shared use of small rooms by groups and convert to single occupant use only
3. Calculate the maximum capacity of each room by dividing the net usable area by the square of the locally acceptable social distance (e.g., for a 6' social distance: a 200 SF room divided by 36 SF would have a recalculated maximum capacity of 5 people). Communicate this capacity via signage and room reservation tools.

Workplace kitchen and meal preparation areas

1. Encourage occupants to bring food and beverage items from home and manage them individually
2. Minimize touch-points by removing coffee pots and the like
3. Eliminate open food items
4. Provide prepackaged items in containers
5. Increase frequency of cleaning appliances such as refrigerators and microwaves

Conference Rooms and Meeting Spaces (e.g. City Council Chambers)

1. Consider removing or relocating chairs to maintain 6 foot spacing in conference areas. Consider blocking selected seats in Council Chambers to enforce same.
2. Establish protocol for any conference areas that remain open to ensure social distancing. Ensure that such areas are stocked with disinfectant wipes and that there is time allotted for appropriate cleaning between uses. All occupants are to adequately wipe down the area after use.
3. Practice a clockwise flow in all amenity spaces and conference rooms.
4. Encourage Departments to develop their own protocols internally around their own conference room uses, coffee/lunch areas, phone booths, and shared workstations.

5. Establish increased common area/amenity cleaning protocol with specific instructions.

Deliveries

1. All deliveries at City Hall should be made at a central receiving station downstairs (including Fedex) and items disinfected centrally.
2. Assign delivery management and sterilization as a task to specific employees only.
3. For longer-term planning, consider shortwave ultraviolet light sterilizing rooms/booths.
4. Limiting food deliveries to City Hall for the time being to minimize unnecessary traffic.

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE, IT PERSONNEL AND CONTRACTORS

1. All building maintenance employees and outside contractors are to be tasked with maintaining necessary distancing with each other and when interacting with other City Hall employees and the public.
2. Consider staggered staff schedules (hours, shifts, and days worked).
3. Consider specified work assignments for employees to ensure minimum work distances being adhered to by staff.
4. Limit in-person meetings with third party contractors.
5. Ensure there is adequate supply of face masks, hand sanitizers and disinfecting products available on site.
6. Clean and disinfect all shared equipment, tools, radios, IT equipment and spaces before and after use. Ensure that disinfecting supplies are available in each area.
7. Require departments to submit work requests through iWorQ order or IT work order system.
8. Coordinate time for maintenance employees to complete work requests in an office space to ensure distancing. If not possible, work to be scheduled after hours with ownership approval as there is an associated added cost.
9. Establish when construction workers should enter/exit building to avoid conflicts during regular work hours.
10. Update rules and regulations around construction protocol to address masks, breaks, access and post-construction cleaning.

CLEANING FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

The City will ensure common areas, entry points to the building, lobbies, elevators and public restrooms are frequently cleaned and disinfected and have visible presence of cleaning personnel. We will pay particular attention to door handles/knobs, light switches, staff rooms, desktops, washrooms and other high touch surfaces and ensure that the custodial staff is following the latest guidelines for proper cleaning and maintenance of workspaces. The City has already posted signs encouraging hand washing in all restrooms.

- Doors: Wipe knobs often and place hand sanitizer near entrances/exits.
- Stair railings: Wipe and clean these surfaces at least daily.
- Elevator buttons: Sanitize hands and place hand sanitizer in high-traffic areas.
- Conference tables: Wipe tables, phones, etc. before each meeting.
- Lobby areas: Wipe hard surfaces and provide hand sanitizer for guests.
- Copy stations: Sanitize or wash hands when using common office machines.
- Water cooler/kitchen space: Wipe all surfaces, even if they appear to be clean.
- Reception: Provide hand sanitizer in public or common areas.

In addition to providing disinfectant sprays or wipes adjacent to each touch-point, we are considering the following range of precautions to reduce touch-points:

- Light/power switches: Affix signage to remind occupants to keep switches 'on' all day • Install movement detectors to activate light switches • Provide wall-mounted disinfectant dispensers
- Doors and drawers: Remove non-essential doors • Remove door handles if viable •
- Collaboration tools: • Remove shared conference phones and encourage the use of personal mobile phones or laptop softphones for teleconferences. • Remove whiteboard pens and erasers and encourage individuals to bring and manage their own • Provide whiteboard cleaning solution and disposable wipes adjacent to every board • Remove remote control handsets and provide instructions for manual equipment use instead
- Chairs: Remove unnecessary fabric upholstered chairs • Consider plastic wrapping fabric upholstery for ease of cleaning • Affix notices to each chair reminding occupants to avoid or disinfect touch-points
- Shared equipment (printers, copiers): • Reduce the quantity of printers and copiers to dissuade printing

PPE and Cleaning:

- Provide receptacles for used/discarded PPE

- Develop new protocols for collecting and disposing of large quantities of potentially contaminated waste (especially if single-use PPE becomes common in the workplace). Determine a centralized place for disposal of discarded PPE and supplies and establish protocols on how this should be discarded. Used masks, gloves and such should be placed into sealed bags and disposed.