Suggestions for Managing Workplace Visitors

A COVID-19 resource developed by IREM® (Institute of Real Estate Management)

Workplaces know there is a risk that people visiting the office might unknowingly bring the COVID-19 virus with them, exposing employees to potential infection. As they seek to limit person-to-person contact, employers are looking at their protocols around managing visitors and taking precautions to reduce risk.

If you cannot eliminate all visitors to the office, a policy on workplace visitors may be needed. Such a policy would address who can visit, the way they check in, where and how meetings with visitors take place, and what to do when they leave.

This document contains suggestions for establishing a visitor policy

* Use it to develop a visitor management policy for your office.
* Share this with your tenants as they develop their visitor management policies. You can distribute the following page as is or incorporate it into your tenant communications materials, customizing it as may be appropriate.

**Managing Workplace Visitors**

As we reopen the building for business and your employees return to work, you will want to give some attention to how to manage visitors to your workplace as part of your social distancing program. If you cannot eliminate all visits to the office, here are some suggestions for you to consider.

**Establish a visitor policy:**

* Replace in-person meetings with virtual meetings. Continue the practice of virtual meetings with clients, vendors, and members of the public to the extent possible.
* Restrict visitor access to essential visitors only.
* Adopt an invite-only guest policy by requiring all visits to be scheduled in advance. Do not allow unscheduled visitors into the workplace.
* Pre-screen visitors about their current health status regarding symptoms. Ask them to confirm that they are not exhibiting any common flu symptoms (e.g., fever or cough), have not had person-to-person contact with someone who has exhibited coronavirus symptoms in the last seven days, and has not visited an area where there has been a significant outbreak in the last 14 days.
* Conduct temperature scans of visitors entering your workspace.

**Determine how to accommodate visitors:**

* Identify one meeting room where all visits will take place. Ideally this space will be near reception area and minimize walking by other employees.
* Coordinate the scheduling of visits to only one visitor meeting at a time.
* Welcome the visitor without shaking hands.
* Restrict number of persons who can be in the visitor room to accommodate social distancing. Set chairs accordingly.
* Keep visitor room door open at all times to avoid the need for anyone to touch the doorknob.
* Require visitors and staff meeting with visitors to wear masks.
* Provide disinfectant in the meeting room and have visitors sanitize hands upon arrival.
* Do not serve drinks or food to visitors.

**After visitors depart the workplace:**

* Require employees to disinfect all surfaces after each visitor meeting. Provide disinfectant wipes for this purpose.
* Encourage handwashing after the visitor meeting.
* Maintain a log of visitors with contact information, as well as all staff in the meeting, in the event contact tracing becomes necessary.