

PANDEMIC RECOVERY



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Eventually the pandemic will pass, and life should return to normal or – more likely – it will be life as modified: The New Normal. During the pandemic response, FM senior staff should keep an eye on eventual recovery.

During the Recovery Phase, the organization will begin to relax the procedures and policies determined during the Planning/Preparation and Response Phases. Business practices will eventually return to normal. The Pandemic Team will develop and implement a Recovery Plan to return the company to normal working operations. Note that in some cases, a new or revised policy or process may become incorporated into normal company practices.

General Principles for Returning to Normal Operations

Recommended Recovery Phase Actions

- ▶ Monitor absences and concerns
- ▶ Prepare facilities/offices for return/reopening
- ▶ Return to normal staffing and workload
- ▶ Relax pandemic policies; return to normal company policies or modified policies
- ▶ Implement new employee pandemic prevention recommendations
- ▶ Implement Pandemic Response Action Plan recommendations

Six Readiness Essentials

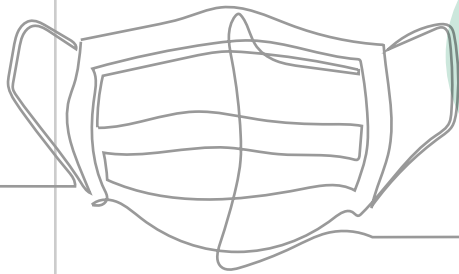
1. **Prepare the Building:** cleaning plans, pre-return inspections, HVAC and Mechanicals checks
2. **Prepare the Workforce:** mitigating anxiety, policies for deciding who returns, employee communications
3. **Control Access:** protocols for safety and health checks, building reception, shipping and receiving, elevators, visitor policies
4. **Create a Social Distancing Plan:** decreasing density, schedule management, office traffic patterns
5. **Reduce Touch Points and Increase Cleaning:** open doors, clean desk policy, food plan, cleaning common areas
6. **Communicate for Confidence:** recognize the fear in returning, communicate transparently, listen and survey regularly

During the Planning/Preparation and Response phases, it was strongly recommended that Facility Managers and senior Facilities staff should maintain a log of events by date/time. In this log they should also record all processes that worked well and any that need correction. Also critical are any comments and suggestions for improvement. During the Recovery phase, someone must be assigned to gather the pandemic paperwork generated and compile the improvement items and recommendations into a Post-Event Review Report and an Action Plan.

Issues to Consider/Monitor

- ▶ Monitor, assess, and follow federal and local government re-opening guidance. In several countries, re-opening of commerce, transportation, businesses, etc., will be implemented on a phase-in or transition-in basis. Your business may be on the initial re-entry list or perhaps the last-to-open list.
- ▶ Under government guidance, re-opening will most likely include phases (guidance that is applicable to a set of circumstances; guidelines become more relaxed as the phase increases) with gates (criteria that must be satisfied before moving on to the next phase). Again, monitor the government guidelines.
- ▶ A significant part of re-opening will most likely be facility disinfection. Not only will you need to do this, you may need local health department guidance, inspection, and certification. Determine and factor these into your recovery plans. Include strategies to accomplish this effort yourselves or via a third-party vendor.
- ▶ Another significant part of re-opening will most likely be employee testing for a period following re-opening. You may need local health department guidance, inspection, and certification. Determine and factor this into your recovery plans. Include plans to purchase test kits, analysis, and interpret results. Have policies in place for employees whose test results range from clean, to recovered, to infected.
- ▶ Social distancing will probably remain in place for an extended period after re-opening. Be able to provide masks, sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, etc. Post signs as appropriate.





1

All staff still wear facemasks

2

Most of the staff wear facemasks, a few do not

3

A few of the staff wear facemasks, a few do not

4

None of the staff wear facemasks

MASK CONFUSION:

Consider this situation: Local government has lifted the facemask requirement. As staff and contractors report back to work, you notice the following in various areas and departments:

1. All staff still wear facemasks
2. Most staff wear facemasks, a few do not
3. A few staff wear facemasks, most do not
4. None of the staff wear facemasks

If all staff or no staff wear facemasks, consistency reigns and no difficulties should result. However, there may be a problem with the outliers in scenarios #2 and #3. In #2, the few might be considered reckless and viro-dangerous. They might be treated differently, criticized, and possibly shunned. In #3, those few who do wear facemasks may also be

treated differently, criticized, and possibly shunned for fear they might have the virus. Consider if you are in a restaurant and all staff wear facemasks, you think it is a good sign of caution. If only one or two waiters wear a facemask, you may ask yourself “why only them?” This may also apply if some departments wear facemasks, but others do not.

Although this issue belongs in the Human Resources domain, it will impact your staff and contractors. FMs could require all contract cleaning staff or all cafeteria workers (for example) to wear facemasks for some duration. If that is your policy, you must so inform the organization – and later when you relax it.

Work with HR and your vendors; address this issue before staff return to work.

Actions

- ▶ Develop and follow a defined schedule to manage the return to normal operations. An example Facilities Recovery Plan Template is shown on the next page.
- ▶ All staff members and impacted tenants, contractors, etc., should be aware of the schedule. Still, be flexible and announce changes as necessary.
- ▶ Inform all branch offices of the return to normal schedule.
- ▶ Be very deliberate about returning to normal operations to enable supervisors to verify that functions can be performed effectively. Avoid the temptation to rush the process in order to restore normalcy; missteps will cause confusion.
- ▶ Maintain elevated staffing levels while returning to normal operations, during the transition period the FM staff may be performing functions using both normal and alternate processes.
- ▶ Validate that systems are fully functional before ceasing manual contingencies.
- ▶ Communicate appropriately, internally, and externally when return-to-normal operations are complete.
- ▶ Remind all FM employees to save hard copy records that are created during a system disruption. Records should be saved until data can be entered into appropriate systems.

Example Facilities Recovery Plan Template

Modify/prioritize as needed. There may be more granular items under a given policy/action.

POLICY/ACTION	TARGET DATE	STATUS
Building(s)		
Security (site) established/operational		
Security (building) established/operational		
Utilities inspected/operational		
Fire/Life/Safety systems inspected/operational		
Buildings and areas disinfected/inspected		
Work/common areas disinfected/inspected		
HVAC system inspected/operational		
Environmental systems inspected/operational		
Janitorial services established/in place		
Mail service returned to normal		
Food service areas cleaned/inspected		
Food service areas restocked and ready		
Employee space allocated/restricted		
Signs posted (Safety, social distancing, etc.)		
Supplies restocked/available		
Contractors available/in place		
EMPLOYEES		
Employee counseling available		
Employee testing available		
Social distancing policies developed		
Personal protection supplies/practices in place		
At-work policies verified/revised		
Work at home policies verified/revised		
Absence policies modified		
Social distancing practices implemented		
Travel policy implemented		
Visitors policy implemented		
FACILITIES DEPARTMENT		
Contact lists updated		
Out-sourced functions available/in place		
Facilities hotline in place		
Web pages update schedule established		
Vendors/supply chain re-established		
Vital records secured/available		
Supplies restocked/available		
OTHERS TO BE DETERMINED		