

Considerations for Recovery and Resumption of Operations

Our community organizations are facing conditions unlike any most of us have ever experienced before. Responsible measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak have led thousands of facilities, including synagogues, JCCs, and Day Schools, to close, cease, or severely limit their operations. It is uncertain how soon our community will be open again, yet critical that we think of the future. The below guidance is a reference for considering how and when to reopen so that we can safely and quickly resume providing those vital spiritual and social services to our community and the public at large.

Designate a Recovery Team – Identify key staff to prepare the organization for resumption of operations and to lead it through its recovery. Designate a senior staff member to serve as the Recovery Manager and lead the team.

- Team may include members from Facilities, Human Resources (HR), Information Technology (IT), Security, senior leadership, and operations.
- The team should be announced to the organization and should provide periodic reports on plans and preparations, decision points, and assist in the development of the recovery plan and resumption of normal or modified operations.

Determine Recovery Goals – Determine how quickly you want to be up and running again and what level of functions and services you want to achieve to consider yourself operational.

- Consider resuming operations and functions in steps, rather than all at once.
- When you return to ordinary operations, what will be your initial level of functions and services?
 - What operations are critical or most urgent to restore first?
 - What operations can you most safely restore first?
 - In what order will you re-establish the remaining functions?
 - What will be your stages and timing to increase those?

Assess Facility Readiness for Return – The Recovery Team should inspect the facility to determine its readiness for resumption of operations, with considerations of habitability, safety, and functionality.

- What clean-up and disinfection are needed? What repairs are needed? How long will clean-up, disinfection, and repairs take? Are temporary facilities needed?
- What changes to the facility (i.e. – seating), operations, or maintenance (i.e. – cleaning and disinfection schedules) are needed to adapt to continuing COVID-19 concerns?
- If you are in a shared facility, as landlord or tenant, this should be coordinated with all organizations affected.

Reassess Security – Your organization may face new threats, vulnerabilities, and risks resulting from the closing and re-opening, including from new safety procedures. Consider the risks posed by the new situation and develop plans minimize those risks.

- Changes in facility operations may alter your risk profile. Re-opening after having been closed for an extended period grabs the attention of potential bad actors. Ensure you have your safety and security plans and resources in place before re-opening.
 - Scapegoating of our community may result in targeted violence towards individuals, organizations, and your facility. Be alert to suspicious activities in your area and stay in regular contact with local law enforcement and the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh.
- Determine what security staff and measures need to be in place for each step of your return to operations.
 - Do you have the staff necessary to address new or routine safety and security challenges? If you laid-off security staff, can you re-hire the same staff, or will you need to hire and train new staff?
- Ensure necessary resources are available to support a safe and secure workplace. In your planning, allocate funding for staff and equipment need to implement any new safety measures to allow persons back into the facility.
- Disgruntled staff may act out to delay re-opening or in revenge for closure or lay-offs. Assess risks and concerns arising from staff that have been laid-off or who have declined to return to the workplace and develop risk management plans for each.

Preparation of Facility – Depending on the nature of the incident which required remote operations, in this case COVID-19, remediation of a hazard may be necessary. Disinfection, mold remediation, and other clean-ups should be completed before resumption of operations. Those plans, progress, and results should be widely communicated to the staff.

- Do work and gathering spaces need to be re-organized or marked off to encourage distancing for infection control?
- Criteria for people to return to facilities will likely be determined by local health authorities.
 - What are the criteria for our area?
 - What, if any, additional criteria should we set for return of our membership, staff, or the public to the facility?
 - How will we administer screening of persons for return or entrance?

Return of Staff – Anticipate on-going HR concerns resulting from the closure and reopening. Sensitize managers and supervisors to recognize indicators of staff members facing challenges. Identify Employee Assistance and Resource program support to assist staff in adapting to the changes. Consider returning staff in stages, even within business units, rather than all at once.

- Ensure all staff know your policies on remote work, leave, and pay and how the re-opening affects the employee.
- Some staff may be immediately ready, if not eager, to return to the facility.
- Depending on the length of the period of remote work, some staff may need additional time to reorganize their lives to return to the office.
- Some staff may have come to prefer remote work and will need time to re-integrate into the office environment.
- Some staff may have residual anxiety about the safety of the facility.

Return of Congregants, Members, and Guests – When the facility is ready to resume services to its membership, congregants, and their guests:

- Publicize the status of the facility, the new safety measures that have been put in place, and the requirements to be met for persons to return to the facility.
- Provide a forum for questions and feedback about those procedures.
- Re-evaluate those procedures regularly, after the first week then monthly until you have reached your new normal operating status.

Begin Planning for the Next Incident—Once operations have resumed, the planning process begins all over again.

- Consider what you have learned from closing and re-opening the facility and what you will do if we have a resurgence requiring us to close again.
- Use the lessons you learned to revise plans and to train your staff and membership for the next time.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE JEWISH COMMUNAL SECURITY PROGRAM, PLEASE CONTACT:
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