

Tips on How to Re-open a Construction Site After a COVID-19 Shutdown

June 2020

On June 8, New York City entered Phase One of the multiphase reopening process for New York State. Construction is one of the five industries included in the reopening. As many as 32,000 construction sites may reopen, according to statements made by City Hall. Employers are expected to adhere to specific reopening protocols. A link to this information through Forward NY is included below.

Some Construction projects which may have been suspended for a prolonged period of time can be challenging to reopen. In the event you closed a project for periods greater than several days or weeks, we have gathered the following information for your consideration as you develop a site specific plan for your circumstances.

First and foremost, you should know and obey applicable government guidance and orders concerning the pandemic and consult your attorneys and other professionals regarding how such guidance and orders may apply to you and your operations.

Prior to re-starting operations and onsite precautions:

- Check that the construction permits already in effect, including but not limited to DOB, DOT, and FDNY permits. [Executive order 202.6](#), states that existing permits shall remain in effect until the end of the term for which they were issued and must be renewed for as long as work remains suspended. Make sure your permits have not expired for your project.
- Inspect the property for damage or any changes to the site conditions that may require repair or attention prior to starting full employment on site. Pay particular attention to equipment or other building components where potential theft and vandalism could occur.
- Review, secure and stabilize equipment (e.g. cranes, rigging/lifting equipment) in accordance with manufacturer recommendations prior to allowing their use on the project.

As you prepare to have workers back on site, create a Site-Specific COVID -19 Safety Plan and provided training on its contents. While this is not a comprehensive list, a few considerations are listed below:

- Provide central temperature screening policy for all site employees.
- Require workers to stay home if they feel ill or have flu like symptoms. Don't put yourself or others at risk.
- Worker self-certification / declaration for COVID-10 symptoms or contact with persons that may have had symptom.
- In addition to standard PPE for the project, require appropriate PPE including face coverings, eye protection, and gloves.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

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- Increase the number of handwashing facilities and hand sanitizers throughout the work site; remind workers to wash their hands often and regularly.
- Create a no-congregating social distancing plan, e.g. traffic flow, work spacing.
- Consider staggering work shifts, break and lunch periods to limit the number of workers on-site and/or in close proximity at the same time. Limit the use of food trucks and common eating areas.
- Limit non-essential on-site construction personnel such as accountants, payroll, and if practical, certain field management personnel; provide work from home flexibility if possible.
- Wipe down and sanitize the tools, work stations and equipment workers will be handling during the course of the work day. Consider hiring cleaning firms to sanitize areas of construction sites.
- Limit the number of workers allowed inside of passenger and material hoists, elevators or other confining locations.
- Notify and post signage around the site instructing workers on proper procedures to follow if they have flu-like symptoms, such as where to enter first aid facilities, and contact names and numbers to notify medical personnel in advance of arrival (allowing medical personnel time to prepare for and utilize necessary PPE)
- Where practical, eliminate in-person meetings (such as production, foreman, safety meetings etc.), and opt for video conferencing or conference calls where possible.

New York State's guidelines for construction – Reopening New York. Construction Guidelines for Employers and Employees – can be accessed at the Forward NY link below.

For additional information and guidance regarding COVID-19:

[The New York City Department of Buildings](#)

www.osha.gov/

www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/

www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html

www.agc.org/coronavirus-covid-19

www1.nyc.gov/site/buildings/index.page

www1.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/pdf/essential_vs_non-essential.pdf

www.governor.ny.gov/news/no-2026-continuing-temporary-suspension-and-modification-laws-relating-disaster-emergency

<https://forward.ny.gov/new-york-city-phase-one-industries#construction>

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