



Reopening New York

Gaming Facility Guidelines for Employers and Employees

These guidelines apply to gaming facilities once they are permitted to reopen. See “Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Gaming Facilities” for full details.

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During the COVID-19 public health emergency, all owners/operators of gaming facilities should stay up to date with any changes to state and federal requirements related to gaming and incorporate those changes into their operations. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and standards.

	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Limit the workforce and patron presence to no more than 25% of the maximum occupancy, inclusive of employees and patrons, both of whom must only be permitted entry into the gaming facility if they wear an acceptable face covering and must wear a face covering at all times, except for age verification upon entrance, provided that the patron is able to medically tolerate one. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patrons may be required to lower their face covering upon entering a gaming facility so that the facility and/or any employees may verify the identity of the individual and compare to any proper method of identification, if necessary. The patron must be at least 6 ft. away from others. ✓ Ensure that a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals, including employees and patrons, with the exception of patrons who are members of the same immediate party or household, at all times, unless safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance (e.g., cage operations, moving equipment). ✓ For sports wagering counters, demarcate distances of at least 6 ft. for queueing patrons, and install a barrier, in accordance with OSHA guidelines, between patrons and counter attendants. Windows must be closed as necessary to allow for 6 ft. between individuals. ✓ Ensure arrangements of active slot machine and other game machines, including sports wagering kiosks, allow for distancing of at least 6 ft. in all directions between patrons, or, alternatively, the installation of physical barriers between such machines, in accordance with OSHA guidelines. Distancing may be implemented through physically moving machines or by deactivating machines, where needed. ✓ Mark areas for 6 ft. apart in commonly congested areas (e.g., common seating areas in lobbies, restrooms, or casino cage queues). ✓ Close off any seating areas or machines where 6 ft. of distance cannot be maintained. ✓ Close any food or beverage service on the gaming floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Modify layouts and reduce bi-directional foot traffic by posting signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces. ✓ Prohibit the use of small spaces (e.g., elevators, staff rooms, behind cash registers), by more than one individual at a time. ✓ Limit on-site interactions (e.g., designate an egress(es) for individuals leaving the facility and separate ingress(es) for individuals entering) and movements (e.g., employees should remain near workstations as often as possible). ✓ Modify the use and/or restrict the number of workstations and employee seating areas, so that individuals are at least 6 ft. apart in all directions. When distancing is not feasible, physical barriers may be enacted in areas where they would not affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation, or present a health or safety risk (e.g., emergency exit hazard). ✓ Install physical barriers between patrons and cage operators. ✓ Stagger schedules for employees to observe social distancing for any gathering. ✓ Encourage the use of touchless payment options or pay ahead, when available. Minimize the handling of cash, credit cards, reward cards, and mobile devices, where possible ✓ Implement a touchless delivery system whereby drivers stay in the cab of the vehicle while delivery takes place.



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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Physical Distancing (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monitor and control the flow of patron/employee traffic into and within the gaming to ensure adherence to occupancy requirements and social distancing. ✓ Maintain sufficient employee/security presence to monitor the flow of traffic, ensure groups adhere to social gathering limitations, and eliminate congregating. ✓ Single-player electronic versions of table games (e.g., video poker), are permitted, provided that 6 ft. of distance can be maintained between patrons, or physical barriers are installed between patrons, and that all cleaning/disinfection protocols are followed. ✓ Table games (e.g., poker, black jack) are permitted, provided that facilities adhere to the following protocols/all applicable requirements in this guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables must be at least 6 ft. apart/arranged so that patrons at adjacent tables maintain 6 ft. of distance; • Patrons at a single table must be separated from all other patrons by physical barriers which are approved for use by the NYS Gaming Commission; • For games without chairs (e.g., craps), 6-ft. intervals must be marked around the outside of the table, and physical barriers must be installed to separate patrons from one another; • Security personnel, dealers, and other employees must enforce social distancing between patrons and disrupt congregations when they form; • Physical barriers must also be installed between dealers/patrons, even if 6 ft. of distance is possible; • Dealers must verbally substitute into the game/give breaks to other dealers, instead of “tapping in;” • Wherever possible, games must be reconfigured to minimize the number of times that patrons must touch cards (e.g., by using “face-up” dealing in blackjack), and must never permit patrons to touch another patron’s cards. ✓ Limit any social gatherings in event spaces that are separate from the gaming areas in the gaming facility (e.g., parties, gatherings in event rooms or ballrooms) to the lesser of the State's social gathering limit, which is 50 or fewer people as of the issuance of this guidance, or 25% of maximum occupancy for the space. 	

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
<h3>Air Handling and Building Systems</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Before occupants return to a building that has been entirely closed, complete pre-return checks, tasks, and assessments to ensure a healthy and safe environment. These systems include but are not limited to mechanical systems, water systems, elevators, and HVAC systems. ✓ Ensure building HVAC system filtration meets the highest rated filtration compatible with the currently installed filter rack and air handling systems, at a minimum MERV-13, or industry equivalent or greater (e.g., HEPA), as applicable, and as certified and documented by a certified HVAC technician, professional, or company, ASHRAE-certified professional, certified retro-commissioning professional, or New York-licensed professional building engineer. ✓ Facilities that cannot handle the abovementioned minimum level of filtration (i.e., MERV-13 or greater), must have a certified HVAC technician, professional, or company, ASHRAE-certified professional, certified retro-commissioning professional, or New York-licensed professional building engineer certify and document that the currently installed filter rack is incompatible with abovementioned minimum level of filtration (i.e., MERV-13 or greater) and/or the air handling system would be unable to perform to the minimum level of heating and cooling that it was otherwise able to provide prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency if such a high degree of filtration (i.e., MERV-13 or greater) was installed. Such facilities should request that the professional document the associated equipment, labor, and cost that would be involved in upgrading the system to handling MERV-13 or greater level of filtration. Retain such documentation for review by state or local health department officials to operate at a lesser filtration rating of no less than MERV-11 or MERV-12 with additional ventilation and air filtration mitigation protocols. ✓ In addition, facilities that have an air handling system that is unable to meet a filtration rating of MERV-13 or greater must adopt additional ventilation and air filtration mitigation protocols per CDC and ASHRAE recommendations, including: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For buildings that are able to implement a minimum of MERV-13, or industry equivalent, or greater (e.g., HEPA), consider adopting additional ventilation and air filtration mitigation protocols per CDC and ASHRAE recommendations, particularly for buildings older than 15 years, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing necessary retro-commissioning of central systems, as well as testing, balancing, and repairs as needed; • Increasing ventilation rates and outdoor air ventilation to the extent possible; • Keeping systems running for longer hours, especially for several hours daily before and after occupancy; • Disabling demand-controlled ventilation, where reasonable, and maintain systems that increase fresh air supply; • Opening outdoor air dampers to reduce or eliminate recirculation to the extent possible; • Sealing edges of the filter to limit bypass; • Regularly inspecting systems and filters to ensure they are properly operating, and filters are appropriately installed, serviced and within service life; • Opening windows to the extent allowable for occupant safety and comfort if applicable; • Installing appropriately designed and deployed ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) to deactivate airborne virus particles; and/or • Using portable air cleaners (e.g., electric HEPA units), considering units that provide highest air change rate at appropriate performance level and do not generate harmful byproducts. <p>(For specific guidance on air filtration and building systems, please consult “Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Gaming Facilities”).</p>



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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Air Handling and Building Systems (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing necessary retro-commissioning of central systems, as well as testing, balancing, and repairs as needed; Increasing ventilation rates and outdoor air ventilation to the extent possible; Keeping systems running for longer hours, especially for several hours daily before and after occupancy; Disabling demand-controlled ventilation, where reasonable, and maintain systems that increase fresh air supply; Opening outdoor air dampers to reduce or eliminate recirculation to the extent possible; Sealing edges of the filter to limit bypass; Regularly inspecting systems and filters to ensure they are properly operating, and filters are appropriately installed, serviced and within service life; Opening windows to the extent allowable for occupant safety and comfort; Installing appropriately designed and deployed ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) to deactivate airborne virus particles; and/or Using portable air cleaners (e.g., electric HEPA units), considering units that provide highest air change rate at appropriate performance level and do not generate harmful byproducts. 	
Protective Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure that employees/patrons are only permitted entry into the gaming facility if they wear an acceptable face covering, provided that they are able to medically tolerate such covering. ✓ Ensure that employees/patrons wear acceptable face coverings at all times when within the gaming facility, except for age verification upon entrance. ✓ Provide employees with an acceptable face covering at no cost to the employee. ✓ Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth (e.g., homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), surgical masks, and face shields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Even when casino cages, table games, and individual game machines are socially distanced, consider installing physical barriers, where feasible.

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Protective Equipment (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clean, replace, and prohibit sharing of face coverings. Consult CDC guidance for additional information. ✓ Install physical barriers at casino cages and in between individual game machines, when these facilities are not 6 ft. apart. ✓ Limit the sharing of objects, such as equipment and vehicles, as well as the touching of shared surfaces (e.g., touchscreens); or, require employees to wear gloves when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched surfaces; or, require employees/ patrons to perform hand hygiene before and after contact. 	
Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adhere to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. ✓ Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout the facility, including handwashing with soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible. ✓ Ensure hand sanitizer is available throughout the gaming facility (e.g., entrances, exits, gaming floors, cages, security/reception desks). ✓ Ensure that all areas and equipment in the gaming facility are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at least once per day, and high-touch areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected more frequently, in accordance with the standards set forth below. ✓ Ensure equipment or objects that are shared between patrons and/or employees (e.g., game machines, counters for slot machines) are cleaned and disinfected between each user or at least every 4 hours. ✓ Provide appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies for shared/frequently touched surfaces (e.g., game machines, counters for slot machines), and require employees /encourage patrons to use these supplies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Where possible and practicable, place seat covers on cloth seats or other seats that may be more difficult to clean and disinfect. These seat covers should be cleaned between usage, or every 4 hours, at a minimum. ✓ Install touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers where possible. ✓ Place receptacles around the gaming facility for disposal of soiled items, including PPE.

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Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure sufficient staff is available to “wipe down” equipment between users, though patrons may be required to do so before/after each use. Patrons must be provided the option of requesting that slot machines and other game machines be cleaned and disinfected prior to their use of the machine. ✓ Adhere to the following cleaning protocols for equipment and surfaces at table games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following must be cleaned and disinfected, or replaced or disposed of, as applicable, before changing playing patron/dealer as appropriate to the game: table game rail(s), chair area(s), dice, on/off button(s) used by dealers, card shoe(s), roulette wheel head(s), ball(s), and dolly, Pai Gow tiles, Visual Limits, Elo units, money paddle, token boxes; • The following must be cleaned and disinfected, or replaced or disposed of, as applicable, every hour: Chipper Champs, Pit & Poker podiums; • The following must be cleaned and disinfected, or replaced or disposed of, as applicable, every four hours: shufflers, baccarat discard pile, blackjack discard holder, hard game surfaces, push carts; • All betting chips coming from the cage must have been disinfected and chips used on the floor must be sanitized at least once per day; and • Dealers must require patrons to use hand sanitizer prior to joining a game; and • All other equipment must be cleaned at the intervals described in this guidance. ✓ Ensure shared workstations (e.g., cages) are cleaned and disinfected between use by different employees. ✓ For cleaning and disinfection, refer to Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) products identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19. ✓ Prohibit shared food and beverages among employees and reserve adequate space – off of the gaming floor – for employees to observe social distancing while eating meals. 	



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Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Affirm you have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that you will implement them. ✓ Encourage individuals to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically face coverings, through verbal communication and signage. ✓ Conspicuously post completed safety plans on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop a communications plan for employees/patrons that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide information. Consider developing webpages, text/email groups, and social media. ✓ Post signage inside and outside of the building to remind individuals to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfection protocols.
Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implement mandatory health screening practices (e.g., questionnaire, temperature check) for employees, but do not mandate for patrons/delivery personnel. ✓ Screening must ask about, at minimum: (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 diagnostic test in past 14 days, (3) close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days; and/or (4) traveled within a state with significant community spread of COVID-19 for longer than 24 hours within the past 14 days. ✓ Refer to DOH travel advisory for the most up to date information on states with significant spread of COVID-19 and quarantine requirements. ✓ An individual who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms must not be allowed to enter the gaming facility, and employees who screen positive must be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing. ✓ Immediately notify the state and local health department about any confirmed positive cases of COVID-19. ✓ Designate a central point of contact responsible for receiving and attesting to having reviewed all screening questionnaires. They should be prepared to receive notifications from individuals of positive cases and initiate the respective cleaning/disinfection procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perform screening remotely (e.g., by telephone or electronic survey), before individuals report to the gaming facility. ✓ Prevent individuals from intermingling in close contact with each other prior to completion of the screening. ✓ Screeners should be trained by employer-identified individuals familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols. ✓ Temperature checks may also be conducted per U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines. ✓ Maintain a log of every person, including employees, contractors, and vendors, who may have had close contact with other individuals at the gaming facility; excluding patrons and deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means. The log should contain contact information such that all contacts may be identified, traced, and notified in the event an individual is diagnosed with COVID-19. ✓ Patrons may be encouraged to complete a health screen or provide contact information for contact tracing but may not be required to do so. Patrons may be required to provide identifying information or contact details if the identification is necessary for security personnel or employees of the gaming facility to verify age and permission to enter the casino. ✓ Refer to DOH guidance regarding protocols and policies for employees seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the employee had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.

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