WELCOME

Economic Development Advisory Board

June 4, 2020

AGENDA

Part I

- Welcome and Call to Order

Part 2 – New Business

- Tangram Designs Presentation:

  Wayfinding Signage Program Initial Concept Options
- Getting to Safe Toolkit

Part 3

- Approve Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2020
  - If time allows; otherwise, will be added to June 11 meeting agenda

Part 4 – Next Meeting: June 11, 2020

- Small Business Relief Grant Draft Application Form
- Small Business PPE Grant Program?

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WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM – INITIAL CONCEPT OPTIONS

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APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

May 28, 2020

Economic Development Advisory Board

May 4, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The May 28, 2020 Monroe Economic Development Advisory Board Meeting was called to order at 8:07 a.m.; Zoom Meeting Platform.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Allan Dye, Sally King, Liz Nugent, Bridgette Tuttle, Katy Woods; and ex-officio members Janelle Drews and Jim Watt

Staff present: Deborah Knight, James Palmer, Rich Huebner and Ben Swanson

Guest present: Ben Webb

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Board member Katy Woods made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Board member Allan Dye. Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Deborah Knight commented that the planned presentation by Tangram Designs has been rescheduled by one week to June 4, 2020. When originally scheduled, the presentation was anticipated to be an update to the gateway sign concept, but will actually be a presentation of the wayfinding signage program preliminary concept options.

A. Small Business Relief Grant

Mr. Huebner reported on the outcome of a committee meeting held on Friday, May 29, with Board Members King, Nugent and Tuttle, and Messrs. Huebner and Palmer.

At the recommendation of Ms. Tuttle, the committee members reviewed the Snohomish County Small Business Relief, Recovery and Resiliency (R3) Grant Program application.

All recommendations detailed in this section were provided to the full EDAB membership following the unanimous recommendation of the review committee:

- City's Small Business Relief Program application should closely follow the R3 template.
- Remove question of multiple sites in Snohomish County, as this is a city focused program.
- Question of staffing level to be revised to a question of total hours of employee compensation.
- Remove the question of if the grant would help the applicant business retain jobs, as this grant is not intended to be solely a payroll-focused program.

- Remove the amount requested line and give the application review committee the discretion to assign grant amounts.
- Remove the words “on eligible expenses” from question of how funds will be used.
- Retain the short answer questions.

The committee also recommended adding questions on the following topics:

- Phase of the Safe Start Washington program in which business will reopen.
- Other funds received through Federal or State assistance programs, and how funds from a city grant will be used differently.
- If the applicant business applied for and did not receive funding from a Federal or State program.
- The likelihood of permanent closer with and without a city grant.
- How the applicant business plans to remain solvent.

Other criteria recommended by the committee:

- Applicant business has experienced a 25% or more loss in revenue due to COVID-19.
- Applicant business was current on state and local licensing requirements as of the first date of the Stay Home/Stay Healthy Order.

B. Criteria for Moving to Phase II

Mr. Huebner shared information provided by the Snohomish Health District regarding moving to Phase II. The current target criteria is less than 6 new case per 100,000 residents per day. For the two-week period of May 8-21, Snohomish County had an average of 22 new cases per day per 100,000 residents.

C. Penalties for Businesses Operating in Violation of Order

Mr. Huebner detailed the emergency rules released by the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) on May 26.

Per the rules, L&I and the State Emergency Response Center will receive and respond to complaints. Businesses found to be operating in violation of the state Order will be informed and directed to close or adjust operations immediately, and continued non-compliance may result in a workplace safety citation, which carries a fine of up to $10,000.

Once a complaint has been received and contact made with the business, L&I will conduct in-person spot checks to ensure businesses are complying with Safe Start Washington requirements.

Ms. Knight commented that the state retains all enforcement responsibility for the Order. When notified of a business potential operating in non-compliance, the City, through Mr. Palmer, makes contact and asks why the business is open, and offers educational

resources for businesses that were unaware of or misinterpreting the Order. Some local businesses have adapted their business model to come into compliance with one of the exceptions offered in the current Order. If the business continues to operate in non-compliance, the city notify the state.

Mr. Palmer commented that he is actively tracking the details of the state Order, and what business functions are allowed and not allowed; he recognizes that the Order is being regularly revised and updated, which can result in nebulous guidelines.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/UPDATES

Ms. Drews commented that she has heard from members about the nebulous guidelines that Mr. Palmer mentioned. For example, some particular business functions have been deemed allowable if conducted in association with a Farmers Market, which may result in confusion that the same business function is allowed in a standard capacity.

Ms. Drews commented that the opening day of the Monroe Farmers Market was a success. Representatives of the Snohomish Health District were present between 2:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., and suggested some changes the Chamber could make to ensure even better compliance with social distancing guidelines in the coming weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

_____

Deborah Knight, City Administrator

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NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

8:00AM-9:30AM

Zoom Meeting

Getting to Safe GUIDE

Recommedations for reopening your business during the COVID-19 pandemic

v. 05282020

EVERETT
WASHINGTON

SNOHOMISH HEALTH DISTRICT
WWW.SNOHD.ORG

COVID-19

everettforeverett.com/safeopening

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SECTION 1: Introduction

IMPORTANT

Any adoption or other use of any of the contents of the Getting to Safe Toolkit is the sole responsibility of the user. The City of Everett and partners do not warrant the toolkit in any way. It is up to each business to comply with applicable laws and orders. It is up to each business to determine applicable health guidelines and follow them.

The contents of the toolkit may not be applicable to all businesses or places of work. As applied to a particular business, the contents of the toolkit may or may not comply with applicable laws and orders. Each person must make that determination for themselves in every situation. The toolkit does not impose, define or change any standard of care.

ABOUT

The Getting to Safe Toolkit was developed by gathering information provided by Challenge Seattle, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), the Office of the Governor and the Washington State Department of Health, along with recommendations from the economic development department at the City of Everett and the Snohomish Health District. The Getting to Safe Toolkit is a living document that may be updated at any time.

The toolkit was developed with partnership and community in mind between public, private and nonprofit sectors. We recognize that the fight against COVID-19 requires shared responsibility and common purpose across employers, workers, customers and visitors.

Ideas are intended to demonstrate how employers can operate in a “new normal” in a way that aligns with public health guidelines.

The toolkit is not intended as a prediction or forecast about: duration of lockdown; peak of viral infections; efficacy of government or health care responses to the virus; or other health or societal impacts.

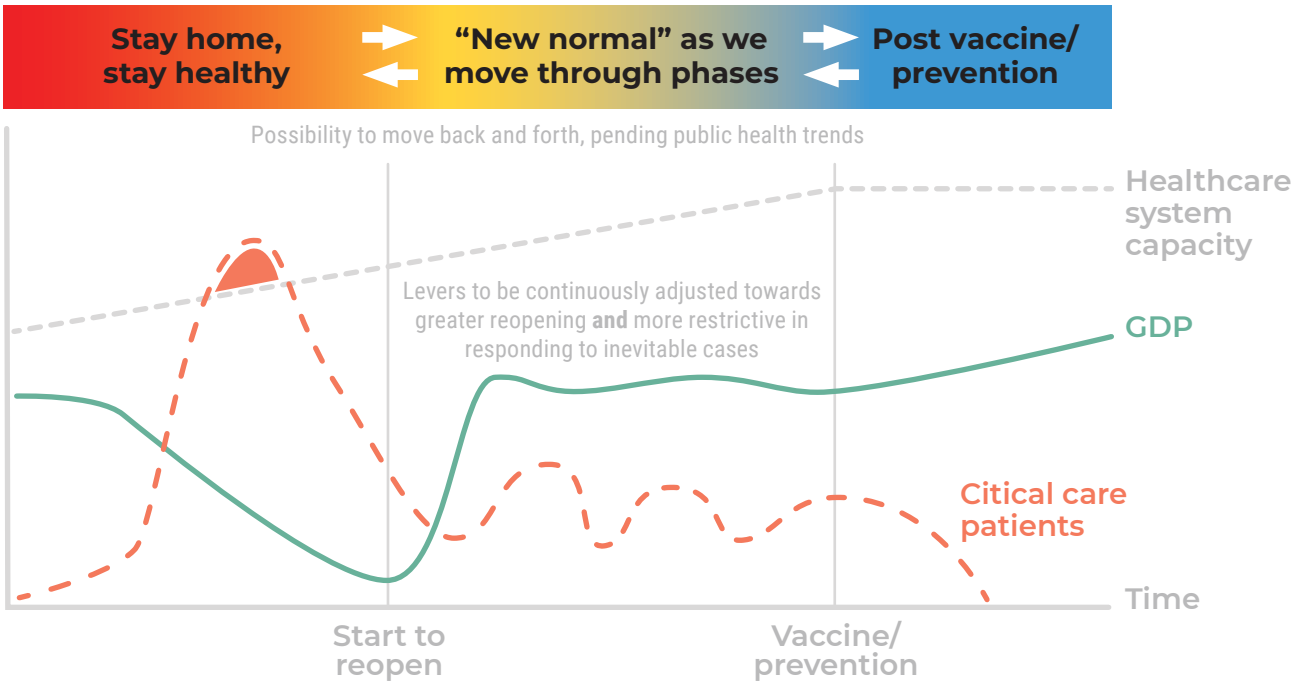
The Getting to Safe Toolkit and associated materials are only recommendations for consideration.

PURPOSE AND HOW TO USE

The toolkit is intended to provide tools and resources and be flexible so you can create a personalized plan to work for your business. It does not constitute medical, legal or safety advice, and is not an endorsement or recommendation of a particular response. As such, you are advised to use this document as general guidance only in making your own continued assessments as to the appropriate course of action, taking into account local laws, rules, regulations and orders. Additional tools, resources and links to more in-depth information can be found at everettforeverett.com/safeopening.

WHY THIS MATTERS

There are multiple phases in the collective battle against COVID-19. Moving to the next phase requires readiness for ongoing adjustments, both to further reopen and to fight subsequent cases.



SECTION 2: Safe reopening recommendations and resources

PLANNING IN THE NEW NORMAL

On May 1, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee announced the Safe Start Washington plan for safely resuming recreational, social and business activities. The four-phase approach is more like turning a dial rather than turning on a light switch. Each phase will result in different business sectors reopening with modified operations to meet public health and safety requirements.

We know that it's hard enough to run a business under normal circumstances. Changing your operations during a global pandemic requires grit and determination on a whole other level. Unfortunately, there's no universal, one-size-fits-all approach to reopening. Each business will have to create a tailored plan based on its unique circumstances. That's why we've put together this toolkit; we want to help give you a head start. In the pages ahead, you'll find information, checklists and resources that will help you create a plan to reopen safely and lawfully.

Please note

It's the responsibility of each business owner to follow industry-specific regulations during each phase of the governor's plan. This information can be found at coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/safe-start

If you have specific questions related to public health guidelines in Snohomish County, contact the Snohomish Health District at SHDInfo@snohd.org.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN CREATING YOUR SAFE REOPENING PLAN

Your plan should be comprehensive enough to cover all safety aspects of your business, but simple enough to implement and modify quickly if needed. The length and detail of each plan will vary, but we recommend breaking your plan up into three focus areas. These are:

Your workplace

This should include things like enhanced cleaning, protective equipment and physical modifications to your office or facility to keep your customers and employees safe.

Your workforce

This should include things like how you'll bring staff back to work, how you'll communicate new information and how you'll keep them safe in the workplace. It must include procedures for screening and how you'll handle COVID-19 exposure.

Your customers

This should include what you need to do to prepare your business for your customers to return and how you'll prepare your customers for returning to your business.

Build a "safe opening team"

Whether your business has a few employees or a few thousand, we recommend spreading the workload among different specialists within your organization. If your business is a sole proprietorship, consider building a team of your professional advisors and colleagues.

A safe opening team should include representatives like:

- Owners/executive leadership
- Department heads/leads, e.g., front of house and back of house in a restaurant
- Legal and HR
- Communications
- CPA/bookkeeper
- Facilities and operations

The safe opening team should aim to:

- Set priorities and delegate work
- Identify key data sources
- Stay up to date on local and federal reopening guidelines
- Create and set policies
- Create and manage to-do lists
- Define key messages to employees and customers

Set priorities based on phased-in approach

Before your safe opening team starts putting pen to paper on a plan, it should identify priorities and work on the highest priorities first. Your priorities list should be informed by the statewide phased-in approach and order priorities on the criteria in each phase. For example, it's unlikely that your business will need to return to pre-COVID-19 staffing levels during phase two of the Safe Start Washington plan, so prioritize staffing needs to account for your needs during each phase.

Key health data recommendations

Washington's Coronavirus Response website

Snohomish Health District website

Center for Disease Control (CDC) website

World Health Organization (WHO) website

Washington State Department of Health website

Access Washington website

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) website

ADA website

Washington State Labor and Industries website

PREPARING YOUR WORKPLACE

Before you can bring your employees and customers back, you'll need to get your workplace in order so it's safe for your employees and customers. In this section we'll cover baseline recommendations for personal protective equipment, facilities and cleaning, and gathering and space planning.

PPE

What is PPE?

Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as PPE, is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses.

Baseline recommendations checklist

- ☐ Face covers or masks (not N95 or medical grade) - consider purchasing reusable cloth covers for your staff and issuing them as you would a dress code or uniform
- ☐ Hand washing area(s) and hand sanitizer - should be available in abundance
- ☐ Antiseptic cleaner and/or wipes - for wiping down high-touch surfaces like counters, screens and handles
- ☐ Infrared thermometers for screening employees
- ☐ Disposable gloves - non-medical grade

Notes and considerations

The Snohomish Health District recommends that face covers for the general public are simple, homemade cloth covers and not surgical or N95 respirator masks. It is crucial that we prioritize the limited supply of PPE for our medical providers, first responders, long-term care facilities and others whose life-saving work requires them to be in close contact with patients.

OSHA recommends that PPE should be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the worker
- Properly fitted and periodically refitted, as applicable (e.g., respirators)
- Consistently and properly worn when required
- Regularly inspected, maintained and replaced, as necessary
- Properly removed, cleaned and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others or the environment

PREPARING YOUR WORKPLACE

Facilities and cleaning

You should establish a sanitary baseline before the workplace opens and maintain sanitary levels once open. Your facilities and cleaning plan should consider your unique, workplace-specific circumstances.

Baseline recommendation checklist

- ☐ Stay up to date on current cleaning guidelines from local and state health officials
- ☐ Update your current cleaning procedures to ensure they comply with current guidelines
- ☐ Close or limit communal area usage like:
  - Breakrooms
  - Lunchrooms
  - Exercise facilities
  - Conference rooms
- ☐ Implement touchless technology where possible
- ☐ Clean high-touch surfaces every hour (e.g., bathrooms, handles, office equipment)
- ☐ Establish disinfection stations for employees upon arrival and for packages and deliveries

Best practices

- Close or limit communal spaces like break and lunchrooms
- Mandate social distancing among workforce
- Implement touchless technology
- Implement more robust cleaning protocols

PREPARING YOUR WORKPLACE

Gathering and space planning

You'll likely need to reconfigure your workplace and modify gathering policies to meet social distancing and safety requirements. Any physical changes to your space should be easy to modify and remove in the future.

Space planning baseline recommendations checklist

- ☐ Reassess facility capacity to comply with the Safe Start Washington guidelines
- ☐ Consider signage to limit ingress/egress, reduce number of people in elevators, etc.
- ☐ Stagger schedules where possible
- ☐ Establish "safe distance zones" around common gathering points and consider floor markings or quadrants in open work areas
- ☐ Consider installing physical barriers
- ☐ Consider removal of extra seats and decluttering furniture to facilitate effective cleaning

Gathering baseline recommendations checklist

- ☐ Mandate social distancing of 6 feet
- ☐ Review all activities in the workplace to identify where COVID-19 transmission could occur
- ☐ Encourage remote work when possible
- ☐ Eliminate or limit non-essential visitors
- ☐ Consider restricting travel
- ☐ Restrict group size for in-person meetings so that 6 feet of distancing can be maintained
- ☐ Track and store meetings, times, dates and attendees for 28 days to aid in future tracking and tracing if someone from your team contracts COVID-19

Best practices

- Start space planning early
- Reassess capacity to comply with social distancing requirements
- Determine where physical barriers should be placed (e.g. plexiglass for point of sale or desk clusters)

PREPARING YOUR WORKFORCE

Before your employees can return to work, you'll need to plan for who comes back and when. You'll also need to consider how you'll implement screening and tracking policies and special accommodations needed for your most vulnerable workers.

Bringing people back to work

Bringing people back to work is an important milestone in this unprecedented journey. Like with all other steps in reopening, bringing people back to work is going to be phased in and will require planning and prioritization.

Baseline recommendation checklists

Define who is eligible to come back

- ☐ Understand current opening limitations and base staffing needs accordingly
- ☐ Classify essential and non-essential workers
- ☐ Identify and understand those in high-risk categories, with childcare or transportation constraints, and level of comfort to return

Measure worker readiness sentiment

- ☐ Consider surveying all staff members to understand their readiness to return
- ☐ Apps like TinyHR and Culture Amp work great, but so does a simple questionnaire sent out via email

Create a phased approach

- ☐ Determine your plans to bring people back to work based on the Safe Start Washington phased approach
- ☐ Outline who will come back and when

Adjust policies and workplace accommodations

- ☐ Take spatial density and role/function into account
- ☐ Consider creating daily staggered start and end times, or an "on site as needed" policy
- ☐ Expand definition of work time so there are not "rush hours"
- ☐ Implement flexible work policies
- ☐ Encourage those who can work remotely to do so
- ☐ Be flexible with those who have limitations (e.g., high risk, childcare, transportation)
- ☐ Adjust leave policies for employees who need it
- ☐ Develop a policy on how to prioritize accommodation requests

Prepare contingency plans

- ☐ Be prepared for a resurgence of COVID-19 and how you will adjust your operations if necessary
- ☐ Anticipate and stay informed on changing regulations

Best practices:

- Prioritize essential workforce
- Identify those in high-risk categories
- Encourage remote work when possible

PREPARING YOUR WORKFORCE

Screening, tracking and tracing

One of the most critical steps in limiting the spread of COVID-19 is screening, tracking and tracing. This requires mutual accountability among employers, employees and customers.

Before you begin to plan how you'll address screening, tracking and tracing, get familiar with these terms and your responsibilities as an employer. Here's a quick rundown:

Screening is defined as practices to screen for and/or confirm COVID-19 risks. It is recommended that employers screen all on-site persons. Screening can be done by asking people to self-certify via an app, log, email or text. It can also be done on site by a trained staff member. *Screening should only be for COVID-19 symptoms.*

Tracking is defined as the ability to identify individuals that may have been exposed to COVID-19. It is recommended that employers log when workers, volunteers and visitors come on the premises. These voluntary client/customer logs are encouraged in the event the Snohomish Health District needs to notify them following a possible exposure in the business.

Tracing is defined as determining individuals who should be notified about exposure to COVID-19. This is done with guidance and instruction from the Snohomish Health District. Employers should work to support the Snohomish Health District with their tracing efforts, but tracing is not the employer's responsibility.

Best practices:

- Use an app so staff can self-screen and log their data before coming to work
- Store screening data and treat as confidential medical information
- Set visitor expectations and protocols ahead of time

Screening, tracking and tracing continued...

Policies should be:

- Actionable and pragmatic to implement
- Simple in order to be adopted broadly
- Effective in mitigating the risk of COVID-19 cases
- Timely to improve public health outcomes and enable economic recovery
- Permissible by law, including HIPAA and state employment law
- Ethical, safe and privacy protective, avoiding harm and being respectful of individual needs and preferences

Baseline recommendations checklist

- ☐ Decide what screening is done on premise versus at home for workers, as well as volunteers, visitors and customers/clients where possible
- ☐ If performing on-site screening, consider special training required
- ☐ Consider an at-home screening app like CovidSafe or Apple COVID-19
- ☐ Develop a HIPAA compliant health screening data storage policy
- ☐ Develop a list of screening questions. Potential information to collect when developing your screening policy:
  - Available contact information
  - Travel in the last 14 days
  - Confirm no symptoms or exposure for 14 days prior
  - Confirm symptom-free on an ongoing basis
  - On-site temperature

  Be transparent about what data is collected, why and how long it is kept.

Guidelines currently suggest that anyone with the following symptoms should be sent home:

Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

PREPARING YOUR WORKFORCE

COVID-19 symptoms procedure

Although it's scary to think about, you need to plan for the unfortunate event that one of your team members shows signs COVID-19.

Baseline recommendations checklist

- ☐ Stay current on understanding COVID-19 symptoms as reported by the CDC
- ☐ Consider how to isolate an employee if they're symptomatic
- ☐ Define sanitation steps if symptoms are discovered
- ☐ Define who to notify when COVID-19 or COVID-19-like symptoms are discovered. For example:
  - Workforce
  - Customers
  - Public health officials (for example, when more than two cases occur in a work setting within 14 days of one another)
- ☐ Define requirements for returning to work
- ☐ Educate your workforce on COVID-19 symptoms and when to stay home
- ☐ Create a work culture where employees feel comfortable self-identifying when a member of their household has COVID-19 symptoms

Notes and considerations:

Snohomish Health District guidance states that employees can return to work 10 days after symptoms began and 72 hours after symptoms have improved without medication. It is not recommended that businesses require employees to test negative for COVID-19 prior to returning.

Things to consider if an employee contracts COVID-19 or has COVID-19-like symptoms

- Who should information be reported to? (e.g., manager, HR)
- Timeline and procedure for notifying potentially exposed workers
- Isolation and sanitization procedure if symptoms are discovered
- Requirements to return to the workplace

PREPARING YOUR WORKFORCE

Special considerations for at-risk employees

Employers should create policies to support employees at high risk of COVID-19. According to the CDC, high-risk/vulnerable communities are:

- Persons 60 years and older
- Persons of all ages who have certain underlying medical conditions and/or compromised immune systems
- Women who are pregnant

Policies should be created to support these communities based on state and federal guidelines such as Washington State Proclamation 20-46, "Opening Up American Again," Americans with Disabilities Act and nondiscrimination laws.

These guidelines include the following actions:

- Employers should utilize all available options for alternative work assignments to protect high-risk employees
- Employers should continue to allow telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations, and should strongly consider special accommodations for personnel who are members of a vulnerable population
- Employers should work together with employees to think of creative solutions that will meet the needs of both

PREPARING FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS' RETURN AND PREPARING YOUR CUSTOMERS TO RETURN

Preparing for your customers to return is different than preparing your customers for returning. Preparing for your customers to return considers practical steps and policies needed to ensure public safety. Whereas preparing your customers for returning considers how you'll keep your customers informed on steps you're taking and their shared responsibility in keeping the public safe.

Checklist: preparing for your customers to return

- ☐ Review and modify your customer service policies based on public health guidelines. Consider how you will:
  - ☐ Respond if a customer ignores your posted safety guidelines
  - ☐ Handle returns and send backs
  - ☐ Respond when a customer appears sick
  - ☐ Decide whether or not you'll request that all customers wear face covers

Checklist: preparing your customers for returning

- ☐ Consider point of entry signage that outlines steps you're taking to keep the public safe and what is expected from your customers upon entry
- ☐ Define key messages you'll send out via your marketing channels to inform your customers on the steps you're taking

Best practices

- Consider how you'll prepare your business and its policies to keep your customers safe
- Consider how you'll prepare and inform your customers about how they'll help keep themselves and other people safe

SECTION 3: Safe reopening recommendations for customers and visitors

DIGITAL MARKETING: CREATING AND MANAGING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

Now that you've prepared your workplace and workforce for the new normal, it's time to prepare your customers so they understand their shared responsibility in keeping the community safe. In this section, we'll go over some basic digital platforms available to help you create or increase your online presence to communicate with customers about your business's new normal and what's expected of customers when they visit you.

An online presence is incredibly important for businesses in today's digital era, and even more so with stay-home orders and social distancing. If you don't have an online presence yet, now is a great time to develop one. There are many easy-to-use, no- to low-cost options that can help you reach your customers digitally. Because people have different preferences on the digital platforms they use (Facebook, Instagram, Google, etc.), sharing information across multiple digital platforms can help you reach a variety of customers.

Whether you have 50,000 followers already or you're new to digital marketing, we hope you'll discover some new tools and resources to help you better reach your customers during this time and beyond.

TYPES OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Websites

Having a great website can be simple and affordable, and helps your customers in many ways. It helps customers find you when they search online, learn about the products or services you offer, be informed about changes at your organization during the pandemic, and be able to purchase products from you directly online. There are many free and low-cost website services available to help you build and manage your website:

- **Google for business:** build and manage a website for free google.com/business/website-builder
- **Squarespace:** a low-cost one-stop-shop to create and manage your website starting from scratch or using templates squarespace.com
- **Word Press:** create a website or blog with free, customizable designs and free hosting and support wordpress.org
- **Constant Contact:** a low-cost, easy-to-use website builder and e-commerce platform constantcontact.com/website
- **Wix:** offers custom URLs, free website hosting and a website builder wix.com

Depending on the website service you choose, you may need to get a domain name or URL (www.YourBusinessNameHere.com). Domain names can be very affordable and easy to create. Several websites allow you to purchase a domain name for one or more years, and offer support to use and maintain your domain name:

- **GoDaddy.com:** search for, purchase and manage your domain name(s) all in one spot
- **Google Domains:** a great resource to get you started on creating, registering and using your domain name domains.google

E-commerce

As our community gets use to the new normal and restrictions continue to be lifted, foot traffic may lag for some time. If you do not already offer your products or services online, now is a great time to begin setting up an online storefront on your webpage or on low-cost options, like eBay, Etsy, Facebook and Shopify. Use your website and social media to promote your online storefront as a safe option to patronize your organization from a distance.

Google

Google is the number one search engine in the world with over 70% of the search market share. Using Google tools and practices can help make your organization more easily found when people are searching for you or organizations like yours:

- **Google business profile:** learn how to set up and manage your Google business profile to better inform and connect with customers: google.com/business
- **Google support:** make your website easy to find in search engines, get help with your website and so much more: google.com/webmasters
- **Google Analytics:** Get the most out of your website, learn more about your customers' online behavior and much more. Get started and find free learning tools at: analytics.google.com

Social media

Social media platforms allow businesses to quickly and easily connect with existing and potential customers, share news and information, promote services and products, build brand loyalty, easily and affordably produce targeted ads, and much more. There are many social media platforms available that offer different ways of communicating with customers:

Facebook: Millions of users locally and around the world use Facebook to connect with friends, family and their community. People of all ages use Facebook, but the majority of users are over the age of 18. Facebook allows you to build a customer following online, share news and information about your organization, invite people to events and tell stories to connect with your customers. It also allows you to easily create targeted ads at any budget to better reach your audience. Learn how to set up a business profile, take free online courses and much more at business.facebook.com.

Instagram: Instagram continues to expand its reach and is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, especially with younger demographics. Instagram is a photo sharing platform that businesses use to promote their products, services and brand through photography, graphics, short videos and stories. Owned by Facebook, you can post your photos between Facebook and Instagram with the click of a button, and create targeted ads at any budget to better reach your audience. Learn how to get started at business.instagram.com.

Other platforms: there are many other options for you to check out that offer different ways of reaching your customers. If you are already on Facebook and Instagram, grow your audience further by checking out some other platforms like Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn.

TYPES OF MESSAGES TO SHARE ONLINE

Whether you choose to manage a website, social media accounts, an online storefront, or all of the above, use your platforms to share important information with your customers about your "new normal" when you reopen, and what's expected of them when they visit you.

Hours of operation: many organizations have changed their hours of operations during the pandemic. Let customers know when you're open so they can plan ahead before visiting or contacting you.

Changes in operations, safety messaging: part of reopening includes some changes in how we do things. Help customers understand your organization's new normal and what they can expect when they come to see you, order from you or reach out to you. Let them know that you are opening with their, and your employees', health and safety in mind. Share information about their shared responsibility is in keeping people safe and what's expected of them when they visit you.

Contact information: if customers have questions, let them know how to reach you and when they can expect to hear back from you.

Answer questions: sometimes people prefer to send an email or social media message/comment if they have a question, or perhaps they can't call during your business hours. Answer their questions online to help show your responsiveness and maybe answer some of those burning questions others have.

Menu, product or service offerings, and online/phone ordering: adding photos and/or descriptions of your menu, product or service offerings to your website or social media is a great way to inform your customers of what you have to offer. Include purchase options you offer such as how to order online, by phone or in person.

Promotions: generate some online buzz and excitement by sharing your current promotions and how customers can get in on the deals. Websites like canva.com and crello.com offer free, customizable templates to create eye-catching web and social media graphics to use on your platforms.

Thank yous: give your customers a shout out for supporting local organizations and doing their part to keep people safe. Thank customers in the comments of their social media posts when they mention you, or post a thank you to your social media or website.

OTHER TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Social media management: the thought of managing multiple social media platforms may seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be! Most can be managed from a smart phone, but there are also free and low-cost tools available that allow you to manage it all from one place. Websites/apps like Hootsuite, Buffer and Later offer free subscriptions, and sites like Sendible and Sprout Social offer paid subscription plans.

Digital marketing strategy: get the most out of your efforts online by creating a digital marketing strategy. The U.S. Small Business Association's learning center offers a variety of tools and courses to help you build a digital marketing plan for your organization so you can efficiently and effectively market your business online. sba.gov/learning-center

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