



Reopening Your Office Doors and Keeping Them Open

An Ipsos Point of View



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As the coronavirus swept through the country this spring, companies were quick to act and close offices. Employees transitioned to teleworking and teleconferencing in no time. Fast forward to today, and companies must once again act quickly—this time to reopen offices across America. Unfortunately, this will not be a turnkey operation, one in which you simply turn on the lights and watch staff return to their desks to pick up where they left off. Turning on the lights will not alleviate the fact that many Americans are still fearful of contracting the Covid-19 virus. In fact, a recent Ipsos poll revealed only 55% say they would be comfortable returning to their place of work. This leaves us in a quandary, with businesses wanting/needing to reopen their doors and employees scared to walk through those very doors. Ipsos' Workplace Health & Safety Compliance Audit is a service that assists employers meet employee and government safety needs to successfully reopen and stay open.

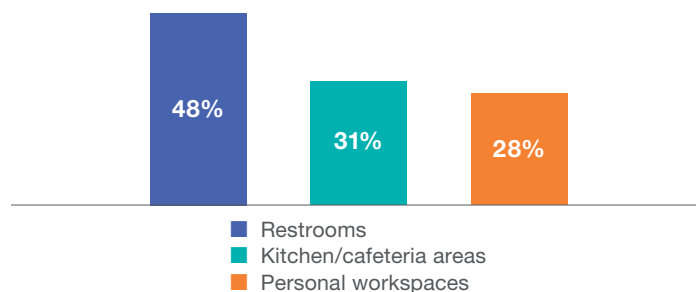
With the challenging road ahead, businesses must first address the fears staff may have about returning to the office. To build confidence and trust, employers will need to create a work environment that adheres to the new government safety standards. Once those measures are in place, businesses will need to monitor that these practices are being followed each day. A failure to do so, can be costly. Businesses who experience an outbreak due to a lack of adherence to new safety standards can not only face the obvious risk of illness, but also a loss of trust and reputation from employees and consumers, as well as a loss in sales and profit. There is also the risk of having to close offices all over again, costly fines and potential litigation. These risks can create damage which will be hard to reverse. There is a lot at stake in the reopening and monitoring of the new 6-foot office environment.

To meet this complex challenge of keeping your employees safe and your offices open, Ipsos has created a Workplace Health & Safety Compliance Audit. It uses new government safety standards to measure how, and if, your business meets the new guidelines. It can also serve as a checklist to help successfully plan your reopening.

For example:

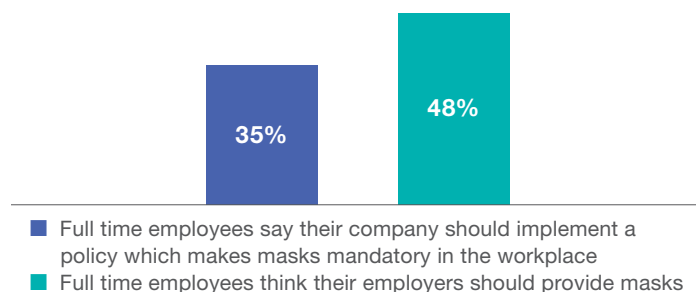
- Are high-traffic areas and amenities being cleaned thoroughly and more often?

New Ipsos data finds most full-time employees are concerned about:



- Are employees required to wear masks?

New Ipsos data finds:



Additional examples:

- Is distancing being followed at desks, conference rooms and common areas?
- Are physical separators in place in high traffic areas like reception?
- Are hands-free options available for doors and bathrooms?
- Is sanitizer available throughout the office?
New Ipsos data finds 57% of full-time employees think companies should provide hand sanitizer for staff.
- Is health and safety signage posted in the required spots?
- Is there designated one-way traffic areas and signage?

These are just a few issues to consider while navigating our new work world.



Since some retailers remained open during the Covid-19 outbreak, Ipsos was asked to perform Mystery Shops for several during the lockdown to learn if safety measures were being followed by staff and being enforced with customers. In our observation, many lessons can be learned from these retailers' experience of integrating the new health and safety regulations into the workplace. First there needs to be a culture of feeling like your staff's well being is of utmost importance. New Ipsos polling finds that 83% think their company should provide personal protection and implement distancing protocols in the workplace. Second, businesses need to comply with local and state regulations to avoid fines and office closures. This is followed by confidence that workplace health and safety policies are in place and being executed daily. Finally, there needs to be a feeling of continuity that comes from keeping your doors open while employees are safe and productive. Since the Covid-19 outbreak, Ipsos' Workplace Health & Safety Compliance Audits and Mystery Shopping program has been utilized by companies to ensure the health and safety of staff and customers.

As businesses adapt to the realities of the coronavirus world, they need to be proactive in their planning and execution of the numerous mandated safety regulations. The cost of not doing so is too great. And, your employees and clients are counting on you. Incorporating a customized Workplace Health & Safety Compliance Audit will help you foster trust, confidence, security and loyalty in your brand.

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About Ipsos

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Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5,000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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