

Guide to re-opening during the pandemic

Practice 2.0
The State Bar of Arizona's
Practice Management Program



Practice 2.0

The State Bar of Arizona's free
and confidential law practice
management program

www.azbar.org/practice20

602-340-7332

practice_{2.0}

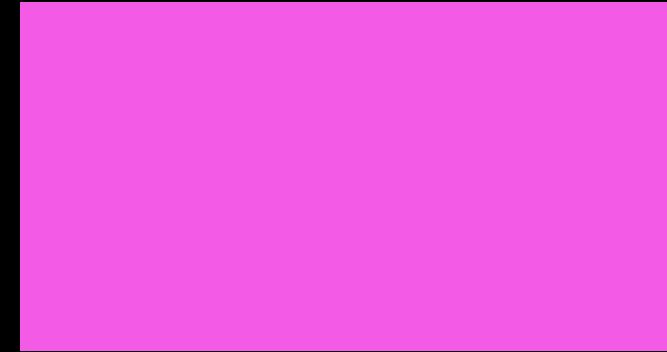


Are you planning to re-open your law office? The decision will certainly be personal to each office and firm, but as you consider doing so, here is some guidance and some issues you should be considering.

- CDC Guidance on re-opening. (May 14, 2020)
- CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers (May 2020)
- Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 (OSHA)

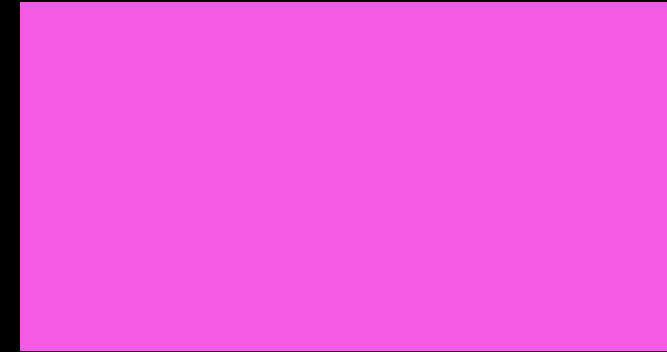
Keep in mind that although stay-at-home orders may have expired, Arizona is still in the throes of the pandemic and that these measures will likely have to remain in place for an extended period of time.

Preliminary considerations



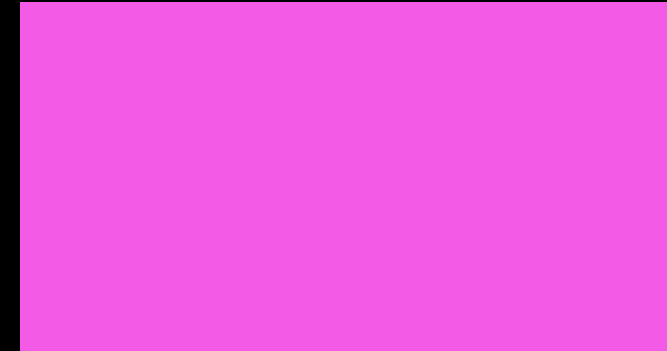
- Are you in a position to ensure the safety of your staff and visitors?
- Can you and your staff continue to work remotely?
 - What are the pros and cons of continuing remote work?
 - Were there challenges in working remotely than may be easily remedied to allow that practice to continue?
 - Are staff being productive and meeting the needs of your office, your clients, etc.?
- Do you have a virtual platform that permits employees to collaborate, keep in touch and not be isolated?

Office and Building



- ❑ Has your building/office had a deep-cleaning since being closed?
- ❑ Investigate the building's air filtration system
 - ❑ Does it create the risk of spreading contagion?
 - ❑ If so, are there solutions you may implement, including but not limited to the installation of plexiglass guards?
 - ❑ Can you increase outside air flow when using air conditioning systems?
 - ❑ Have your vents/ducts been cleaned? After 2+ months of disuse they will be dusty.
- ❑ Do you have, or can you provide, physical barriers to increase safety, such as plexiglass dividers in your reception area, restrooms, etc.?

Preparing Your Employees

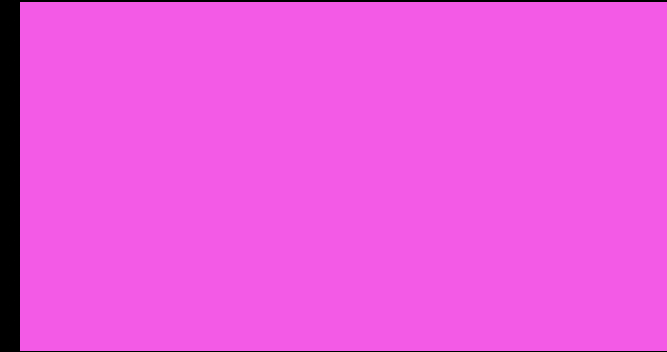


- ❑ What personal protective equipment will you require employees to use?
 - ❑ Will you purchase protective equipment for employees?

- ❑ Ask your employees about their greatest fears and challenges have been with working remotely and also about returning through anonymous survey or open discussion
 - ❑ Be prepared to respond in a supportive and flexible manner
 - ❑ Address issues relating to, for example, daycare being unavailable or limited; concerns about exposing those at high-risk

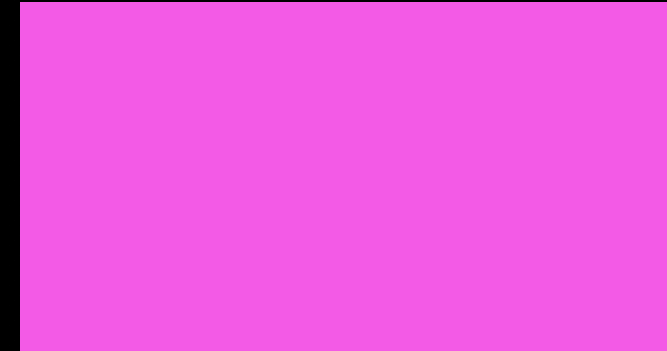
- ❑ Establish health policies and procedures and clearly communicate them to employees
 - ❑ Do you have policies that will permit/encourage sick employees to stay home?
 - ❑ Explore medical leave options and/or FMLA

Controlling Access



- What kind of safety and health screenings will you require for staff and/or visitors?
- Maintain visitor logs and staff attendance sheets to enable contact tracing should that become necessary
- Do you have the ability and supplies to provide visitors with face-coverings and hand sanitizer, or other PPE?
- Do you have a compliance/enforcement policy that is consistent with your firm culture, state and local law, or best practices?
- Install signs explaining requirements, such as “a mask is required for all who enter” and decide on an enforcement strategy
- How will mail and packages be delivered?

Safety and Social Distancing



Create a plan for safety and social distancing

- Continue remote working as much as possible
 - Who should return? Bring back only those who are truly necessary
 - Are you able to provide PPE, or at a minimum, masks?
- How will you be able to social distance within the workplace?
 - Will you be able to rearrange workspaces to provide the recommended 6 feet of distance between employees and, if you plan to allow them, visitors?

- Can you use rotating or staggered shifts?
- Avoid sharing of workspaces, office supplies, technology
- How many people can be in your offices/building at the same time while maintaining safe distancing?
- Will you (continue to) offer virtual meetings for those clients requesting those, and/or for those who decline to wear masks?

- Will you allow visitors to use your public areas, such as waiting rooms or restrooms?
 - Restroom occupancy should be limited to provide for social distancing

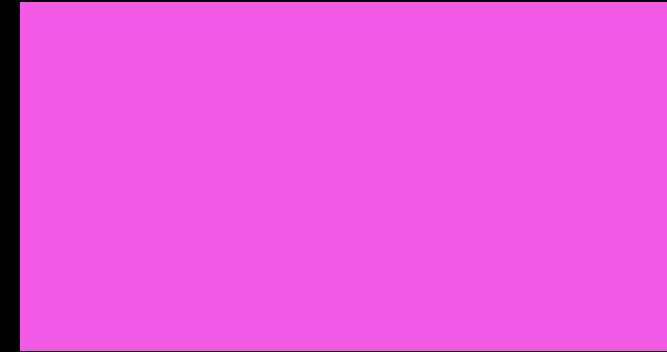
- Can you repurpose shared areas (conference rooms, break rooms) into working spaces to create social distancing?



- ❑ **Public areas**

- ❑ Remove seating to minimize capacity and enable social distancing of 6 feet between people
- ❑ Can you manage traffic flow with one-way traffic patterns?

Cleaning and Sanitation



- ❑ Do you have sufficient sanitation (cleaning) supplies?
If not, you should plan on stocking up prior to reopening.
- ❑ If you are in a shared building, what is the plan for cleaning common areas including lobbies, hallways, restrooms?
 - ❑ Have cleaning protocols consistent with OSHA, WHO and/or the CDC been implemented?
 - ❑ How often will you clean, and who will do it?

- ❑ Reduce touch points.
 - ❑ For example, can you leave doors open or unlocked to minimize door handle use?
 - ❑ Can you use automated, touchless light switches?
 - ❑ Eliminate unnecessary touch points, such as shared equipment including coffee makers, refrigerators, ice machines, phones or computer terminals provided for public use

- ❑ If cleaning staff is used, can employees reduce their presence by carrying out trash to centralized location?

Communication

- ❑ Create a communication plan to clearly communicate the new normal to employees and clients
 - ❑ Consistent message
 - ❑ Consistent messenger with authority
 - ❑ Frequent updates as necessary

- ❑ Communicate expectations for personal precautions
 - ❑ Consistent use of masks while in the building/office
 - ❑ Wiping down surfaces that have been touched
 - ❑ Where will cleaning wipes be located?
 - ❑ Hand washing, 20 seconds
 - ❑ Will you be providing each employee with hand sanitizer, or if not, where will that be located?

- ❑ Be transparent about why people are returning or not returning

This is a new normal. Once you've implemented these steps, revisit your protocols, procedures, processes, etc. regularly to assess their effectiveness and revise as needed.

Have questions?
Call Practice 2.0,
602-340-7332

Practice 2.0
The State Bar of Arizona's
Free and Confidential
Practice Management Program

