

# COVID-19 Post-Crisis: Healthier Employees, Workplaces and Communities

## Employers key to building and sustaining trust during the "next normal"

Relief and excitement are stirring as it appears we are emerging from the worst of the pandemic's grip. Yet, we know the virus will not be eradicated and downstream consequences will continue to emerge, particularly for racially and ethnically diverse communities. The best preparation for the endemic is to optimize lessons learned from the pandemic — and to continue learning and adapting to change.

## Keys to Success in the "Next Normal": Be Informed, Be Prepared, Stay Flexible



See details for implementing keys to success on side 2 ▶

## Building the Bridge to the "Next Normal"

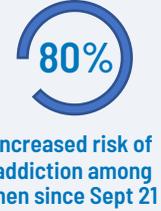
**Immunizations and High-value Preventive Care**

**Employer Readiness Assessment**

**Getting to and Sustaining the Next Normal: A Roadmap for Living with COVID**

## Ongoing Challenges...

### Mental Health



Mental Health Index: U.S. Worker Edition; January 2022

### Long COVID

At least **50%** of COVID-19 survivors face lingering symptoms of varying severity. Most of whom do not have access to specialty treatment facilities and services

JAMA Network; October 2022

### Missed and Delayed Preventive Care

**50%** of Americans had an in-person medical appointment they missed, delayed or cancelled during the pandemic

Prevent Cancer Foundation; February 25, 2022

## Eliminating COVID-19 Not Realistic

*"If you look at the history of infectious diseases, we've only eradicated one infectious disease...and that's smallpox. That's not going to happen with this (COVID-19) virus. Scientists don't know exactly how the pandemic will finally play out."*



**Dr. Anthony Fauci**  
White House Chief Medical Adviser and Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

# Thriving in Uncertain Times

Adapted with permission from the Health Action Alliance [Employer Readiness Assessment](#)

## Employers can serve as trusted advisers to employees and their families by adhering to safety and transparency protocols



### Assess INFORMATION

- Are you using the [CDC's updated COVID-19 Community Levels](#) to track local risk and set safe rules for masking?
- What is your local community vaccination rate? Are you in touch with your local public health department for up-to-date information on community resources and opportunities to collaborate on community health?
- Is your organization participating in state/region/community employer emergency preparedness and response planning groups?
- What is the current vaccination status of employees? Are you offering vaccination incentives?
- Are employees routinely tested for COVID-19? Are you conducting daily temperature checks and health assessments?
- Are you reporting cases/deaths to your public health department?
- Do you know where there are local long COVID centers of excellence/specialty clinics?



### Assess POLICIES

- Do you have an organizational [vaccination requirement](#), including boosters?
- Are you maintaining separate accommodations for exempt (unvaccinated) employees?
- Do you offer paid time off for employees to get themselves and their family members vaccinated?
- Do you offer paid time off so workers can stay home when they feel unwell and when they need to quarantine?
- Are you providing ongoing vaccine/booster education and debunking myths?
- Do you offer a non-retaliation policy and anonymous process for workers to report safety concerns?



### Assess OPERATIONS

- Have you upgraded indoor ventilation?
- Do you supply masks and self-tests for employees?
- Do workspaces allow for social distancing?
- Have you reduced frequent touchpoints with hands-free solutions?
- Are you prepared to offer onsite booster shots if new variants make them necessary?



### Assess SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

- Are you and your health plan regularly communicating about benefits with employees, including *targeted* reminders about preventive care and care for chronic conditions?
- Are you seeking and incorporating employee feedback—including people from disproportionately affected communities—with planning for future health challenges?

- Have you identified and trained employee champions within underserved and vaccine hesitant groups to support safety and transparency protocols?
- Are you supporting employees who choose to continue wearing masks?
- Do you have a policy to address employee concerns about working with unvaccinated coworkers or in unsafe conditions?
- Do you offer support flexibility for employees with new family care responsibilities (e.g., childcare, long COVID patients)?
- Are supervisors and managers trained to check in on employee mental health and wellbeing?
- Does your organization have employee resource groups for diverse populations and unique mental/physical health needs, including long COVID?
- Do employees have access to affordable healthcare and disability benefits through employer-sponsored health insurance? Have you reviewed coverage for long COVID to avoid claim denials?
- Is your health insurance in compliance with the [Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act](#)?
- Do you offer an employee assistance program? Have you assessed its offerings to meet pandemic PTSD and other challenges?



### Assess FLEXIBILITY

- Are you inviting employees to help identify creative and flexible solutions and to take part in safety drills?
- Are employees cross-trained in the event of another COVID-19 outbreak or other emergency?
- Are you prepared to hire temporary employees if your employees become sick or need to quarantine?
- Are you prepared to move part or all of the workforce to remote and/or hybrid models?

### Additional Resources for Employers

- [Advancing Primary Care: A Purchaser Playbook for Action](#)
- [Vaccineinformation.org](#)
- [Makeityourvaccine.com/faqs](#)
- [Saving a City: How Seattle's Corporate Giants Banded Together to Flatten the Curve](#)
- [Confronting the Health Debt: The Impact of COVID-19 on Chronic Disease Prevention and Management](#)
- [Pandemic Will Influence Legal Trends in 2022](#)
- [Health Affairs COVID-19 Resource Center: Bridging the Health Equity Gap](#)
- [The Impact of COVID-19 on Business in 2022](#)

