

Exercise Facilities

The “Tennessee Pledge” is a plan to help Tennesseans get back to work in a safe environment, restore their livelihoods and reboot our state’s economy.



Exercise Facilities

Safeguarding Guidance

These guidelines do not replace or supersede any requirements applicable to your business or licensed employees pursuant to law or regulation. Rather, these guidelines are intended as a supplement to assist with safely reopening and providing services due to COVID-19. These guidelines are subject to change.

In addition to strict adherence to CDC guidelines, the State recommends gyms, fitness/exercise facilities, or substantially similar facilities and activities put into place an assortment of measures to protect consumers and employees, including:

Employee Protection

- **Allow employees to work from home as much as possible**
- **Screen all employees reporting to work for COVID-19 symptoms** with the following questions:
 - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? (Note: This does not apply to medical personnel, first responders, or other individuals who encounter COVID-19 as part of their professional or caregiving duties while wearing appropriate PPE.)
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath or sore throat?
 - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
 - Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
 - Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- **Temperature screening employees:**
 - Employees should take and log temperature before shifts
 - Best practice: employers to take temperatures onsite with a no-touch thermometer each day upon arrival at work
 - Minimum: temperatures can be taken before arriving. Normal temperature should not exceed 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- **Staff should wear face coverings** (not N-95 or medical masks, which should be reserved for healthcare workers) and other personal protection items as recommended by the CDC
- **Provide training on personal protective equipment** based on CDC guidelines
- **Provide a sanitizing station** such as a wash station with soap and/or bottle of hand sanitizer
- **Practice recommended social distancing** to the greatest extent possible—**“Further is safer”**
- **Stagger shifts, breaks and meals**, in compliance with wage and hour laws and regulations, to maintain social distancing. Consider reduced staffing requirements



where possible

- **Prohibit congregating in break rooms or common areas** and limit capacity of such areas to allow for safe social distancing minimum of 6 feet whenever possible
- **Employees should increase hygiene practices**—wash hands more frequently, avoid touching face, practice good respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing
- **All employees should stay home if feeling ill**, report any symptoms of illness to supervisor and require notification of COVID-19 positive case in employee's household. Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC (e.g., due to age or severe underlying medical conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- **Direct any employee who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms** (i.e., answers yes to any of the screening questions or who is running a fever) to leave the premises immediately and seek medical care and/or COVID-19 testing, per Tennessee Department of Health and [CDC guidelines](#). Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employee health information
- **Plan for potential COVID-19 cases**, and work with local health department officials when needed (e.g., monitor and trace COVID-19 cases, deep clean facilities)
- **Covered employers and employees should be aware of the provisions of the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act**, which allows for paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons, such as for self-quarantining or seeking a medical diagnosis for COVID-19 symptoms
- **Post extensive signage on health policies**, including the following documents, in the workplace to help educate building occupants on COVID-19 best practices:
 - [CDC guidance to stop the spread of germs](#)
 - [CDC guidance on COVID-19 symptoms](#)

Consumer Protection

- **Screen customers for illness** upon entry to the gym:
 - Best practice: temperature checks for every customer. Persons with temperatures above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should not be permitted on the premises
 - Minimum: Question customers regarding COVID-19 symptoms
 - Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days? (Note: This does not apply to medical personnel, first responders, or other individuals who encounter COVID-19 as part of their professional or caregiving duties while wearing appropriate PPE.)
 - Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
 - Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
- **Keep doors and windows open** where possible to improve ventilation
- **Post signs encouraging social distancing** (visible to customers)
- **Require customers to wash or sanitize their hands** upon entering and leaving the facility



- **Require customers to clean equipment** they come in contact with using disinfecting wipes before and after each use
- **Encourage customers to use only one piece of equipment at a time** (i.e., no circuits or “super setting”) so that machines are cleaned after use
- **Consider limiting workout length** to avoid unnecessary exposure, decrease congestion, and allow for additional sanitization
- **Recommend that persons more vulnerable or at-risk** for COVID-19 as identified by the [CDC](#)—including those who are over the age of 65 or those who have severe underlying medical conditions—take extra precaution or refrain from use of the facility

Business Process Adaptations

- **Limit facility occupancy** to the number of customers necessary to accommodate social distancing of at least 6 feet between persons at all times
- **Mitigate exposure in the workplace** by implementing social distancing guidelines and modify scheduling
- **Staff to conduct regular (i.e., every 2 hours) disinfecting of high-touch surfaces,** equipment and common areas of the facility using disinfectant cleaning supplies according to [CDC guidelines](#)
- **Locker rooms, showers and lockers may be utilized, but sanitization should be significantly increased** (e.g., at least every two hours for high-touch surfaces like handles, sinks)
- **Implement appropriate protocols for aquatic venues, such as swimming pools, hot tubs and saunas,** in accordance with [CDC Considerations for Public Pools](#) and [ERG Swimming Pool Guidelines](#) which at a minimum should include:
 - **Modify layouts of deck chairs and tables** and limit capacity for the number of persons allowed in an aquatic venue at one time to ensure at least 6 feet of separation between families or small groups of acquaintances. Provide physical reminders for social distancing (e.g., lane lines in pool, non-slip tape on deck, or signs).
 - **Observe social gathering size limits.** Executive orders from the governor and/or local orders in six counties with a locally run county health department (Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, Madison, Shelby, and Sullivan) continue to limit group sizes for participation in social and recreational gatherings and require persons or groups of certain sizes to maintain separation from other persons or groups outside their own group. Venues should be mindful of applicable orders and ensure that their operations facilitate compliance with them.
 - **Implement cleaning and disinfecting practices** for locker rooms and frequently touched surfaces at least daily and more frequently for shared objects such as handrails, deck chairs and tables, water fountains, and pool toys. Consider temporarily removing shared pool toys. Use cleaning projects that are appropriate for aquatic venues



- **Pools should be staffed.** Assign monitoring and cleaning responsibilities to a staff member other than a lifeguard on duty.
 - **Encourage the use of face coverings** when in close proximity with others; however, advise those wearing face coverings to not wear them in the water, as doing so could make it difficult to breathe
 - **Provide hygiene supplies** (soap and paper towels or hand sanitizer)
 - **Post signage** regarding COVID-19 symptoms and request that persons refrain from use if feeling ill
 - **Encourage lap swimming only and limit lane-sharing.** Limit group sizes of aquatic fitness classes, swim lessons, swim practices, or gatherings.
- **Close all basketball courts, racquetball courts, and other places** where formal and informal group or team sports may occur. Refer to [Noncontact Sports Guidelines](#)
 - **Only allow group fitness classes if classes can be completed in accordance with social distancing recommendations** (including but not limited to: less than 50% capacity and with more than 6 feet of distance maintained between participants at all times; no shared equipment during the class; sufficiently adjusted class schedules to allow for deep cleaning between classes; martial arts and other contact activities should be completed without any person-to-person contact)
 - **Adjust equipment layout and close or restrict access to equipment** to maintain at least six feet of distance between equipment
 - **Temporarily close water fountains, common areas, break rooms, check-in counters, where customers or employees may congregate.** Encourage guests to provide their own water
 - **No self-service options** (coffee bars, smoothie stations and other forms of communal food in facilities). For onsite food and beverage services, follow restaurant guidelines issued by Economic Recovery Group ([see full Restaurant guidelines here](#))
 - **Ensure staffing of facilities is sufficient** to enable enhanced sanitization and cleaning measures