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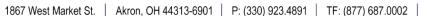330-283-3480

Recommendations for Employers during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Summit County – Summit County Public Health (SCPH) recommends the following action steps for employers to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak conditions on businesses, workers, customers, and the public.

Steps Employers Should Take Immediately

- Ensure that your sick leave policies are up to date, flexible, and non-punitive to allow sick employees to stay home to care for themselves, children, or other family members.
  - Be as flexible as possible within your means
  - Blend sick, vacation, and holiday allowances into one bank of PTO
  - Allow employees to exhaust paid time off (PTO) hours and go into negative balances
  - Advance sick time up to a year of accrual (if, for example, the employee normally accrues 10 days of sick time per year and has used all 10 days, then you may want to consider advancing another 10 days)
  - Suspend the requirement for a doctor's note during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Suspend point attendance policies during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - If no sick or vacation time is available in a small operation, consider providing a special time off allotment for COVID-19
  - Allow people to work extra shifts to offset lost time
  - Allow employees to donate leave to others

- Consider encouraging employees to do a self-assessment each day to check if they have any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, etc.).

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home until they are free of fever or symptoms (without the use of medication) for at least 24 hours. If the employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 by their provider they should follow the most current quarantine guidance outlined by the Ohio Department of Health and Local Health Department.

- Separate employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms from other employees and send them home immediately. Restrict their access to the business until they have recovered.

- Implement social distancing policies such as telework and staggered shifts to enhance distance between employees.

- Consider canceling non-essential business travel per CDC's travel guidance.

- Frequently perform enhanced environmental cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, such as workstations, countertops, railings, door handles, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down by employees before each use.

- Reinforce key messages — stay home when sick, use cough and sneeze etiquette, and practice hand hygiene — to all employees, place posters in areas where they are most likely to be seen. Provide protection supplies such as soap and water, hand sanitizer, tissues, and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

An electronic copy of the recommendations with interactive links to sample policies, infographics and additional information can be accessed at http://scph.org/efhc/resources/ "COVID-19 Quick Start Guide for Employers".