

# VDH GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS MAINTAINING A HEALTHY FACILITY AND PREVENTING RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

The following public health recommendations apply to general business (non-healthcare) settings in Virginia. For guidance on specific settings, please see the [VDH Website](#) and the [CDC website](#).



## Encourage vaccination.

Encourage all employees and patrons to [stay up to date](#) on [recommended vaccines](#). Where feasible, consider paid time off or other incentives to allow employees to attend vaccination appointments. People can find appointments for COVID-19 and flu vaccines at [www.vaccinate.virginia.gov](http://www.vaccinate.virginia.gov).



## Monitor respiratory illness trends.

[CDC's respiratory illness webpage](#) provides a snapshot of current local, state, and national respiratory illness trends for flu, RSV, and COVID-19. Businesses and organizations may consider monitoring this information and reviewing suggested prevention measures. Recommendations are not mandates, and businesses and organizations can decide what steps, if any, they wish to take.



## Promote frequent hand washing.

Promote frequent and thorough hand washing by displaying [handwashing posters](#) in highly visible areas and by providing employees and patrons entering the space with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide hand sanitizer for customers and staff, particularly at entry and exit points. Further hand hygiene guidance can be found on the [VDH website](#).



## Practice routine cleaning (and disinfect if needed).

Follow [VDH guidance](#) for cleaning and disinfecting the facility or space. Surfaces frequently touched by multiple people, such as door handles, desks, phones, light switches, and faucets, should be cleaned at least once per day. Consider cleaning more often or using an [EPA-Registered Disinfectant](#) to disinfect (in addition to cleaning) in high traffic areas, when indoor [ventilation](#) is poor, when people are not regularly washing hands, or if the space is used by people at [increased risk of severe illness](#) from a respiratory illness. In those situations, disinfecting wipes could be used at least once per day. If patrons wish to wipe down surfaces more often, wipes should be made available to them. If there has been a sick person or someone who tested positive for a respiratory illness in the facility within the last 24 hours, high-touch areas should be disinfected, in addition to cleaning the space. Ensure cleaning staff are trained on the proper use of cleaning and disinfecting products available in the facility. VDH and CDC do not recommend foggers for disinfection, since there is insufficient evidence to support their use in businesses, their potential benefits do not outweigh potential harms, and conventional cleaning and disinfection methods are safer and proven to be effective.



## Encourage employees to self-monitor and to stay home when sick.

Employees should be instructed to self-monitor for any signs or symptoms of respiratory illness. A list of respiratory illness symptoms is provided on the [VDH website](#). If an employee is sick, they should stay home and away from others until they meet the [return criteria](#).

Develop or adopt flexible sick leave policies to ensure that sick employees do not report to work if they have symptoms or a respiratory illness.



## Incorporate ventilation as a mitigation strategy.

Proper ventilation practices and interventions can greatly reduce the airborne concentrations of the viruses that cause respiratory illness inside a building. See [VDH Ventilation Best Practices](#) and [CDC guidance](#) for more information on using ventilation as a strategy to help reduce transmission in buildings.