

REOPENING PUBLIC & PROFESSIONAL SPACES



Image by Chloe Evans

As lockdown restrictions are being lifted, safe return to public and professional spaces will require redesigning and rethinking spaces, interactions and systems.

ABOUT THE PLAYBOOK

Playbook for Pandemic Response, an initiative led by Final Mile, is a real time documentation of strategies and solutions impacting behavioral outcomes critical to pandemic response that can immediately be used by a variety of stakeholders. A practitioner toolkit is

built weekly on a critical behavior theme and compiled into the comprehensive playbook. Elaboration and additional resources / references on the contents of this toolkit are available on the [Pandemic Playbook website](#). Help us build the playbook by submitting ideas [here](#).

Note: Click on the corresponding titles to read detailed posts

WORKPLACES / WHERE REMOTE WORK IS NOT POSSIBLE

1. Use structural or technological solutions to limit individual discretion in high risk contexts, e.g. physical barriers between employees or employees & customers, spaced out desks, etc.
2. Use administrative measures such as staggered work hours, alternating cycles of work and quarantine and liberal sick leave policies.
3. A sense of collective responsibility and accountability should be created for ensuring safety at the workplace.
4. Employees should be consulted about the barriers they anticipate in adopting safety actions.
5. Provide strategically placed and timed reminders and cues for actions, such as appropriately placed sanitizers, trash receptacles, etc.
6. Employees consistently complying should be recognized and rewarded, while sanctions for failure to comply should be mild and gradually escalated.
7. Communicate policies promptly, clearly and in a balanced manner.
8. Ensure transparency and participation in decision making about future of the organization.
9. Develop a zero-tolerance policy towards stigma attached to COVID-19.
10. Develop and implement mental health support and services.

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL SPACES / PARKS, BEACHES, TOURIST SITES

1. Provide visual cues for social distancing such as markers for individuals to occupy and familiar visual heuristics for estimating 2 m distance e.g. length of a bicycle
2. Remove benches from public spaces as these encourage people to sit in close proximity
3. Create physical demarcations to divide the space for use while maintaining social distancing
4. Limit number of people in public spaces at a time, require pre-booking where possible and temperature screen at entrance
5. Instead of only fines and punishments, positively reinforce the socially, culturally and morally desirable actions in public spaces

SCHOOLS

1. Design for social distancing such as staggered attendance and entry, directional corridors, spaced-out sitting and physical barriers.
2. Improve adoption of hygiene routines by emphasizing contexts in which these behaviors need to be undertaken.
3. Positive reinforcement can increase the stickiness of new behaviors. Signal the social desirability of following hygiene and safety behaviors.
4. Students can be engaged in cleaning protocols to a degree where they own and manage their space within classrooms.
5. Provide flexibility in exam schedules, assignment deadlines, and learning pace.
6. Provide visual cues for physical distance, direction markers, safety symbols or badges, indicators of school level health.
7. The post-COVID school must resemble the one which students had left before the shutdown. Familiarity can help in coping.

SHOPS & RETAIL OUTLETS

1. Put plexiglass barriers at registers separating the cashiers from the customers.
2. Design one-way aisles with signage on the floor to designate direction of movement.
3. Implement policy of masks required at entrance for customers – Employees required to wear masks.
4. Limit number of shoppers in store at one time – ‘one in when one out’.
5. Design for spaced out checkout lines with visual markers on the floor/ground.
6. Provide dedicated hours for the elderly, immunocompromised and other vulnerable customers
7. Allow one family member to shop at a time.

SHARED ARTISTIC EXPERIENCES / THEATRES, CINEMA, CONCERTS

1. Performances can be live streamed online while maintaining safety practices for performers
2. Outdoor drive-in performances can be organized, where audiences come in their cars, park them in designated spaces and view the performance on stage
3. Develop open-sourced performances such as scripts that can be performed by individual households
4. Limited audiences for indoor performances can be allowed with social distancing wherein household members sit together but are distanced from others.

DESIGN EXAMPLES

01



London-based designer Paul Cockledge has designed a blanket that provides a visual cue to understand what two meters or six feet means (as shown in the image).

02



In addition to physically spaced benches, benches have been retrofitted with plexiglass/plastic dividers to arrest any kind of contamination.

03



Schools have created directionally marked corridors to prevent crowding and close face to face encounters. Some schools have adopted uni-directional corridors, and some have created markings and portioning to help communicate the maneuvering rules.

04



Clear and actionable instructions aid in customers following rules in stores. Signs, visual cues and prompts such as the above poster assist in maintaining safe physical distancing.