



These workplace safety standards for Fitness Centers and Health Clubs, as defined below, are posted in advance of the Governor’s initiation of Phase 3 to allow Fitness Centers and Health Clubs time to prepare to operate in compliance with these mandatory health and safety standards. Fitness Centers and Health Clubs may not provide any service, unless previously allowed as part of Phase 2, until specifically authorized to do so in Phase 3 of the Commonwealth’s Workplace Re-Opening Plan. The Governor will initiate Phase 3 of the Re-Opening Plan, which will commence on July 6, by formal Executive Order following a careful review of public health data.

“Fitness Centers and Health Clubs” are defined as any fitness facility that provides access to and/or instruction of personal fitness training, including but not limited to fitness activities such as:

- a. Weight and resistance training
- b. Cross training
- c. Yoga
- d. Martial arts
- e. Spin classes
- f. Boot camp training

Indoor and outdoor athletic facilities, such as those for gymnastics, tennis, and swimming (whether a standalone facility or part of a Fitness Center or Health Club) must follow the Youth and Adult Sports guidance and the Pools guidance, available on the [EEA Reopening Site](#).

While these standards permit the operation of both indoor and outdoor fitness facilities, Fitness Centers and Health Clubs are strongly encouraged to offer outdoor classes / activities to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

MANDATORY SAFETY STANDARDS



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Each facility must monitor visitor entries and exits, ensure social distancing, and limit occupancy at all times to:

- 40% of the facility’s maximum permitted occupancy as documented in its occupancy permit on record with the municipal building department or other municipal record holder
- Facilities for which no permitted occupancy limitation is on record may allow 8 persons per 1,000 square feet of accessible indoor or outdoor space
- In any case, no enclosed space within the facility may exceed occupancy of 8 persons per 1,000 square feet
- All occupancy counts and calculations shall include visitors, staff, and other workers

Arrange all equipment (weights, machines, treadmills, bikes, etc.) so exercise areas are spaced out at least 14 feet apart. Spacing of machines may be adjusted to at least 6 feet apart if barriers are installed

If spacing of equipment is not possible, equipment should be blocked off (e.g., every other machine) to maintain 14 feet distancing

Install visual markers (boundaries, walkways, signage, etc.) to encourage customers to remain at least 6 feet apart while moving throughout the space

Establish directional pathways to manage visitor flow for foot traffic, to minimize contact (e.g., one-way entrance and exit to rooms, one-way pathways). Post clearly visible signage regarding these policies

Stagger lunch and break times for workers, regulate the maximum number of people in one place and ensure at least 6 feet of physical distancing between workers

Close or reconfigure common spaces and high-density areas of facilities where workers are likely to congregate (e.g., break rooms and eating areas) to allow 6 feet of physical distancing

Close or reconfigure other common spaces where customers are likely to congregate or where social distancing is not possible, such as lobbies and waiting areas

Require face coverings for all workers and visitors, except where unsafe due to medical condition or disability

If customers cannot wear a face covering during strenuous fitness activities, physical distancing must be at least 14 feet. If customers are wearing face coverings during fitness activities, physical distancing must be at least 6 feet

Install physical partitions in areas where physical distancing is not possible, such as service counters

In group fitness classes, 14 feet of physical distancing must be maintained between attendees at all times. If physical barriers are installed between group fitness equipment, 6 feet of physical distancing should be maintained

Recommended Best Practices

Consider installing plastic barriers between equipment where possible. Barriers must extend high enough to effectively block respiration from someone using the equipment. If barriers are installed, they must be cleaned regularly

Consider establishing “workout zones” to encourage spacing of customers using free weights, dumbbells, etc.

Contactless payment and sign-in methods are encouraged



MANDATORY SAFETY STANDARDS



HYGIENE PROTOCOLS

Ensure access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water, and allow enough break time for workers to wash hands frequently; alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used as an alternative

Distribute hand sanitizer and disposable wipes abundantly throughout the space for workers and customers to disinfect their hands and equipment before and after use

Disposable wipes should be placed next to each piece of large equipment (such as treadmills, bikes, rowing machines) and next to each area containing smaller equipment (such as free weights)

Require trainers to wash hands before and after each training session and sanitize frequently during each session

All equipment must be sanitized between uses. No equipment should be used by another customer or returned to the storage rack / container without being sanitized

Encourage customers to use one piece of equipment at a time (e.g., limit circuit training or “super sets” with multiple pieces of equipment) in order to facilitate required sanitizing. Facilities must provide sanitization supplies at each piece of equipment in order for customers to clean in between each use

If sanitation (or the monitoring thereof by employees) of any piece of equipment is not possible or practical, this equipment should be closed off

Encourage customers to use their own personal exercise equipment (such as spin shoes, jump ropes, yoga mats, etc.) when possible. If shared items are used, they must be sanitized in between each use

Post visible signage throughout the site to remind workers and customers of hygiene and safety protocols

Allow water fountains to be used as refill stations only, provided that social distancing can be maintained. Customers and workers should bring their own water bottles or purchase from the business



STAFFING & OPERATIONS

Encourage outdoor exercise, classes, sessions, etc. where possible, so long as appropriate physical distancing is maintained at all times and any equipment used is sanitized after each use

Personal trainers should maintain six feet of distance from clients to the extent possible and should minimize any prolonged close contact. Personal trainers must wear face coverings. Any equipment used during the personal training session must be sanitized after each use, or at the end of the session if the client was the only person who used the equipment during the session

Provide training to workers on up-to-date safety information and precautions including hygiene and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission, including:

- Social distancing, hand-washing, proper use of face coverings
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and symptom checks
- Reinforcing that staff should not come to work if sick
- When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe
- Which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting and suffering from a severe case of the virus

Adjust workplace hours and shifts (working teams with different schedules or staggered arrival / departure) to minimize contact across workers and reduce congestion

Require customers to sign up for classes in advance

Facilities must screen workers at each shift by ensuring the following:

- Worker is not experiencing any symptoms such as fever (100.0 and above) or chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, fatigue, headache, muscle/body aches, runny nose/congestion, new loss of taste or smell, or nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Worker has not had “close contact” with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. “Close contact” means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic
- Worker has not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official
- Workers who fail to meet the above criteria must be sent home

Maintain a log of workers and customers to support potential contact tracing (name, date, time, contact information)

Close or limit waiting areas and, for class-based activities with distinct session times, ask customers to wait outside or in cars until 10 minutes prior to their class

Schedule 30-minute windows between classes to allow for thorough cleaning and appropriate ventilation of the fitness room, and to discourage congestion



MANDATORY SAFETY STANDARDS



STAFFING & OPERATIONS

Clearly designate staff responsible for sanitizing, cleaning, and supervision during each shift

Workers must stay home if feeling ill

If the employer is notified of a positive case at the workplace, the employer shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) in the city or town where the workplace is located and assist the LBOH as reasonably requested to advise likely contacts to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other workers may be recommended consistent with CDC or DPH guidance and / or at the request of the LBOH

Post notice to workers and visitors of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in the Commonwealth's [Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplace](#)

Close or mark lockers to enforce 6 feet social distancing, especially in locker rooms. Lockers should be sanitized after each use. Gyms should provide sanitizing wipes near the lockers or in the locker room

Close all communal and individually partitioned showers. Showers that accompany pools may follow guidance for pools located on the [Reopening Website](#)

Require that towels be stored in clearly labeled (clean vs. soiled) sanitary containers. Appropriate temperatures should be used when washing and drying towels. Employees must wear proper protective equipment (gloves and face covering) while handling towels. Towels should not be shaken out

Operations of related services may be allowed to open and must follow sector-specific safety protocols for each setting. Some examples include:

- In-facility child-care: Must follow child-care guidance
- Bars/food services: Must follow restaurant guidance
- Pools: Must follow pool guidance
- Athletic facilities (e.g., tennis courts): Must follow adult and youth sports guidance
- Massage: Must follow close contact personal services guidance
- Saunas, hot-tubs, and steam rooms: May not open before Phase 4

Fans should not be used indoors and should only be used for outdoor classes if directed away from other customers

For indoor and outdoor sports guidance, please refer to the [EEA Reopening Site](#)

Recommended Best Practices

Consider creating "shifts" for customers engaging in unstructured exercise (i.e., open weight rooms) by using a reservation system in order to enforce occupancy limits

Workers who are particularly high risk to COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home

Encourage workers to self-identify symptoms or any close contact to a known or suspected COVID-19 case to the employer

Encourage workers who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to the workplace employer for purposes of cleaning / disinfecting and contact tracing

Consider setting aside specific hours of operation exclusively for vulnerable populations

Limit employees to discrete work zones to minimize overlap where possible



CLEANING & DISINFECTING

Clean commonly touched surfaces in restrooms (e.g., toilet seats, doorknobs, stall handles, sinks, paper towel dispensers, soap dispensers) frequently and in accordance with CDC guidelines

Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection of site (at least daily, and more frequently if feasible)

Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning

Conduct frequent disinfecting of heavily transited areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, handrails, equipment, etc.)

In the event of a positive case of a worker, customer or vendor shut down site and wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace in accordance with current CDC guidance

Disinfect all fitness equipment or mutually-touched objects (e.g., spin shoes, jump ropes, dumbbells, etc.) immediately after each use. At no point should customers come in contact with objects that others have touched without first being disinfected according to CDC guidelines

Recommended Best Practices

Open windows and doors to increase airflow where possible