

Interim Guidelines for Re-opening Public Swimming Pools starting Monday May 18th

These guidelines are intended for application in non-health care related places of employment. The foundation guidelines for businesses and employers remains the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)'s Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#).

General Guidelines that Apply to All

Each employer is responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace. All organizations have to determine how best to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace as well as in their community. In order to re-open and successfully remain open for business, everyone individually and collectively must actively participate in the core recommendations:

1. Self-isolation – if you are sick, stay home,
2. Practice social distancing of at least six feet distance to the greatest extent possible,
3. Wash hands frequently (20 seconds with soap and water or use of a sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol),
4. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects (e.g., keyboards, phones) and surfaces (e.g., handrails, workstations, sinks) or remove unnecessary frequently touched surfaces (e.g., trash can lids),
5. Avoid touching of eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands,
6. Strongly consider wearing a cloth face covering when in public and not in the pool (do not use on children under two years old, people with difficulty breathing, or people who cannot remove the mask themselves)
7. Cover mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues away immediately after use,
8. Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment when possible, or disinfect them before and after use,
9. Minimize the use of soft surfaces like cloth covered chairs or area rugs that are more difficult to clean or disinfect.

Guidelines Specifically for Public Swimming Pools

According to the CDC, the virus that causes COVID-19 cannot be spread to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, spas, or water play areas. However, the opportunity for transmitting the virus does exist in surrounding areas. In addition to the above safe-practices, swimming pools should comply with the following additional guidelines to further minimize the potential for transmission and spread of COVID-19 in and around pools:

Based on Information Available as of May 8, 2020

1. Facilities should only allow 20% of normal occupancy or 5 people (staff and visitors) per 1000 square feet of pool and deck area, whichever is less.
2. Person-to-person interaction and activities between members of separate households should be limited and social distancing of six feet between them should be practiced.
3. Commonly used surfaces such as bathrooms, doors, handrails, ladders, gates, lawn chairs, drinking water fountains, picnic tables, etc. should be cleaned and disinfected between each use by a different person, or at a minimum, once a day.
4. Hand sanitizer should be provided for use by all staff and visitors.
5. Signs and/or examples of six foot areas related to social distancing should be posted.
6. Full compliance with SC Public Swimming Pool Regulation 61-51 is always required.
7. Remove from service or regularly disinfect sharable equipment (for example, kick boards, floats, etc.)
8. Consider lane reservations to allow family groups to use a lane or specific area of a pool.
9. Consider a phased approach to opening that brings back lane swimming and limited number participant classes before opening for general swimming.
10. Life guards should continue to follow universal precautions when rendering first aid of any type to patrons.
11. Follow [CDC guidelines](#) regarding cleaning and disinfecting.

While these guidelines are voluntary, it is in everyone's best interest to diligently follow them as we move to re-open our economy and keep it open.