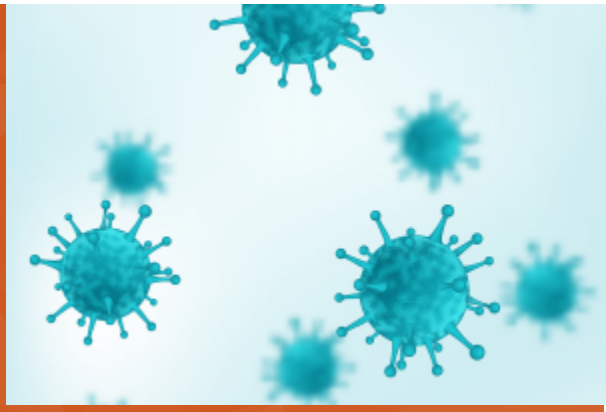
# COVID-19 Alert: Phased Economic Re-Opening Plan Terminated

## Massachusetts Employers Prepare to Re-Open Their Workplaces

By:Matthew L. Mitchell
May 27, 2021



## Governor Baker Rescinds Covid-19 Regulations and Restrictions

On May 17, 2021, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker announced that the Commonwealth's COVID-19 Phased Economic Re-Opening Plan will terminate on May 29, 2021. The City of Boston, and most municipalities around the Commonwealth, have indicated their intent to align with the Governor's announcement, and have taken steps to rescind the various municipal COVID-19 regulations and restrictions. As such, for Massachusetts employers, this means, effective May 29, 2021:

- **Almost all worksites are permitted to re-open without limitations.** With the exception of public transportation, education, health care, and childcare industries, all COVID-19 safety protocols that apply to employers, including workplace capacity and social distancing restrictions that have been in place since March 2020, are rescinded, and employers may return to pre-pandemic business operation activities.
- **Employee facial covering mandates are rescinded.** Current face covering mandates that require, among other requirements, that employees wear face coverings in common-area, workplace settings are rescinded, except in public transportation, education, health care, and childcare settings. (A list of industries that remain subject to facial covering mandates is here.)

## Employers may maintain COVID-19 restrictions

The Governor's announcement emphasizes that employers must continue to adhere to practices that are consistent with their fundamental obligation to provide a safe work environment for their employees:

- **Employers are permitted to voluntarily maintain COVID-related restrictions, such as face coverings and social distancing.** Employees, customers, and patrons are encouraged to abide by any such restriction.
- **Employers are encouraged to adhere to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") Cleaning & Hygiene Protocols.**
- **Consistent with Massachusetts Department of Health orders, employers are encouraged to adhere to CDC Facial Covering Guidelines.** These Guidelines recommend, but do not require, that employees who are not fully vaccinated continue to wear facial coverings and adhere to six-foot social distancing protocols.

Accordingly, employers are cautioned to remain vigilant as we enter this new pandemic response

stage.

## Questions about how your business should address re-opening post COVID-19 restrictions?

For most employers, the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions present both opportunities and challenges. Morse is focused on assisting our clients through these unprecedented times. Please contact Matthew Mitchell should you have questions concerning this subject, or any other COVID-19 response matters.

Go to our full COVID-19 Resource Collection.