

Massachusetts Workplace COVID Standards

Summary of Social Distancing and Impermeable Barriers

Some of the Massachusetts COVID workplace safety standards allow the use of impermeable barriers when distancing is not feasible. This document summarizes standards that mention use of barriers.

Barriers may not obstruct fire exits, exit signs, or fire sprinklers. Fabric barriers such as curtains are not allowed due to fire hazard. Do not block HVAC air vents. Installing a barrier flush with the ceiling will interfere with HVAC ventilation and fire sprinklers. Clean and disinfect barriers regularly.

Setting	Minimum distancing required	Impermeable Barrier
Restaurants	6 feet between tables	Barriers may be installed between tables when tables cannot be distanced more than 6 feet. Patrons must wear face coverings except when seated to eat. Barriers must be 6 ft in height, measured from the floor. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-restaurants When live entertainment provided in restaurant (outdoor only as of 7/6/2020), singing performers must be 25 feet away from audience and 10 feet away from other performers. An impermeable barrier <u>does not</u> reduce this distance rule. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-theaters-and-performance-venues
Performance Venue	25 feet distance is required for singers, woodwind and brass instruments. The standard 6 feet distance is <u>not</u> adequate for singers and breath instruments.	Indoor performances are not permitted in Phase 3 Step 1 (July 6, 2020). Singing, woodwinds and brass are discouraged in outdoor performances. Singing performers must be <u>25 feet</u> away from first row of audience <u>and 10 feet</u> away from other performers. All other performers must be at least 6 feet away from each other, including theater scenes. Face covering encouraged for performers when possible. An impermeable barrier could be installed at the stage, but it <u>does not reduce</u> the distance rule between singing performers and audience. <u>Barriers cannot be installed in the audience areas</u>, due to fire code. Such barriers in audience areas do not reduce the 6 feet distance rule between audience groups. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-theaters-and-performance-venues

Setting	Minimum distancing	Impermeable Barrier
Fitness Center and Health Club	14 feet distance and face covering are required for persons exercising. The standard 6 feet distance is <u>not</u> adequate for exercise. Instructors and trainers must be at least 6 feet away with face covering.	Arrange all equipment (weights, machines, treadmills, bikes, etc.) so exercise areas are spaced out <u>at least 14 feet apart</u>. Face coverings can only be removed if person exercising is 14 feet or more away from others. It is expected in Fitness Centers that masks are worn by visitors and employees at all times. Spacing of machines may be adjusted to at least 6 feet apart if barriers are installed. Face coverings <u>are still required</u> when barriers separate machines less than 14 feet. In group fitness classes, 14 feet of physical distancing must be maintained between attendees at all times. Spacing can be reduced to 6 feet if physical barriers are installed <u>and</u> face coverings are worn. Face covering can only be removed when participants are more than 14 feet apart, even if there is a barrier. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-fitness-centers-and-health-clubs
Hair Salon	6 feet between stations	Barriers may be installed between stations when stylist chairs cannot be distanced more than 6 feet apart. Clients and stylists must wear face coverings during the entire service. Face covering may be removed for beard trimming. Face coverings cannot be removed when barriers installed between chairs. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-close-contact-personal-services
Close Contact Personal Services	6 feet between stations and at checkout	When possible, install barrier between client and worker when closer than 6 feet. Client and worker must wear face coverings, even if there is a barrier. Client may temporarily remove mask when service requires access to that portion of the face and then replace mask immediately. Strongly recommended that worker wears <u>both</u> mask and face shield when working in close proximity to client's face (e.g. hair waxing, facials). https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-close-contact-personal-services
Retail	6 feet between customers waiting on line; 6 feet between employees and other persons	Barrier required when feasible between cashier and customer service locations to protect employees. Customers and workers must wear face coverings at all times inside the store. Face coverings cannot be removed even when there is a barrier installed. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-retail-businesses
Office and Manufacturing	6 feet between work stations	First default is to telework when feasible. Second choice is to move workstations or stagger occupancy so that workers are more than 6 feet distance. When these are not feasible due to operational needs, install barriers between workstations. Barrier must be 6 feet high. Workers permitted to remove face covering when more than 6 feet away from others. https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-office-spaces and https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safety-standards-and-checklist-manufacturing