



HEALTHY AT WORK FRAMEWORK

Preliminary Strategies for a Return to Architectural Office Environments

April 30, 2020

Introduction

AIA Kentucky continues to support the measures implemented by the current administration to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As licensed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, the practice of architecture qualifies as an essential professional service and our firm members across the Commonwealth have cooperated with recommendations to operate remotely since mid-March. Now, as health benchmarks are met and the state begins to evaluate a gradual reopening of various businesses, our professionals remain committed to the hierarchy of controls required for ongoing mitigation of virus transmission.

Our members have been surveyed and, while each business will face unique considerations and circumstances, the majority plan to operate under a hybrid Healthy at Home/Safe at Work plan for the foreseeable future. The strategies for a gradual return to the office environment are noted in the online submission form and are also summarized below.

Periodic jobsite visits will also be required when performing the contractual duties of construction observation and administration. These services are necessary to ensure that projects continue to meet both client expectations and building codes requirements. Therefore, we will recommend that individuals conducting construction observation do so in conformance with the attached guidelines from the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Required/Authorized Personnel

Where feasible, employees will be encouraged to continue teleworking for the foreseeable future. This will be especially true for those in vulnerable populations with high-risk conditions. Special accommodations will be made for these types of personnel and, in most cases, these individuals will be discouraged from physically returning to the office until a later phase of recovery.

Employees, such as clerical and administrative staff and others who cannot work remotely, will be properly distanced within the office space. If proper distancing cannot be achieved, shifts will be designed to permit some employees to work on-site while others work at home, then switch as needed or desired.

Workplace Entrance

Protocol will be communicated for anyone not feeling well, either with a fever or other unusual symptoms, to remain at home.

Those entering offices will conduct either temperature screenings or a supplemental evaluation checklist. Reviewing a checklist of standard questions to screen for exposure and/or symptoms is considered an acceptable alternative where temperature monitoring devices are unavailable – particularly given the unreliability of temperature checks in preventing the asymptomatic spread of the virus. Temperature screening can create a false sense of security, and can be a distraction from more impactful activities, such as ensuring masks are worn and creating workflows that honor social distancing standards.



Workplace Operations

Cleaning

Enhanced and robust cleaning protocols will be implemented to the extent that is possible for each business.

Frequent hand washing with warm water and soap (or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) will be practiced by all employees, particularly after coming into contact with any materials, surfaces, packages, etc.

Containing

Workstations will be a minimum of 6 feet apart and masks, facial coverings, and gloves will be recommended and encouraged, following the recommended health and safety guidance of the WHO and CDC.

Access to common areas such as breakrooms, conference rooms and workrooms will be restricted to facilitate proper distancing and restrict gathering in groups larger than 10.

Staff will conduct meetings with business partners, clients and stakeholders through virtual communication whenever possible. Any in-person meetings requiring building access must be by-appointment only and cleared in advance. These meetings will require six foot spacing and be limited to the number of participants the room can accommodate to comply with spacing requirements. Employees will also avoid unnecessary travel whenever possible and will adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following essential travel.

Crisis Protocols

Each business will establish organizational policies to guide what happens if a person at the workplace is found to be COVID-19 positive, such as quarantining, enhanced cleaning and sanitization, temporary office closure, contact tracing, etc.

Conclusion – A New Normal

Our business leaders understand there will be no return to “normal”, as we knew it pre-COVID-19, in the near future. Instead, as public health benchmarks are met, operations in each industry sector should be gradually expanded over an extended period of time. In the short term, as Healthy at Home strategies continue to flatten the curve, and Healthy at Work strategies show that businesses can reopen carefully and with smart actions to protect employee and community safety, a new normal will emerge across all sectors. AIA Kentucky firms are prepared to embrace and adhere to this new normal, which will be essential to the safe and successful reopening of our economy.



2020 AIA Kentucky Member Firms

713 Architects, PLLC	Prospect	KY
Albert + Associates Architecture	Lexington	KY
alt32 + Cox Architecture	Lexington	KY
Architect Rick Kremer FAIA	Louisville	KY
Architectural Artisans	Louisville	KY
Architectural Investments	Louisville	KY
Archstyle, Inc.	Louisville	KY
Arrasmith, Judd, Rapp, Chovan, Inc.	Louisville	KY
AXIOM Architecture, PLLC	Owensboro	KY
Ayoroa/Simmons	Lexington	KY
Barrett Architectural Design LLC	Richmond	KY
Batson & Associates	Covington	KY
Bristol Group	Lexington	KY
Burgess & Niple, Inc.	Cincinnati	OH
C. L. Anderson Architecture, LLC	Louisville	KY
CBR Architects PLLC	Louisville	KY
Champlin Architecture	Crestview Hills	KY
Civic Consultants Inc.	Louisville	KY
Clotfelter Samokar PSC	Lexington	KY
Clyde Reynolds Carpenter, FAIA, Architect	Lexington	KY
CMW, Inc.	Lexington	KY
CS Design, Inc.	Lexington	KY
David C. Hennen, Architect	Lebanon	KY
De Leon & Primmer Architecture Workshop, PLLC	Louisville	KY
Del Prince Designs, LLC	Louisville	KY
Design +, Inc.	Louisville	KY
Donhoff Kargl Nall Architects	Louisville	KY
Edward Eiche Architect	Louisville	KY
Encompass Develop Design & Construct	Lagrange	KY
EOP Architects	Lexington	KY
Fayette County Public Schools	Louisville	KY
Forza Architecture, Inc.	Louisville	KY
Foxworth Architecture PLLC	Louisville	KY
Full Circle Architecture	Crestwood	KY
G. Scott & Associates Architects, PLC	Frankfort	KY
George W. Abert, Architecture Firm	Paducah	KY
Graves Architects and Planners	Lexington	KY
Gray Architects and Engineers, P.S.C.	Lexington	KY
Gregory Luhan, Architect	Lexington	KY
GRW	Lexington	KY
Guyon Architects Inc.	Lexington	KY
H&H Design-Build	Louisville	KY



Hermitage Farm	Goshen	KY
Hub & Weber Architects	Covington	KY
Hubbard Architecture P.S.C.	Mount Sterling	KY
Hubbuch & Company	Louisville	KY
integrity / Architecture, PLLC	Lexington	KY
J Martinolich Architect	Lexington	KY
James C. Burris Architects	Lexington	KY
Jerry Herndon Architect	Richmond	KY
Joseph & Joseph Architects	Louisville	KY
JRA Architects	Lexington	KY
K. Norman Berry Associates	Louisville	KY
Kersey and Kersey Architects	Louisville	KY
Kesler Simpson Architects, LLC	Lexington	KY
Laughlin Millea Hillman Architecture LLC	Louisville	KY
LS Design Group	Richmond	KY
Luckett & Associates	Louisville	KY
Luckett & Farley Architects	Louisville	KY
Mary Herd Jackson, Architect	Louisville	KY
Mason & Hanger	Lexington	KY
McCoy Architects, LLC	Lexington	KY
McCulloch Associates Architects	Louisville	KY
Mekus Tanager	Georgetown	KY
Michael Koch and Associates Architects	Louisville	KY
Michell Allen Ritz Architects	New Albany	IN
Morris Workshop Architects PLLC	Lexington	KY
Murphy Group Architects, PLLC	Lexington	KY
Murray State University	Benton	KY
nectō architecture	Lexington	KY
NELCO	Fort Mitchell	KY
Omni Architects	Lexington	KY
Oracle Design Group, Inc.	Louisville	KY
Patrick D. Murphy Company	Louisville	KY
PCA Architecture, PSC	Fort Wright	KY
Peck Flannery Gream Warren, Inc.	Paducah	KY
Pfeiffer Architecture, LLC	Lakeside Park	KY
Pickett Passafiume Architects (PPA)	Louisville	KY
Pohl Rosa Pohl, PLC	Lexington	KY
Potter & Associates Architects PLLC	Louisville	KY
Potts Architects, PLLC	Lexington	KY
Prodigy Construction Corporation, Inc.	Louisville	KY
Putney Architecture	Louisville	KY
RBS Design Group, PSC, Architecture	Owensboro	KY
RCS + Associates	Floyds Knobs	IN
REB Architects, PLLC	Nicholasville	KY



AIA
Kentucky

Reese Reinhold Designs	Lexington	KY
Resonance Architecture PLC	Louisville	KY
RicciGreene Associates / CGL RicciGreene	Lexington	KY
Robbins Architecture	Louisville	KY
Robert E. Hayes & Associates, PLLC	Fort Mitchell	KY
Rock Paper Hammer	Louisville	KY
RossTarrant Architects, Inc.	Lexington	KY
SBR Homes	Lexington	KY
Sheridan L. Sims, AIA	Lexington	KY
Sherman Carter Barnhart Architects	Lexington	KY
Skinner Design Associates	Henderson	KY
Spahr Development, PLLC	Dry Ridge	KY
Spangler Williamson Architecture & Engineering	Frankfort	KY
SPURR ARCHITECTURE, PLLC	Hopkinsville	KY
Stengel Hill Architecture	Louisville	KY
Stephen Bryce Liebert, AIA	Louisville	KY
Stewart Architecture	Lexington	KY
Studio A Architecture	Louisville	KY
Studio Kremer Architects Inc.	Louisville	KY
Tate Hill Jacobs: Architects	Lexington	KY
Three Dot Design	Prospect	KY
Tony Kleyer, Architect	Simpsonville	KY
Urban I, LLC	Louisville	KY
Urban Fabric, PLLC	Murray	KY
VanHook Architectural Services	Stanford	KY
VBNA Inc.	Louisville	KY
Weber Group Inc.	Sellersburg	IN
White Pollard Architects	Lexington	KY
WorK Architecture + Design	Louisville	KY

The information contained in this document is meant to serve as a helpful reference but should not be interpreted as legal or other professional advice. Though the information may be updated periodically, due to the rapidly changing legal and regulatory landscape related to the COVID-19 outbreak, it may at any time be out of date, and the AIA does not guarantee the accuracy of the information. Where appropriate, you should seek the advice of an appropriate licensed professional or relevant government office in your location for advice on current laws and regulations, and the application of those laws to any and all legal instruments.

COVID-19 Sample Site Visit Policies

1. Construction Administration & Site Visitation Guidelines

[Firm] has instituted guidelines for site visitations and construction administration services in an effort to respond to the current COVID-19 situation. We understand that the continuation of construction varies for each project and jurisdiction, but this document seeks to communicate our position as a firm and respond to a number of questions we have received.

In jurisdictions where certain construction continues in compliance with local guidelines and regulations, we will be required to continue to provide construction administration services to these projects. However, we will review our CA services in a rational way which assures the proper safety protocols are in place and respects our individual team member's concerns. Therefore, we are implementing the following guidelines for all CA services during this period:

1. When possible, all CA should be supported remotely and virtually. This is already happening on most of our projects and many CMs, Contractors, and Consultants have already made the transition, which is proving to be effective. This could include, but not be limited to:
 - Conference calls or Virtual meetings (WebEx, Skype, etc.) in lieu of site meetings
 - Virtual walk-throughs
 - Video/Photo reviews
2. The Contractor or CM has the sole responsibility for maintaining site safety and the safety of individuals working on and around the site. When site visits are required, a copy of the site safety plan with regard to COVID-19 should be provided by the CM, Contractor, and Client for review by [Firm] leadership and team to assure that the proper protocols are in place and that our teams can be protected. The site safety plan should follow the OSHA Guidance for Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 as outlined in OSHA 3990-03 2020 or the equivalent. All site safety plans should provide for provision of proper protection required by said plan for any of our employees going to site, such as gloves, masks, eye protection, etc., as well as the maintenance of social distancing standards while on site.
3. [Firm] leadership (PIC, Studio Leader, PM, etc.) along with the individual project team members shall review the submitted site safety plan. If there are faults in the site safety plan submitted, or one does not exist, kindly notify the necessary parties and deny any site visit until actions are taken to provide the proper assurances and protocols.

4. Each staff member should employ their professional judgment and common sense and be certain to take into consideration their own individual circumstances. Do you feel comfortable with the site safety plan and with those who will be carrying it out? Do you, or a member of your household, have risk factors or feel particularly susceptible? Only after review of protocols and confidence by both leadership and the employee that the visit will be safe should we agree to conduct a site visit.

5. If for any reason an individual team member does not feel comfortable, regardless of the comprehensiveness of the site safety plan, no one should feel pressured to make a site visit until their level of confidence has returned. Team members should notify [Firm] leadership immediately so they can communicate the concern or arrange for alternatives to meet our contractual obligations. **We will support our team members in their individual decisions regarding these matters.**

6. It is recommended to avoid public transportation to and from jobsites whenever possible. We understand that not all staff have access to a private vehicle for jobsite visits but, if so, the firm will reimburse for mileage, tolls, and parking. The use of Uber or Lyft, where team members feel comfortable doing so, is also an option. Common sense should be used in all decisions.

Our primary concern is the health and well-being of all our employees while fulfilling our contractual obligations. We have a number of critical projects that will demand field services and we will try to fulfill those obligations while making sure that our staff is comfortable and secure.

Should you have particular questions, please address them to the project's Principal in Charge.

2. Remote Construction Contract Administration (CA) Services and Site Observation Protocols

Continuing Construction Contract Administration Services

In response to the current COVID-19 Pandemic and in furtherance of our WFH (work from home) policy, we are instituting remote CA services protocols. It is our intent to continue delivering construction phase services and fulfilling our contractual obligations but to do so using remote technology wherever possible. We have discussed this with several national contractors with whom we are currently working and have developed the following recommendations. As many situations are unique, each team must develop methods and tools that work for the owner, contractor, [Firm] and our consultants.

A. Project and Owner / Architect / Contractor (OAC) Meetings

All scheduled site and OAC meetings must immediately be moved to remote communication platforms provided by either the contractors or [Firm] as appropriate.

B. Certificates for Payment Site Visits and Site Observation Reports

Each design team must coordinate with contractor teams to develop strategies that allow for real- time video observation that can be directed to some degree by the [Firm] team. This must be combined with on-site photographs used in site observation reports. Several contractors are currently doing this by combining their current platforms (Procore, Prologue, PlanGrid or similar) for site photos and information sharing and with video-communication technology such as FaceTime or Skype. Others have gone even further by using geolocated real-time video feeds that can be accessible to design teams.

Locations of the Work requested for observation by design teams and those shown by contractors must be clearly documented to create a record of design teams' observations during the real-time video observations and what it requested for observation but may not have been shown or shown in enough detail.

C. Punch Lists and Project Completion

We don't have a realistic way to complete these services without being on-site. Require that contractors have completed the Work and their own punch lists and that the site is available for the smallest possible group to verify the contractors' punch lists.

D. Owner / Lender Considerations

Owners must be provided opportunities to provide input into the virtual CA plan and ultimately provide approval that such will satisfy the requirements of the Owner / Architect Agreement. Each team must inquire about any third-party obligations that owners may have regarding CA. Additionally, to the extent required, owners must seek approvals from Lenders, which must be provided to the design teams, that the virtual CA will comply with and satisfy any requirements under owners' loan documents.

3. Contract Administration Duties

The principals have put together the following guidance as we navigate through this challenging time. We want to share some insights and tips specific to CA work, such as punch lists and other on-site work that our clients might continue to require notwithstanding the public health crisis. Although [Firm] is operating on a "work from home" basis, we remain conscious of our contractual obligations during CA. First and foremost, as mentioned previously on [intranet], please speak directly with your Principal in Charge if you feel uncomfortable with anything you are asked to do by a client or contractor, whether attending meetings, performing punch list work, etc. Your health, safety and wellness is the top priority, period. To reiterate other guidance that has been provided already:

- You should no longer be traveling by air or mass transit to perform CA work. If a client expects otherwise, please escalate the situation to your studio leader.
- Calls or video conferences in lieu of in-person meetings – and virtual jobsite visits – should be the default right now. (For example, even HUD has issued guidance to its inspectors regarding out of town architects who might be unable to attend HUD-scheduled visits for pay app review.)
- If you do not feel well, or have been sick in the last two weeks, stay home!

We have found that, industry-wide, the vast majority of owners are being accommodating and understanding in light of the extraordinary circumstances. After all, with some creative thinking and the assistance of modern technology, most jobsite work can be handled with a phone call or with someone from the construction team using a video call to walk through the site and show the conditions. To that end, if accommodations are made by a client or contractor, it is important for you to make a record of these accommodations by sending an email to the client (something along the lines of, “Due to COVID-19 precautions, you are agreeing that [Firm] may do _____ instead of requiring _____.”) However, despite everything mentioned above, if a client nevertheless requires your presence at a jobsite:

- Ask in advance for an agenda and a written list of items to be discussed so that you can evaluate whether or not they can be handled over the phone or video conference.
- Call the contractor and inquire about the protocols that will be observed on the jobsite, such as social distancing requirements, the provision of protective measures (e.g., masks, gloves, sanitizer), etc. Many jurisdictions are now requiring this of contractors. For example, the Mayor of Denver issued an order yesterday requiring the construction business to “develop and strictly implement written Physical Distancing protocols” in order to continue operating during this time.
- Make sure to confirm, the day of your visit, that the job site remains open. We are seeing an increasing number of jurisdictions shut down job sites, and the overall landscape is changing every day.
- Limit the number of participants as much as possible, e.g., only one representative each from the client, the contractor, etc.
- Keep your distance. Maintain at least six feet of separation between people (as per CDC social distancing guidance). This means that if an elevator isn’t large enough, take separate trips.
- Don’t share resources. Tablet computers, drawings and mobile phones should be used and handled by one person only.
- Tips for punch list work:
 - A complete list of spaces available to punch should be sent well in advance of the visit. We should be walking a generous amount of spaces if we will be on site.
 - Spaces must be at 100% (completely pre-punched), with all appliances, casework, equipment, fixtures and amenities installed and in working order.

- Spaces should be empty of other tradespeople during the punch walk to minimize interaction. Keep the CDC -recommended distance when walking through corridors and hallways.
- Do not share tablets, blue tape or other resources during the walk: one person records, one person marks with blue tape.

[Firm] will continue to monitor developments on a daily basis and provide guidance accordingly, as has happened for several weeks now. Again, if you have questions or concerns about your specific project please contact your Principal in Charge to discuss your concerns.

Keep safe and keep in touch.

Additional resources are available at: <https://www.aia.org/pages/6280670-covid-19-resources-for-architects>

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Contributions: If you have a policy or feedback to share, please contact me at kathleenmccormick@aia.org.