

Wellness Group – Gymsnasiums, Fitness Studios and Other Similar Facilities

Guidelines for re-opening wellness facilities (commercial gyms and fitness centers, including, but not limited to, dance studios, martial arts studios, yoga studios, spinning studios, personal training services, and similar establishments) with best practices and minimum standards outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to protect the health and safety of all members, staff and the community. These guidelines were developed in consultation with medical and public health experts and with industry stakeholders. The industry must be responsible, methodological and consistent when re-opening, with the intention of eliminating and/or minimizing COVID-19 exposure risks to all staff, members and the community.

The top priorities for these guidelines are to promote and protect the health and safety of all staff, facility users and patrons. The following key factors were considered:

- Capacity limits and social distancing
- Use of facial covering in the facility, in public, and for certain activities
- Increased air filtration and ventilation
- Adherence to CDC and DOH guidance to control spread of germs, including SARS-CoV2
- Proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols
- Appropriate staff training, supervision and patron monitoring and reporting.

In addition to the general reopening guidelines for all business establishments as outlined in the New Normal Guide, the following industry specific requirements for wellness facilities, such as commercial gyms and fitness centers, including, but not limited to, dance studios, martial arts studios, yoga studios, spinning studios, personal training services, and similar establishments, must be adhered to.

Building Occupancy and Access Requirements

- **Monitor building occupancy and restrict customer access to no more than 50 percent of the building's indoor maximum occupancy.**
- **In no event may the combined indoor and outdoor operation exceed 100 percent of a building's legally permitted occupancy.**
- **All individuals are required to wear facial coverings when entering and exiting facilities and within facilities except when conducting certain activities where it is not possible to wear facial coverings.**
- Provide an exit from the facility separate from the entrance, when possible.

Facility Requirements

- **Upgrade HVAC ventilation filters per OSHA and ASHRAE guidance, use MERV 13 or higher or HEPA filters, optimize ventilation system settings to maximize introduction of fresh outdoor air through the system while maintaining proper thermal comfort and maintaining humidity level between 40% to 60% for HVAC systems.**

- See OSHA's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
 - See ASHRAE Guidance on HVAC Systems: <https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/how-to-return-the-hvac-system-to-normal-operation-faq.pdf>
 - See ASHRAE information on infectious aerosols: https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/about/position%20documents/pd_infectious_aerosols_2020.pdf
- Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Open windows and doors where feasible to improve natural ventilation in the facility.
 - **Facility operators must ensure and document that outside air ventilation damper controls are working and remain fully open during this period.**
 - If fans are used (pedestal or mounted), take steps to minimize air flow from fans blowing directly from one person to another.
 - Doors between separate fitness areas or rooms of the facility (excluding emergency exits) must remain open to reduce surface touching by multiple people.
 - Prior to re-opening, flush plumbing and run water in sinks to eliminate stagnant water from the period of facility's closure.
 - Equipment stations for highly-strenuous or highly-aerobic activity must be appropriately distanced so that there is a head-to-head 10-foot distance between patrons at each exercise station. The stations must be properly reconfigured to assure and maximize physical distance requirement.
 - Markers must be placed to indicate the appropriate distance between individuals who are exercising.
 - Social distancing markers of 6 feet must be placed in front of the reception/membership desk and all other appropriate areas.
 - Make readily available dispensers of a disinfectant included on the EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticideregistration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>) and provide patrons with sufficient cleaning and disinfecting materials, including disposable wipes, at all entrances, exits and at various locations throughout the facility and by workout stations.
 - Facility and personal hygiene signage, such as signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, including signs on properly washing hands, everyday protective measures, facial coverings, social distancing, and requirements for patrons to clean and disinfect equipment after use, must be conspicuously posted at all entrances, exits and at various locations throughout the facility, including bathroom facilities.
 - Remove any unnecessary chairs, tables, or other furniture and all magazines, newspapers, service menus and similar shared items.
 - Common-use amenities, including, but not limited to, saunas, steam rooms and locker rooms, showers (except pool showers), must remain closed at this time.
 - Other common-use amenities, including, but not limited to, body lotions, deodorant, razors, shaving cream and mouth wash, must not be provided. However, facilities may provide patrons with single-use water bottles and other single-use amenities.

- **Discontinue providing towels, heart monitors, personal fitness mats, blocks, bolsters, or similar equipment to customers.**
 - **Patrons must bring their own personal-use items, including, but not limited to, towels, heart monitors, fitness mats, blocks, or similar equipment that may be required for exercise**
- **Shower facilities must be closed, except for showers at facilities with pools, but only for use prior to entering the pool.**
- **Doors to multi-stall restrooms should be able to be opened and closed without touching handles, if at all possible.**
- **Place trash can by the door if the door cannot be opened without touching the handle.**
- **If toilet lid is present, close lid before flushing; place signs indicating that toilet lids (if present) should be closed before flushing.**
- **Provide paper towels in restrooms and disconnect air dryers or tape them off.**
- **For single restrooms, provide signage and materials (paper towels and trash cans) for individuals to use without touching the handles, and consider providing a key so disinfection measures can be better controlled.**
- **Place signs asking members and employees to wash hands before and after using the restroom.**

Operational Requirements (to be followed at any time when facility is occupied)

All individuals in the facility must wear a facial covering while maintaining a minimum of 6 feet distance from each other, unless otherwise specified in the chart below:

Minimum of 10 Feet Social Distancing and No Facial Covering Required

- Aerobic Classes
- All Dance Activity involving floor work including, but not limited to, Zumba, Ballet and Tap (Singles unless members of same household)
- Barre Classes
- Basketball (Singles unless members of same household)
- Boot Camps
- Boxing (Singles unless members of same household)
- Cheerleading
- Circuit Training (No sharing of equipment)
- CrossFit
- Gymnastics
- HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training)
- Indoor Tracks (Singular direction)
- Metabolic Conditioning
- Personal Rope Jumping
- Pilates - High Intensity
- Racquetball (Singles unless members of same household and bring your own equipment)
- Spinning
- Stationary Cardio Equipment - High Intensity (Measured head to head)
- Strength Training - High Intensity
- Yoga - High Intensity (Bring your own equipment and/or props)

Minimum of 6 Feet with Face Mask or Cloth Covering Required, Consistent with CDC Guidelines

(These activities may be performed without a mask if a minimum of 10 feet is maintained between individuals.)

- Barre work for dance classes – Low to Medium Intensity
- Chair Fitness
- Martial Arts (Singles unless members of same household)
- Pilates - Low Intensity (Bring your own equipment and/or props)
- Selectorized gym equipment workout
- Strength Training – Low to Medium Intensity
- Yoga - Low Intensity (Bring your own equipment and/or props)

Not Permitted

- Aerial Fitness
- Battle Rope Fitness
- Sparring
- Yoga involving temperature at or greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit

- Physical contact will be prohibited between any individual within the facility unless individuals are members of the same household. If an instructor must come within 6 feet of a student, the instructor must wear a facial covering.
- Aquatic programs within fitness and wellness centers must be limited as to class size to meet 6-foot distance requirement; in lap lanes, the 6-foot requirement is deemed met while swimming laps provided no more than one person is using a lane at any time. Lap lane sharing is prohibited.
- Pool sanitation and safety guidelines outlined in the Mayor's New Normal Guide must be adhered to: <https://www.miamidade.gov/information/library/new-normal.pdf>

Sanitation and Disinfecting Requirements

Staff and users must be trained on the proper use of cleaning and disinfecting products. Products must be registered on the EPA's N List for SARS-CoV2. Products must be used following label instructions and Safety Data Sheets including for application method, contact time, dose, PPE use and disposal.

- All employees and patrons must be required to sanitize their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer at least 60% alcohol:
 - Upon entering the facility (or before beginning their fitness activities, if conducted outdoors);
 - After using each piece of equipment;
 - Upon completing their fitness routine; and
 - Upon exiting from facility.
- Disinfecting wipes (wipes must be registered on the EPA N List to kill SARS-CoV-2) must be available throughout the facility and patrons must disinfect every piece of equipment after each use. Equipment must be allowed to fully air dry before next use.
- Staff must monitor the facility and ensure that all equipment and high-touch surfaces are appropriately disinfected after each use. Equipment and high-touch surfaces to be cleaned and disinfected include, but are not limited to:
 - Hand grips on cardio equipment such as treadmills, bicycles, ellipticals;
 - Touch screens on exercise equipment;
 - Hand grips on dumbbells, weight bars, and other strength-training systems;
 - Weight plates and weight-selection pins;
 - Pads/cushioned components such as permanently installed mats, anti-fatigue flooring, bike seats, lifting benches, and seating or other cushioned components of strength training machines used for exercise activity;
 - Fitness balls, rope handles, and other fitness accessories.
- During daily operation, routinely (every two hours at a minimum) clean and disinfect common-area surfaces, particularly high-touch surfaces including, but not limited to, counters, handrails, seating, doorknobs, light switches, and all furniture/equipment that is in use.

- During daily operation, routinely (every two hours at a minimum) clean and disinfect restrooms and high-touch surfaces within restrooms including, but not limited to, faucets, toilets, and doorknobs.
- In addition to routine cleaning and disinfecting during hours of operations, clean and disinfect the entire facility at the close of business or before the facility opens to the public.

Employee Protection Requirements

- Employees not engaged in exercise activities or instruction must wear facial coverings. Any employee who appears to have flu-like symptoms or other symptoms related to COVID-19 upon arrival at work, or who becomes sick during the day, must immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors, and sent home.
- The manager (or designee) must ask every employee the following health screening questions before each shift to help identify any symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Have you experienced a fever ≥ 99.5 °F (37.5°C), cough (any kind dry or productive), sore throat, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties, fatigue, chills, muscle pain, headache, or loss of taste or smell since your last shift?
 - Have you come into contact with anyone who has at least two of the symptoms listed above since your last shift?
 - Have you come into contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 since your last shift?
- Any establishment that has an on-site employee or contractor who tests positive shall close for the shorter of:
 - the time needed for staff who were in contact with the positive employee or contractor to be tested and cleared by a medical professional as being COVID-19 free and the establishment to be deep-sanitized;
 - 14 days from the date such employee or contractor was last on-site at such establishment, if deep-sanitization is not performed.
- An establishment shall be deemed to have complied with the above if, after deep-sanitizing, employees who were in contact with the positive employee or contractor do not report to work for 14 days after the date the positive employee or contractor was last on-site.
- Where an establishment has multiple floors or structures or square footage of more than 10,000 feet, only those structures, floors or areas where the infected person was present are required to be sanitized as a condition of re-opening, and only those employees working in such structures, floors or areas must be tested. All employees who came into personal contact with the positive employee must be tested or, in the absence of a test, be excluded from the premises for 14 days after the date the positive employee was last onsite.
- Under no circumstances shall an employee or contractor who tested positive report to work at an establishment until that employee is cleared by a medical professional as being COVID-19 free.

Other Considerations for Facility

- Whenever possible, patrons must reserve spots in pre-assigned classes/time slots ahead of time.
- Whenever possible, patrons must wait outside of the facility until their scheduled appointment.
- Consider offering designated block of times for patrons who are 65 years of age and older, or patrons who are considered high-risk, to safely exercise.
- Consider contactless payment options.
- Protect staff who are defined by the CDC as COVID-19 vulnerable or high-risk individuals (e.g., age, pre-existing underlying medical conditions, etc.), where possible, by redeploying to other, or reassign to other job functions where risk of exposure is minimum (i.e., job functions with minimum contact with staff and visitors).
- Health screening questions for staff can be administered online through a secure employee portal and sent electronically to the facility prior to the employee arriving for work or via telephone.
- Consider health screening questions for patrons to help identify any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Plan for potential COVID-19 cases in the facility to work and coordinate events with the DOH in Miami-Dade County, i.e., monitor and contact trace COVID-19 cases, cleaning and disinfecting of impacted area, including temporary closure until area impacted is cleaned and disinfected
- Maintain good records for visitors and staff movements for each shift during operation to facilitate investigating potential COVID-19 cases.
- Consider the use of air conditioning and/or purifying systems for indoor facilities.
- Consider the use of UV/germicidal lights. If used, proper maintenance required as per manufacturer.

- Communicate to staff and members everything the facility owner/operator is doing to eliminate and/or minimize spread of germs, including SARS-CoV2, in the facility (including health policies for staff, flex attendance schedule, cleaning and disinfection protocols, social distancing requirements, and health and safety measures).
- Utilize communication platforms including social media, websites, and outdoor and indoor signage.

Other Considerations for Individuals Visiting Facilities (Staff and Patrons)

- Stay home if:
 - You are or someone in your household is sick;
 - You have a temperature; and/or
 - You have allergies and can't control sneezing.
- Use online gym/workout services whenever possible.
- Pre-plan your workout routine to avoid lingering/socializing that will allow other members to workout due to reduced occupancy and distancing requirements.
- Limit the items touched within the gym to only the items needed for use.
- Avoid using lifting gloves and other items that are not easily cleaned.
- If feeling ill during exercise, stop activity and safely exit the facility.
- Wipe down each piece of equipment you use before and after use and dispose of the wipe appropriately.
- Wash hands before and after leaving the facility, if possible. If not, use hand sanitizer when upon entering and exiting the facility.
- If you get the urge to sneeze or cough, put on your mask, cover your nose, and mouth with mask, napkin or handkerchief. Attempt to delay the urge to sneeze or cough and immediately leave the facility. Wash your hands and face thoroughly before returning.