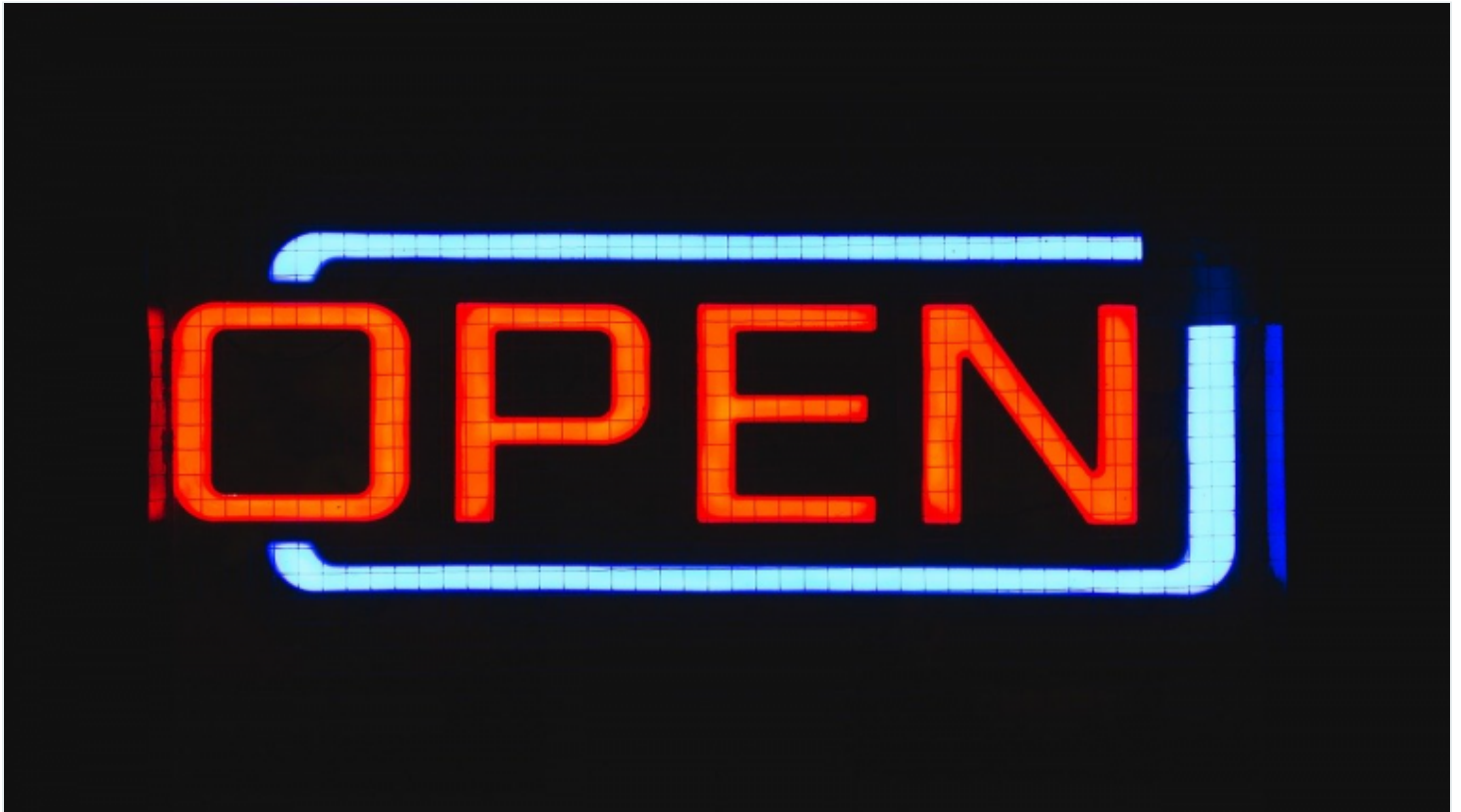


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The health and well-being of your employees is your top concern, obviously, but you also have to consider the health of your clients, your team's access to protective equipment, and your own legal liabilities.

**Bill Sheridan** • Jun. 15, 2020



Returning to work during a pandemic goes way beyond telling the world, “We’re open.”

This is complicated stuff. There are federal, state, and local regulations to consider. The health and well-being of your employees is your top concern, obviously, but you also have to consider the health of your clients, your team’s access to protective equipment, and your own legal liabilities.

There's no shortage of guidance out there. Every organization is scrambling to

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Safe Work in a COVID-19 World,” the document gathers recommendations from health care, government and business experts and presents it as the generally accepted best advice available for how business leaders can safely return to work.

“Reopening our businesses in this environment goes way beyond unlocking the door and turning on the lights. It’s a complex process that involves considerations in a number of areas, including health care, human resources, business strategy, and risk management,” said MACPA President and CEO Tom Hood, CPA. “A number of agencies have released terrific guidance on how to protect our teams and organizations as we return to work. This document is an authoritative collection of what we believe is the best advice available.”

Much of that advice stems from work done by the state of Maryland. In particular, Gov. Larry Hogan’s “Roadmap to Recovery” is a set of recommendations based on guidance from the White House, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Governors Association, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the American Enterprise Institute.

The MACPA document also emphasizes the work done by the Professional and Financial Services Recovery Advisory Group, a state-appointed group that has released extensive guidance for businesses in the professional and financial services industry as they begin the arduous task of reopening workplaces amid the worst pandemic in more than a century.

That group, whose membership included Hood and fellow Maryland CPA Ed Brake, based its work on a belief that the goals of every business should be to:

- protect the health and well-being of employees,□
- maintain business resilience, and□
- support broader public health and community objectives.

The advisory group agreed with seven critical recommendations that all businesses

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restrooms accessible to all tenants and any meeting space available to multiple tenants. Businesses may choose, as their discretion, to extend such requirements to common spaces accessed by multiple employees, but not by the public in general, such as meeting rooms, hallways and kitchens.

3. Minimize the need to touch things as much as possible. When unable to provide touchless functionality, maintain operational procedures for frequent cleaning.□□
4. Require 14-day self-quarantine for any employees with COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test, or anyone who has had prolonged recent exposure to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test.□□
5. Provide appropriate signage or other communication methods to inform all persons using the facility regarding Nos. 1-4 above.□□
6. Provide sufficient cleaning supplies and handwashing facilities.□□
7. Regarding work travel: Employers and employees should check the “Traveler’s Health Notices” from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country that they may be visiting.

“Reopening the Profession: An Accounting and Finance Professional’s Guide to Safe Work in a COVID-19 World” is available for free at [bit.ly/CPABacktoWork](https://bit.ly/CPABacktoWork).

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*Bill Sheridan, CAE, is chief communications officer for the Maryland Association of CPAs and the Business Learning Institute.*

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