

Reopening Your Medical or Dental Practice: Preparing Compliant Policies to Limit Practice Liability

By **Ericka L. Adler**

Medical and dental practices preparing to re-open or expand services being offered to patients must be aware of various state and federal requirements with which compliance is required. Because there is still a COVID-19 pandemic, elevated safety standards established by CDC, OSHA and other agencies must be satisfied to ensure protection of staff and patients. Failure to comply with these standards could result in liability for the practice.

To best protect your practice, in addition to waivers of liability, we have developed a series of policies that frame the COVID-19 compliance issues your practice must address before reopening. These policies include:

1. Staff Education and Training related to COVID-19;
2. Process for Alerting Management and Authorities of COVID-19 infection;
3. Employment Policy Changes Impacting Employees;
4. Adjustments to Patient Services Related to COVID-19;
5. Patient education and communication;
6. Physical office modifications Related to COVID-19;
7. Cleaning and Disinfection Changes Related to COVID-19;
8. Materials and Supplies To Support Operations During COVID-19; and
9. Personal Protective Equipment and Safety Guidelines for staff and patients.

There may be additional policies that your practice may develop to meet available guidelines. All policies should take into account each practice's unique operations, specialty, patient population, physical space and preparedness. Currently, OSHA is performing audits on hospitals and facilities in order to assure compliance with COVID-19 standards and it is anticipated that these audits may be expanded to include healthcare and dental practices.

We are ready to assist you in preparing to get back to business and can assist in the preparation of your policies and provide guidance on state and federal requirements, as well as any specialty requirements that may impact your practice. Feel free to reach out to us so we have adequate time to assist you in establishing the necessary requirements for you to reopen your doors to business.

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