



COVID-19
Leap-frogging towards recovery



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The rise of COVID-19 has thrown the world into a whirlwind of global chaos. Unprecedented in its reach, the effects of COVID-19 have left the entire world looking for ways to adapt and maintain a certain level of normalcy. Focusing on the GCC as a region, several controls and precautionary measures have been set to ensure the safety of the people. Such measures include shutting down all major airports, setting nationwide curfews and ordering public sector operations to an abrupt halt.

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Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, a clear course of action was set in the minds of each member of society regarding personal and professional decisions. However, in light of the current situation, and given constraints created by imperative protective measures, those actions have changed drastically while others have disappeared altogether. Observing and considering the impact of COVID-19 is crucial when attempting to develop recovery plans and returning to operational activities.

Now more than ever, there is a constant need for businesses to be 2-3 steps ahead of the situation to effectively minimize the spread of the virus.

Due to the uniqueness of the global situation, there is a knowledge gap on the actions required to take in response to such a pandemic. To begin, there is a need to assess the key points to consider when planning to resume operations during the coming weeks, given that COVID-19 might not be completely contained.

Below is a summarized list of key considerations that, when applied, may elevate the level of readiness of concerned businesses who deal with customers physically. To ensure the safety of employees and clients when continuing business operations, consider the following:



Internal protection

- Sanitize offices, areas around buildings, branches, data centers and disaster recovery sites.
- Only critical employees to manage critical processes, in consultation with Business Continuity Plans and Business Impact Analysis results, should return to offices.
- Review the regulations issued by the Government Response Teams and Authorities / Regulators while also staying up to date with the Ministry of Health (as well as WHO) latest news and recommendations for recovery activities.
- Plan a campaign to increase online capability awareness and offering support across all social media platforms.
- Limit presence in employee workspace and office premises on necessity.
- Review the building/workspace floor plan with Admin and Facilities teams to decide on workspace capacity for intended

employees to avoid creation of condensed areas.

- Ensure proper planning of 2-3 teams on rotational shifts for all critical activities/processes operating from different places to avoid the risk of cross contamination and single point of failures.
- Plan the course of action should an infection case emerge by dedicating an isolation room on each floor.
- Plan for containment measures at team and physical location levels to guarantee immediate isolation.
- Plan the contact trace template for infected individuals to ensure tracing of all employees who were in contact with the infected case and apply necessary measures accordingly.
- Plan area shutdown and isolation procedures.
- Update Crisis Management, Business Continuity, Disaster Recovery, Evacuation, and Pandemic Plans to include newly learned lessons resulting from the outbreak.
- Review HR Processes and Work from Home Procedures (considering security measures), to ensure alignment with the critical processes and employees, but also to consider required arrangements for extended periods of disruption.
- Ensure CCTV monitoring is enabled at every floor and archived for at least 14 days in case an infection tracing is required to determine its source and spread.
- Remain in contact with regulators for early planning of opening doors.

Jumping to the external perspective

External protection

- Monitoring individual's temperature in addition to mandating gloves, masks and sanitizers at the entrance areas as well as all places where people are expected to visit.
- Installation of sanitizer dispensers at all areas expecting customer interaction including but not limited to; ATM machines, POS Machines and branch doors.
- For banks specifically, limit customer visits to the bank and require an appointment after applying a strict process of "bank/branch visit need" verification, to better control customer traffic.
- Limit the use of monetary currencies and encourage the utilization of online transactions, and bank cards.
- Arrange for an outdoor waiting area for clients to remain distanced from each other.
- Label the chairs in the waiting areas, so customers and visitors ensure compliance with social distancing measures.
- Employee attendance and visitors log to be strictly up to moment for traceability purposes.



To enable organizations around the globe to be ahead the crisis timeline, Deloitte has developed a suite of tools aiming at Pandemic Situational Awareness and Risk Sensing as well as Crisis Management and Command Center coordination tools.

Uncertainty as a concept presents itself at any time and in varying degrees of severity. Although it may seem intimidating at first, when relevant measures are enforced, uncertainty can become a less intimidating threat. The ultimate goal of the above mentioned considerations are to assist decision makers in establishing clarity. Planning properly in advance facilitates an easier transition to the new mode of work that will arise in and after these difficult and challenging times. The plan and action steps developed will act as guidance for businesses operations and provide a level of readiness for when governments reopen the region.

Learning, communication and planning are all tools to help secure future operations. They bear the promise of us coming back stronger. To enable organizations around the globe to be ahead of the crisis timeline, Deloitte has developed a suite of tools aiming at [Pandemic Situational Awareness and Risk Sensing](#) (PSAT and Sense Nexus) as well as [Crisis Management and Command Center](#) coordination tools (CrisisHub). Please refer to the linked pages for more information.

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