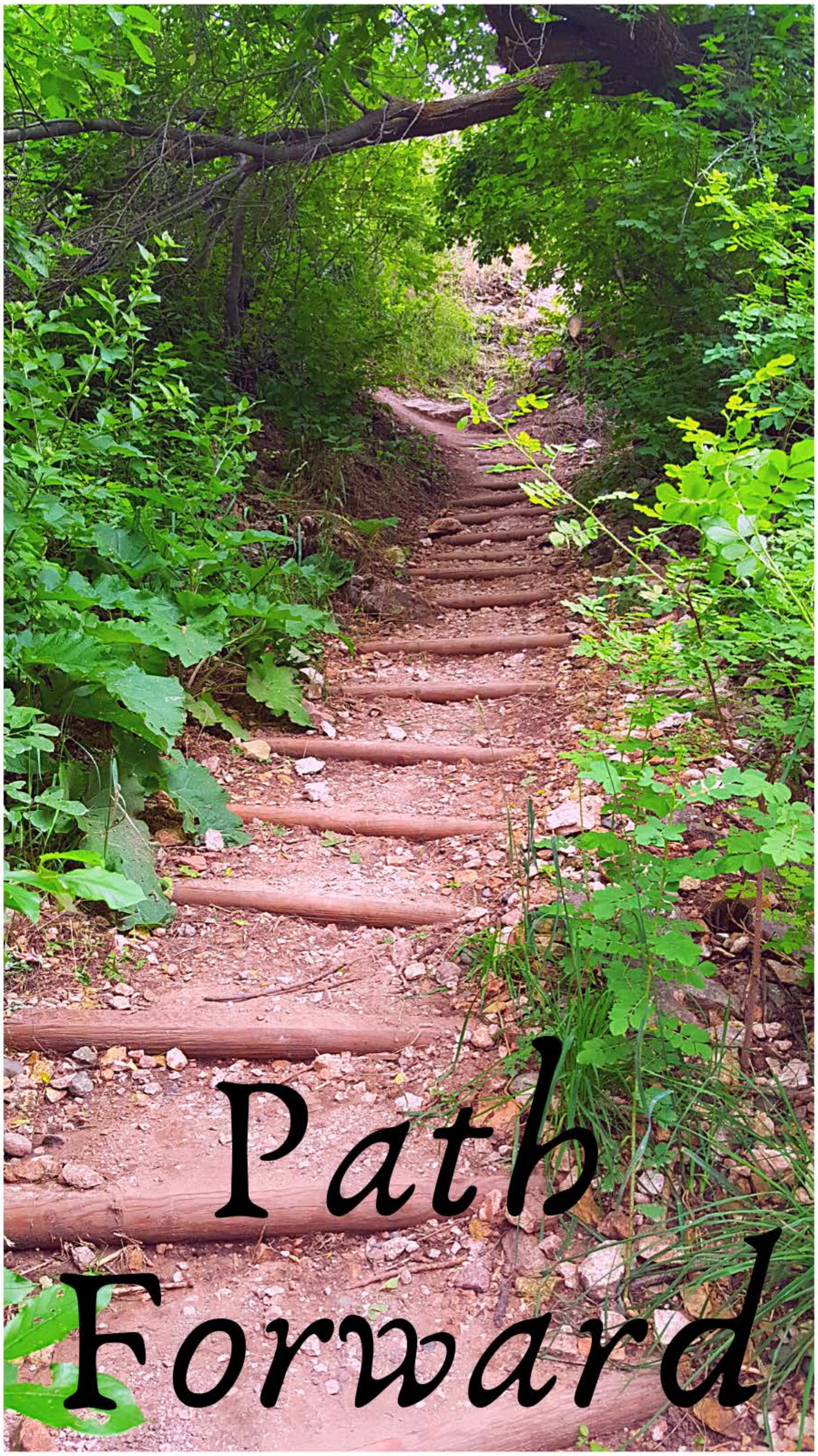

CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR NONPROFIT RE-ENGAGEMENT

Wyoming Nonprofit Network

June 1, 2020

Message for Wyoming nonprofit leaders….

Our daily lives have changed considerably since mid-March. Whether you are on the frontlines serving those most impacted by this pandemic or if you've had to put your programs and services on hold, everyone has been facing unprecedented challenges. In good times and in bad, nonprofits feed, shelter, educate, and nurture our bodies and souls. You do this by leveraging resources in ways that make you highly efficient and resourceful. During this pandemic you have quickly adapted to ensure the safety of your employees, volunteers and communities.

As public health orders have eased and nonprofits begin the process of reopening offices and facilities, we have full faith in the nonprofit sector to carry out this process in a thoughtful manner and with consideration for the health and safety of everyone.

The Wyoming Nonprofit Network is providing these guidelines and resources to assist you in the transition of re-opening. The nonprofit sector is diverse, and your operations and physical workplaces are diverse as well. The guidelines in this document are intended as recommendations for organizations as put your own plans in place. Should you have specific questions regarding legal or financial issues, you should consult your own counsel and financial professionals. We also recommend organizations consult guidelines from sources in your respective fields.

The re-opening and the return of the workforce will look different for every organization. We will likely have a segment of the workforce that will continue to work remotely. One thing is clear - this is new territory for nearly all of us. The purpose of this document is to help employers prepare for the return of their workforce and to help employees prepare to return to the workplace. We have provided guidance to help ensure that this transition is safe, efficient, effective.

Thank you for everything you do for Wyoming communities.

Jody Shields
Executive Director

We would like to acknowledge and thank the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits for allowing us to utilize their "Going Forward" document as a basis for this document.

Wyoming Nonprofit Network
1401 Airport Parkway, Suite 300
Cheyenne, WY 82009
www.wynoprofit.org

Cover Image: Photo by Jody Shields. Ayres Natural Bridge Park, Wyoming.

Considerations for Re-Opening

There are several considerations before you implement the process of re-engagement.

- **Put your mission, vision and values front and center** in your approach to reopening.
- **Remember that this is a process and not an event.** Your organization may take a phased approach as you begin to reopen. You may experience pressure to re-open, but staff leadership and the board of directors should take the time needed to determine what is best for your organization.
- **Practice the "We love our neighbors" mantra,** assessing potential risk for the people we work with and serve. Consider the health of your staff, volunteers, clientele and your constituents (donors, friends and allies) in all your decision-making, especially as it relates to gatherings.
- **Go to trusted sources for information.** The World Health Organization (WHO), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Wyoming Department of Health should be your primary sources for guidance on COVID-19 and other health-related issues. The CDC has a workplace readiness decision tree that is helpful. You can find current Wyoming Public Health Orders on this website. Your county may have approved variances to current public health orders. Check with your county health department for additional information.
- **Approach decision-making with an eye for cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion.** Consider repercussions for the most vulnerable populations and do not put them at undue risk. These include populations such as minorities, persons living in poverty, persons with disabilities, immigrant communities, etc.
- **Communicate any new procedures, policies and practices with all staff, volunteers, board members, clientele and constituents** to ensure all individuals involved with your mission know what is expected.
- **Ask staff, volunteers and others to adhere to an Oath of Personal Responsibility**.

SAMPLE Oath of Personal Responsibility [NONPROFIT NAME]

I, ____________________, am aware of the potential spread of COVID-19 that could result in severe illness and potential death. Therefore, I will, to the best of my ability, practice proper social distancing at work and outside of the office as recommended by health department directives, as well as practice good hygiene (handwashing, use of the hand sanitizer, wearing of a mask when required, etc.) and follow other health recommendations. Should I become ill, I promise to self-report the illness and contact my nonprofit to let them know of my condition. I will adhere to testing guidelines and work with my own primary care providers. Finally, if I am exposed or suspected to be exposed to COVID-19, I will self-quarantine and notify my nonprofit immediately.

____
Signature

Operations and Workplace Readiness

There are a number of factors to plan for in re-opening workplaces and re-engaging with your constituents. We recommend that you put together a work group to navigate this road. The chief executive will make final decisions, but the inclusion of additional staff members can be very helpful. If you have an HR manager and finance director, they should be included in the group as well.

Communicate new protocols and procedures **BEFORE** staff returns to the office. This not only establishes those best practices, but also shows to your staff the commitment you have for protecting their health and well-being. You may find that, due to spacing issues, your organization might consider only bringing a portion of staff back to the office while others continue working remotely.

Preparing the Workspace for Return

- Thoroughly clean and sanitize the workspace, particularly common areas, bathrooms and other congregating facilities (lunchrooms, break areas, kitchens, conference rooms). Consider assigning staff, or ask for staff volunteers, dedicated to wiping down surfaces and ensuring regular cleaning is occurring.
- Ensure you have cleaning supplies on hand for more active, daily cleaning for the foreseeable future. These include sanitizing wipes, bleach, disinfectant cleaning supplies and sanitizers available for all parts of the office.
- Before staff arrival, assess the space for social distancing (desks six feet apart, use of cubicles, offices). Also look for areas where staff, volunteers or clientele could congregate (waiting rooms, conference rooms, etc.) and assess those spaces for social distancing.
- Place signage in bathrooms to wash hands along with signage to remind people of social distancing and etiquette. Post "Stop the Spread of Germs" flyers in restrooms, kitchen and in other common areas. Consider laminating this document.

Ongoing Sanitation and Social Distance Guidelines:

- Enforce a clean desk policy. Ask staff to remember to also sanitize their own desks, keyboards, telephones, doorknobs, and other surfaces in their office area on a regular basis (at least daily) to prevent the spread of germs.
- Make cleaning supplies and sanitizers available in all parts of the office. Sanitize common equipment (copiers, projectors, monitors, etc.) daily if multiple people are using them.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Offices should be cleaned daily, especially where people congregate (waiting rooms, conference rooms, bathrooms). You may want to increase professional cleaning and sanitation for these reasons. Remove trash daily.
- Have hand sanitizer available in public areas.

- For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
- Discourage workers from using co-workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.
- Provide disposable wipes or other cleaning products so that commonly used surfaces (doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

Nonprofits are full of huggers and hand-shakers. It will be hard, but we must avoid physical contact. If you do not require masks at work, please be sure to remind people of "respiratory etiquette" that includes covering a cough or sneeze, using and throwing away tissues, etc.

When in doubt, do not put groups of people into hygienically compromising situations.

Don't assume everyone understands hygienic concepts. You will find yourself in situations with some clientele who will need instruction, reminding and assistance with some basic tasks such as handwashing, sanitizing, etc.

Consider the following social distancing suggestions to avoid unnecessary exposure:

- Implementing flexible worksites (e.g., telework).
- Implementing flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts).
- Increasing physical space between employees at the worksite.
- Increasing physical space between employees and customers.
- Implementing flexible meeting and travel options (e.g., postpone non-essential meetings or events).
- Downsizing operations.
- Delivering services remotely (e.g. phone, video, or web).
- Delivering products through virtual and/or digital platforms.
- Relying less on paper that is passed around the office.

Food Handling

At first, you might require limited or no communal food in the office or organization. This could mean a requirement that all employees and volunteers bring their own meals or eat off site. We recommend avoiding potluck style meals or open, self-serve buffets, up to and including communal coffee service, for the time being.

You might consider for a period of time asking all employees to eat alone to preserve social distancing. Your organization may also restrict how much communal food is left in the refrigerators or communal cupboards.

If you are preparing and/or serving food at your facility:

- Follow local health department guidelines. Additionally, the FDA has produced a set of guidelines for communal food preparation and service. (https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19)
- Appetizers, hors d'oeuvres, food and/or all beverages, including water, tea, wine, beer and/or adult beverages, should not be self-served. All food and beverages should be served from service staff that are wearing appropriate PPE to reduce any contamination. Organizations should not provide any buffets, tables with appetizers, and/or any self-serve wine and/or beverages to staff and/or attendees.

Protocols for Public Opening and Closure

- While your office may be ready to bring back employees and volunteers, your organization may not be accepting public appointments. Ensure you communicate on doors, your website and social media when public hours may resume.
- Inform employees about who is allowed in the building and who should not enter. This could include family members, friends of employees, donors, volunteers, etc.
- Let employees and volunteers know when the organization can receive visitors or the public.
- If you do receive the public, ensure signs about hygiene and disease prevention protocols are visible and accessible. If you regularly work with clientele where English is not a first language, translate those into the appropriate languages.
- For contact-tracing purposes have ALL visitors sign in when they enter. That information may be necessary for local health departments.

Continue to follow any and all guidelines from your local health department for sanitation and social distancing. Go to the CDC's Guidance for Employers Responding to COVID-19 for current information.

Human Resources Considerations

Your staff and volunteers are the lifeblood of your nonprofit mission. A number of issues will arise as you bring staff back into offices and facilities. You will find HR resources specific to COVID-19 on the Employers Council and SHRM websites. We highly recommend that you follow their best practices and guidelines, as well as seek counsel with HR attorneys and professionals as you go through this process. Wyoming Nonprofit Network members can access Employers Council trainings at their member rates, contact us for more information.

Human Resources and Staffing

- Organizational leadership should meet to discuss which staff should return to the office and when.
- These decisions should be very flexible, as you will not only have to consider staffing needs but also potential accommodations for some staff in certain categories.
- You may continue (for the time being) work remotely plans for those who can effectively do their jobs away from the office to lower physical capacity and increase social distancing at the office or facility.
- You should provide immediate accommodations to staff with known compromises to their health and those in other high-risk health categories.
- Be open to staff requests for continued work remotely privileges, particularly those in higher-risk health categories.
- Leadership and Human Resources should establish protocols for any employees requesting further work from home, accommodations or exceptions.
- Familiarize yourself with the provisions in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and establish a procedure for accommodating requests for leave or accommodations requested by employees.
- Familiarize yourselves and your staff with all “paid-time-off” policies including vacation, sick leave, work remotely and provisions from the FFCRA.
- Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school and childcare closures. Additional flexibilities might include giving advances on future sick leave and allowing employees to donate sick leave to each other.
- Employers that do not currently offer sick leave to some or all their employees may want to draft non-punitive “emergency sick leave” policies.
- Your organization may wish to screen returning employees for COVID-19 symptoms such as taking their temperature as they arrive to work each day. On March 18, 2020, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission gave employers the green light to take employee temperatures in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19. Go to the CDC Business FAQ page for additional guidance (this page is not intended for healthcare facilities).
- Any staff member who experiences any symptoms of COVID-19 or serious respiratory issues should leave the location immediately and go home.
- Provide information to employees on where they can be tested.
- Employers should not require a positive COVID-19 test result or healthcare provider’s note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to

return to work. At this time, healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely manner. You may want to revisit this depending on the current healthcare situation.

- Review human resources policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws.
- Connect employees to employee assistance program (EAP) resources and community resources, as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services. For example, coping with their work within the field and/or with the death of a loved one.
- Plan for staff absences. Staff need to stay home when they are sick, or they may need to stay home to care for a sick household member or care for their children in the event of school dismissals.
- Identify critical job functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff (similar to planning for holiday staffing).
- Ensure you have communicated any new procedures and protocols to all returning staff members.

Anxiety, Depression and Other Mental Health Issues

- For most, the COVID-19 quarantine experience has been very concerning, and some individuals will report significant anxiety, fear and reticence about re-entering the workplace. Organizations should not be dismissive or judgmental about this anxiety.
- It is important that staff members should have some avenue to express concerns – either with co-workers, leadership, an established employee, an Employee Assistance Program, or other outlet.
- Leadership, management and co-workers should be ready to work with staff members and volunteers in an empathetic and trauma-informed manner
- Remember, trauma and anxiety can manifest in several ways. Nonprofits should be ready to refer employees to professional mental health services should the need arise.
- It is important for nonprofits to understand that this isn't "business as usual" and that we will need to be perceptive and attuned to our staff's, volunteers' and clienteles' mental health.

Re-Engagement in Phases and Waves

A larger nonprofit may bring employees back to the office or facility in phases and waves. Consider the timing and triggers for those phases back to the office. Also consider evaluating each phase as it happens before starting the next. This could be done through surveying or data exploration, as well as using data and guidance from outside sources (health data, economic data, etc.).

Regression

At any point, there could be a resurgence of the virus, forcing organizations back into quarantine or work remotely situations. Should this occur, follow similar steps to a previous change to your operations. Ensure active and quick communication to your staff, volunteers, clientele and constituents. Have a plan at hand in case you need to move back a step or two in your re-engagement plan.

Oath of Personal Responsibility for Staff and Constituents

This “Oath of Personal Responsibility” is something that all staff, board members, frequent visitors and clientele should adhere to. While not legally binding, it does remind all of us of our responsibilities both inside and outside of the office to practice social distancing, good hygiene, disease detection and management. This is the same sample that was on page 3.

SAMPLE Oath of Personal Responsibility

[NONPROFIT NAME]

I, ____________________, am aware of the potential spread of COVID-19 that could result in severe illness and potential death. Therefore, I will, to the best of my ability, practice proper social distancing at work and outside of the office as recommended by health department directives, as well as practice good hygiene (handwashing, use of the hand sanitizer, wearing of a mask when required, etc.) and follow other health recommendations. Should I become ill, I promise to self-report the illness and contact my nonprofit to let them know of my condition. I will adhere to testing guidelines and work with my own primary care providers. Finally, if I am exposed or suspected to be exposed to COVID-19, I will self-quarantine and notify my nonprofit immediately.

Signed,

____

Board Governance

Remember boards govern, not manage. These are some guiding thoughts for working with your board as your nonprofit re-engages, as well as suggestions for ways to lean on their resources as you move forward.

Board Communication

- As you begin to re-engage, inform the board of your plans, phases of re-engagement, etc. Feel free to share this document with your board so they understand the direction of re-opening.
- Work with the board chair and chair-elect to ask for any possible assistance or advice through the process. Work with those board members who are engaged in this process with their own respective companies and employers.
- Throughout the process, have regular updates to the board (typically weekly) on how things are going.
- Remember, your nonprofit has a full-time job with your mission, and COVID-19-related activities are taking a lot of your time. Keep the board up to date on your mission-related activities as well.

Policies and Procedures

- Through the crisis, you may have had to alter, discontinue or enact policies and procedures as part of a continuation of a business plan. On a regular basis, inform and work with board leadership on any other alterations you may need to make.
- Review bylaws and current policies in place before making big decisions in a time of crisis. You may want to consider giving more authority to an executive committee for emergency decisions.
- Management decisions should continue to be made by the executive director. Governance decisions are made by the board. Executive directors should keep board members informed of major management decisions happening at the staff level.
- Ensure you have a crisis communications plan in place that establishes the spokesperson of the nonprofit.

Other Leadership Responsibilities

- Ensure board and leadership have a firm understanding of any risk and/or liability and who assumes it. The board should also approve an Emergency and Disaster Plan to mitigate future crises.
- Depending on circumstances, a board may wish to establish a crisis task force depending on the nature of the business.
- Boards and committees SHOULD continue to meet on a regularly established schedule, and they may consider lengthening meetings, adding meetings or having emergency meetings as the nonprofit deals with the crisis.

Communications and Public Relations

Communication is key in all our relationships, especially during a crisis. Whether it is with staff, board, volunteers, clientele, the media or the general public, during a crisis (even one we are all managing), transparency is essential. This is an optimal time to engage our closest allies as we navigate re-opening.

To the Public

- Depending on your mission, you will want to communicate to the public your intentions about re-engagement. Let them know your general timeline and what to expect.
- This could be a press release, an email or a simple statement on social media and your website.
- As part of that communication, be transparent and let them know the processes that guide your decision-making.
- If you are a very public-facing organization that regularly engages the public, be detailed in your communication regarding protocols to keep the public safe.
- Establish a "single point of contact" or spokesperson for all media and public relations purposes.

To Staff

- We can't stress enough that communication to staff, board and volunteers should be especially transparent and contains as much detail as necessary.
- Let them know immediately the plans to re-engage and give sufficient notice so that they can make accommodations as they begin to transition from working remotely.

Ongoing Communications

- You may want to devise a plan of ongoing communications for the next several months that focuses on both internal work (staff, board, clientele, etc.) and external work (donors, supporters, general public).
- This is especially important to keep individuals informed about changes in programming or program delivery, protocols or procedures, policy changes, etc.
- Ensure your website and social media communication are up to date. Hours of operation may change, or you may need to communicate protocols for visitors, etc.

Events and Donor Relations

Nonprofits host several special events with a cadre of purposes. Below are a few guidelines for these events that will depend heavily on health department regulations around people gathering together. We suggest nonprofits, performing arts organizations, congregations and other organizations gathering groups together, continue to follow those guidelines from the local and state health departments to preserve the health and safety of all involved.

Special Events

- Follow local regulations about the number of people allowed to be together.
- Ensure social distancing tactics are observed.
- Encourage those attending to wear masks and observe their own social distancing techniques.
- For food handling, use licensed caterers and allow no “self-service” type handling.
- Inform all guests of any special protocols in place at events before they attend (wearing masks, social distancing, food, and other etiquette you will observe).
- Have contingencies in place in the event of postponement, cancellation, change of plans, etc.
- If you have postponed an event, have a cancellation contingency in place.
- Keep donors informed of all contingencies.
- Consider online-only events.
- For smaller events, work with a restaurant or licensed caterer to provide food. We do not recommend self-catered or “potluck” style group meals, particularly if you are working with individuals in high-risk groups.

Granting or Sponsorship Relationships

- Communicate with your program officer or community relations director (the person responsible for overseeing your grant or sponsorship) as soon as possible to check in. They want to hear from you.
- Let them know your plans on re-engagement and reopening, and any changes to program delivery, deliverables or expectations.
- Provide them information on your financial position and be completely transparent.
- Work with them on unrestricting some funds if you’re in need.
- Let them know if you successfully applied for and received business relief grants or loans.
- If you are postponing an event, contact donors first and then announce the postponement. Discuss any other methods of giving that might be appropriate.

###