

Phase II guidelines for residential realtors

All realtors should prepare and implement a plan for resuming services in accordance with industry guidelines established below.

Please also review and adhere to the general business and organizations guidance document posted on www.reopeningri.com. This document includes generally applicable information about physical distancing requirements; signage requirements, including downloadable and printable posters; the use of face coverings, which are required to be worn at all times that 6-foot spacing cannot be easily, continuously, and measurably maintained; testing resources and guidelines; required access to cleaning materials and hand hygiene; facility cleaning and disinfection procedures; and protocols to respond to cases of illness.

Phase II operations

Under Phase II of Rhode Island's reopening plan, individual residential real estate viewings may be conducted by appointment. Real estate open house events may also resume, subject to capacity limits, physical distancing and screening protocols, and increased sanitation measures.

To the extent possible, realtors are encouraged to continue offering virtual property tours to decrease in-person interactions between agents, current residents, and prospective residents.

Physical space and occupancy limits

Open house events may operate subject to the capacity limitation of no more than one person per 150 square feet of floor area.

In order to avoid open house visitors clustering outside of a property while waiting to enter, ask visitors to either (1) wait inside a vehicle until their turn is called, or (2) wait at pre-demarcated spots that comply with physical distancing guidelines.

Realtors should develop property-specific plans to manage the flow of visitors in compliance with these guidelines.

Where not specified above, all organizations should follow the general guidance from the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding gathering sizes and physical distancing:

Business processes, procedures and activities

All realtors should establish cleaning, health screening, and physical distancing procedures. Guidance for your organization follows.

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Enhanced cleaning and/or disinfecting procedures

- RIDOH requires at least daily cleanings in any setting and frequent cleanings of commonly touched surfaces (e.g. elevator buttons, door handles and railings).
- RIDOH requires that all employers ensure that employees, customers, and visitors have access to soap and water and/or hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol at all times. During open houses and viewing appointments, it is recommended to provide visitors with access to hand sanitizer.
- Stage open houses to enable “touch-less touring” to the extent possible, allowing visitors to enter and exit with minimal interactions with potential high-touch surfaces.
- When safe and practicable, open windows to increase ventilation and outdoor air circulation.

Screening procedures

- RIDOH requires establishing, at a minimum, symptom screening procedures to screen employees or visitors entering a building or other workplace. People whose responses to screening questions indicate they are sick, or who show visible signs of illness, must be denied entrance and instructed to isolate. Employers may also choose to supplement screening questions with temperature checks.
- The Rhode Island Department of Health has published sample screening questions for businesses and organizations. Sample screening questions can be found at
 - https://health.ri.gov/forms/screening/COVID19_Employee_Screening_Tool.pdf
 - https://health.ri.gov/otherlanguages/spanish/forms/screening/COVID19_Employee_Screening_Tool.pdf
- Screenings can be conducted verbally, by app, by phone, or by another method of the employer’s choosing including, if necessary, the posting of an informational poster that communicates the screening requirements.
- Prior to scheduling viewing appointments or an open house event at a property that remains occupied by current residents, conduct a symptom screening questionnaire with current property residents.
- Conduct a symptom screening questionnaire with visitors to open houses and viewing appointments.

Face masks and other personal protective equipment

- Employees and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless an employee and/or visitor can easily, continuously, and measurably maintain at least six (6) feet of distance from other employees and/or visitors for the duration of his or her work and/or time in a building.
 - Realtors should wear a facemask during open houses or viewing appointments in accordance with the Governor’s executive orders available at <https://governor.ri.gov/newsroom/orders/>.

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- Visitors should wear a facemask during open houses or viewing appointments in accordance with the Governor's executive orders available at <https://governor.ri.gov/newsroom/orders/>.
- Cloth or surgical facemasks are acceptable. Respirators like N95s should be reserved for healthcare workers.
- Gloves are beneficial but not required.

Clear communications plan

- Develop a communications plan to explain the aspects of the Phase II operations to staff, visitors, community members and other target audiences (e.g., businesses) as appropriate.
- Determine appropriate materials and channels for communicating information. Examples include:
 - Developing and disseminating a one-pager.
 - Posting information and FAQs to your website.
 - Sharing information on social media.
 - Developing and sharing screening tools and signage for public buildings and businesses.
- Translate information in the languages helpful for visitors and employees.
- Continue to message the importance of employees staying home if they are sick.

Other processes and activities

- Open house events should not feature communal and/or self-service food and drink stations.
- Realtors should collect contact information, including name, phone number, and date/time of visit, from at least one household member for any household attending a property viewing or open house event. Maintain these records for thirty days.