



September 1, 2021

Dear businesses,

Thank you for everything you have done to help slow the spread of COVID-19. We know the pandemic has been extremely challenging for our businesses. Your partnership has been crucial in promoting the safety and wellbeing of your employees and customers. We know businesses are grappling with questions about what they can do from a public health perspective to best position their businesses as we continue to navigate the Delta variant.

As we are seeing in many parts of the country and the world, Rhode Island's rate of transmission is currently "high" (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), and it's important that we prevent significantly increased demands on our hospitals. As we work to address these challenges, we know it is critical to support the forward motion of our economy, including engaging with you to understand your needs for short-term and long-term resiliency. To help, we want to share some potential actions you and your business can take.

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, and the Department of Business Regulation aim to help businesses make the best choices they can to promote the public health and their economic success. Specifically, we want to make information available to businesses that are considering implementation of the following four public health strategies: vaccination, testing, ventilation, and indoor masking.

- **Vaccination:** Businesses can ask employees and/or customers to be fully vaccinated. Onsite vaccination clinics are available. If your business or organization is interested in holding a clinic, please fill out the [COVID-19 Vaccination Community Partner Interest Form](#).
- **Testing:** Implementing a routine employee testing program (e.g., weekly testing) is a great way to improve your business resilience. An on-site testing program is available to help businesses with this. This program provides businesses with rapid COVID-19 test kits and the training they need to conduct regular testing of employees. If you are interested in participating in the on-site business testing program, email [RIDOH.COVID19BizTesting@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19BizTesting@health.ri.gov).
- **Ventilation:** Increasing ventilation in indoor areas can help reduce the spread of infectious diseases. Visit RIDOH's [ventilation page](#) for information and resources.
- **Indoor Masking:** Businesses also can ask employees and/or customers to wear masks while indoors. New signage options to support this can be found at [Reopeningri.com/signage-resources](https://Reopeningri.com/signage-resources).

We know these mitigation strategies can make a difference. For example, studies indicate that mask wearing can reduce transmission by 70% or 80%.

Locally, a group of nine performing arts venues already formed a partnership earlier this week to set requirements for employees and guests in some of these four areas. They are Festival Ballet Providence, The Gamm Theater, Island Moving Company, Providence Performing Arts Center, Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra and Music School, Trinity Repertory Company, United Theatre, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, and Wilbury Theatre Group. We applaud their initiative in instituting policies that work, and in making these policies clear to their patrons so they can feel even safer attending their events.

As we work to refine the resources to help you implement decisions that work best for your business, we look forward to hearing more about your experiences and ideas in the coming weeks. We want to continue working together so that we remain resilient well beyond the impact of the Delta variant. Please continue to engage with us so we can keep Rhode Islanders safe and our businesses prospering. If you have any additional questions about where to find more information about the above-mentioned strategies, please feel free to call this number for Rhode Island businesses: 401-889-5550.

Thank you,

Rhode Island Department of Health & Rhode Island Commerce teams