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Best Practices for Re-Opening Yoga Studios and Businesses

As several countries begin to lift social distancing measures and re-open public spaces, Yoga Alliance Professionals are conscious of a demand to provide some guidance and recommendations for the safe reopening of yoga businesses.

Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, we have endeavoured to keep you up-to-date with government updates and health and safety guidelines. Now, as we look toward the lifting of lockdown, our commitment to you remains the same.

The following are a set of best practices for studio owners and professionals preparing to re-open their business as and when it is permitted to do so. Our recommendations are based on guidance from expert health organisations, government policy, UKactive and Yoga Alliance Professionals' knowledge of the running of yoga studios. As always, we will amend and update this guide to reflect new information or updates.

Yoga Alliance Professionals understands that the capacity to follow the best practices laid out here will depend on the resources, space, operational practices and regulatory obligations of yoga studios and schools. We strongly recommend checking with a legal advisor and your insurance provider before re-opening your business.

Please be aware that the following are a set of recommendations and do not form part of, or replace official government policy. As always, it is crucial you follow the regulations for your specific area, and check with your local council.



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Following Government Guidelines on Business Re-Opening

Just as we have witnessed huge variation in the global reaction to the Coronavirus pandemic with regard to lockdown and social restrictions, the easing of such measures differ from country to country and even region to region.

The re-opening of public spaces and businesses will, therefore, depend on the severity of the Coronavirus impact in your locality.

Before proceeding to open your studio or business, it is essential you ascertain the following:

- What social distancing measures and business operation restrictions are in place in your specific country/city/town?
- Do these measures apply to your business or employees?
- When are said measures and restrictions due to be lifted?
- If business restrictions have been lifted, are there any health and safety requirements for businesses, employees and members of the public to follow?
- If business restrictions have been lifted, are you required to meet certain standards before re-opening?

If you are not sure of any of the above we recommend checking with your local council for clarification.



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Preparing to Re-Open Your Business

Although physical restrictions are being lifted, it is likely your business will continue to be impacted by Coronavirus. Below are some of the ways your studio may be affected:

- Virus transmissions through in-person contact or shared space.
- Employee sickness or absence due to personal circumstances (childcare/caring)
- Public concerns for returning to in person classes
- Difficulty obtaining cleaning supplies and protective equipment
- Challenges implementing new policies and health and safety measures.

As you prepare to reopen you will need to assess how best to address these risks. This may well require introducing social distancing guidelines, a more frequent cleaning regime, the purchasing of disinfectant and so on. Most importantly, all changes that you do implement will need to be clearly communicated to both staff and students.

We advise all yoga schools, studios and professionals to err on the side of caution when the time comes to reopen. Additionally, given the extensive health and protective measures required to resume operating, we recommend taking a phased approach to re-opening your studios. For example, you may continue some classes remain online until a safer alternative can be found.



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Prior to reopening your yoga space, you will need to create a comprehensive operations plan which covers all aspects of your business. This should include the following:

- Cleaning and sanitation protocol.
- Protective measures for employee and student safety.
- Structure of in-person classes.
- Management of reception, classroom and bathroom facilities.
- Staff leave policies and procedure.
- Provision of protective equipment for staff.
- Provision of handwashing facilities, hand wipes and sanitiser.
- Staff training.
- Communication with students and members of the public.
- Protocols in the event of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case.

Your operations plan should also take into account any laws or government regulations for your business such as:

- Health and safety regulations for businesses conducting face-to-face services.
- Employment laws on employee leave, work schedule, discrimination and reasonable accommodation requirements.
- Workplace safety regulations.



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Implementing Your Plan

In order to successfully implement your operations plan, we recommend writing up all new policies and sharing these with your staff. It will also be necessary to post signage online and on-site to instruct employees, teachers, students and the general public of new procedures. For example, when organising in-person classes, you will need to create a policy that outlines:

- The maximum class size.
- The layout of studio and class space.
- Regulations regarding physical contact and hands-on adjustments.
- Pre-class health consultations and screening.
- Pre and post-class cleaning regime.
- Rules on face covering.
- Rules on the use of personal and shared yoga mats and equipment.
- Protective equipment for teachers and students.
- Use of facilities such as lockers, bathrooms, changing rooms.

Having these policies written up and readily available online and in the studio will help to ensure maximum compliance. It is also worthwhile creating a cleaning procedure for all to follow. This should include:

- All the spaces, surfaces, equipment, floors and furniture to be cleaned
- The cleaning products to be used
- The frequency of cleaning
- A log to demonstrate when cleaning has been completed
- Process in place to escalate any suspected or confirmed unsafe areas.

You should continuously review and amend your policies in line with government updates, updated health guidelines and business local restrictions.



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Best Practices for Re-Opening Your Yoga Business

Yoga Alliance Professionals has created a number of best practices to review and consider when reopening your business. These recommendations are based on the guidance from world health organisations, government guidelines and Yoga Alliance Professionals' experience and knowledge on the running of yoga studios. Given the unprecedented nature and uncertainty surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic, the information provided here may be subject to change.

It is important to remember that the following are recommendations and will need to be adapted or adjusted according to your business, location, and health guidelines. Therefore, we suggest that you use this document only as a guide to develop your own protocols and policies.

Cleaning Schedule

- A rigorous cleaning schedule should be in place, with additional cleaning of frequently touched areas (for example, door handles).
- A cleaning log should be created and accessible to staff members.
- All spaces, equipment, surfaces, floors and furniture should be cleaned thoroughly before class.
- Students should be encouraged to clean their personal mats and equipment before entering the studio.
- Staff and students should be encouraged to follow good hygiene and handwashing.
- Studios should regularly stock up on cleaning supplies.



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The Reception

- Hand wipes or sanitiser should be readily available or, failing this, studio owners should post clear signs directing clients to the nearest hand washing basin.
- Reception staff should be offered protection in the form of protective equipment or reception screen.
- Clear social distancing guidelines should be in place for students entering the studio.
- Studios should implement a system for managing queues into the studio.
- Classes should be paid for either in advance or via contactless payment.

Studio Layout

- Each room must be thoroughly cleaned before each class. Frequently touched areas will need special attention.
- Yoga mats to be positioned 2 metres apart from each other.
- Students should be encouraged to bring their own mats and accessories where possible.
- Where mats are owned by the studio they will need wiping down by the staff or students before and after class.
- To avoid groups forming outside class, studios should instigate a limited time window in which students can arrive at the class.
- Updated policies and informative sign posting should be in clear view in the studio.



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Student Health

- Students must declare any pre-existing health condition before entering the studio.
- The studio must respond to any health condition, and if necessary, advise the student against taking the class.
- Students are advised to change out of their kit as soon as possible after leaving the studio.
- Encourage students to wear face-masks.
- Studios will need to limit the number of students per class.
- All students should be made aware of new health and safety regulations prior to entering the studio.

Teacher Health

- All staff should be made aware of the cleaning regime and additional safety precautions.
- All staff should agree to follow the cleaning schedule and studio COVID-19 guidelines.
- Every member of staff should be asked screening health questions to check whether they are safe to lead the class.
- It is recommended that teachers change out of their clothing after they leave the studio.
- A policy should be in place to ensure that sick staff stay at home.
- Teachers should not carry out hands-on adjustments.

We appreciate this is a difficult time for our members and hope this document can offer some confidence when it comes to planning to reopen your business. As many of us look toward the easing of lockdown, Yoga Alliance Professionals will continue to share updates and useful resources to our members. [You can view these here.](#)

If you have any questions, please [Contact Us](#) via the website,