

## **Anonymous Manufacturer**

Sector: Manufacturing | Size Range: 50-99 Employees | Interviewed: 6/29/2020

### **The Company**

The company manufactures a variety of products for commercial and retail customers.

### **Staffing**

All of the company's currently employed staff members, with the exception of their controller, report to the worksite. The company had to conduct layoffs when the pandemic struck as some of its departments, covering different product lines, closed entirely. Consequently, several of their manufacturing staff were let go. As orders dried up, they immediately laid off a few administrative employees who took in and managed orders. They shifted their accounts payable employee to a three day per week schedule. At the peak of the pandemic, the company was operating with about half of its employees. They have since begun to return employees and hire new ones.

### **COVID-Related Communications**

Information is generally disseminated through managers. Most employees do not have work email addresses, so updates are communicated verbally. A Spanish-speaking employee translates the information for Spanish-speaking employees.

The company has had one positive COVID test. When the employee's sickness was discovered, the employee was told to get tested, and the controller and operations manager individually notified employees who came into contact with the person. These employees were asked to get tested and stay home under FFCRA leave while awaiting their results, which all came back negative. After these employees were sent home, company leadership held an outdoor company-wide meeting stressing how critical it is that employees wear masks and follow safety measures.

### **Safety Measures**

The company quickly cut off travel between its campus' buildings, and visitors are not permitted on-site. Employees currently must use a punch entry keyboard to get into buildings, though the company is in the process of switching over to a key swipe to minimize contact. Employees used to come into their main office to retrieve office supplies; now, staff members in the main office can drop off and take paperwork and items from a box in the main entryway. The company initially removed microwaves, tables, and chairs from the lunch rooms, though they recently resumed microwave and refrigerator use, provided employees wipe the spaces down when used. Earlier in the pandemic, managers cleaned their own buildings. Doorknobs, handles, and lightswitches are wiped down every hour. Since then, the company hired a new employee with a janitorial background who

cleans the buildings on-site continuously throughout the day. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in all administrative offices.

Managers track whether employees are at work through spreadsheets which they share with the controller. Managers from each department take employee temperatures and record when employees cannot enter the building or refuse to do so. Employees who refuse to get their temperatures checked upon arrival are sent home without pay, as are employees who walk around the office without masks. Employees continue to wear hairnets and gloves, as they did prior to the pandemic. Masks are provided, and the company has ordered face shields and hand sanitizer bottles for employee use. The face shields should be more comfortable for employees as the summer heads up.

Employees are required to social distance and work tables are spaced further apart. Where distancing is difficult, the company has put up plastic barriers between employees.

Administrative and office employees normally have individual offices. These employees are permitted to take their masks off in their offices provided they put them back on whenever they leave. Each office is staffed with one person each.

### **Scheduling**

The company has altered its scheduling for manufacturing employees. In the past, these employees had a 15-minute morning break and a 45-minute lunch, with the morning break and 15 minutes of the lunch break being paid. Now employees receive a paid 30-minute lunch. Some departments shifted to 3-days-per-week schedules during the pandemic, but most have returned to full-time schedules at this point.

### **Returning and Hiring Employees**

The company has brought back about 20 employees and is currently operating at around 70% of its pre-pandemic staffing. Some employees accepted other jobs since being laid off and others have returned on more limited schedules. Some employees whose pre-pandemic jobs have changed due to restructuring are reluctant to return to different positions. The company has encountered many employees who are reluctant to return because they would rather stay on unemployment compensation and receive the extra \$600 per week. To fill the gaps left by employees who have elected not to return, the company has placed ads and hired new employees from outside the company.