

SP-HS, LLC

Sector: Retail | Size Range: 250-499 Employees | Interviewed: 6/17/2020

The Organization

SP-HS, LLC operates ten Hand & Stone locations across New Jersey, in Aberdeen, Allendale, Chatham, Clifton, Denville, Edgewater, Emerson, Franklin Lakes, Livingston, and Pompton Lakes.

Staffing

While spas in New Jersey were closed, employees capable of telework worked from home. Certain employees previously worked from home, including their controller and part-time bookkeeper, and their Human Resources Manager split her time between the spas and home before the shutdown. After the Governor announced that personal care services could return, the two owners started by having their Managers call back their front desk employees to schedule appointments, then their therapists and estheticians. They did not actively recruit during the shutdown and have reached out to all of their former employees to gauge their willingness to return. The majority of their therapists are returning the week of June 22nd, and the majority of estheticians are returning to work on July 2nd, when the state allowed those services to be offered. Some employees wanted to come back in early July to give them more time to prepare to return.

Reopening the Spas

Since other states have already permitted day spas to open, Hand & Stone corporate has developed a clear playbook on how to safely reopen facilities and has offered resources to owners. Corporate started hosting weekly calls for franchisees around the end of March to engage with owners around the country. The majority of Hand & Stone locations throughout the country are already operational, which means New Jersey owners can learn lessons from others' reopening processes. For example, some locations had tried a model where their schedules were split into shifts handled by set "crews" (normally a manager, front desk employee, and a few therapists and estheticians) who would always go in at the same time. SP-HS elected not to follow this model as it proved to be overly complicated. Corporate conducted customer surveys throughout the pandemic and created a webinar on preparing to reopen based on the results of clients' feedback. This webinar detailed procedures such as how to reach out to clients, how to best call employees back, and to best handle clients from when they enter the lobby to when they finish, and shared information on where to acquire PPE, additional linens, cleaning supplies, and other items needed to safely reopen.

Communication

The two owners, location managers, and sales managers have taken part in internal calls for about 45 minutes 4-5 days a week to share lessons learned and to review re-opening protocols.

Client Safety

Hand & Stone has required all of its locations adopt safety measures, [outlined on their website](#). In addition to following corporate guidelines, they will also be taking employee and client temperatures in line with state guidelines. All Hand & Stone therapists and estheticians are required to take a 2-hour sanitary training and exam, graded by corporate, before they can safely return to work. For the time being, these ten locations are not offering couples massages. They are adjusting their schedules to account for additional cleaning time. This complicates scheduling, because they can no longer hold all appointments on the hour.