



Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL - CIO

Occupational Safety and Health Department

Updated July 9, 2020 (Originally published May, 20, 2020)

CDC and ASHRAE General Building Ventilation Recommendations for the COVID-19 emergency:

These ventilation recommendations are adopted from the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) for Non-Medical Workplaces¹ and from the Center's for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings²:

- Describe in the COVID-19 Workplace Health and Safety Plan how building ventilation systems will be adjusted to provide increased infection protection for all occupants².
- Increase outdoor air ventilation (disable demand-controlled ventilation and open outdoor air dampers to the 100% as indoor and outdoor conditions permit or on full economizer), but above the minimum recommendation of 17 CFM of outdoor air per person or approximately 20%³ outdoor air.
- Improve central air and other HVAC filtration to MERV-13 (ASHRAE 2017b) or the highest level achievable.
- Keep systems running longer hours (24/7) if possible), but start the systems at least 2 hours before occupants arrive at the beginning of the day and 2 hours after the last person leaves the building.
- Add portable room air cleaners with HEPA or high-MERV filters with due consideration to the clear air delivery rate (AHAM 2015).
- Add duct- or air handler mounted, upper room, and/or portable UVGI devices in connection to in-room fans in high density spaces such as waiting rooms and other similar areas.
- Maintain temperature and humidity as applicable to the infectious aerosol of concern, with a currently recommended relative humidity between 40% and 60%³ and temperatures within the established ASHRAE seasonal guidelines, of 68 F to 74 F in the heating season and 72 F to 80 F for the cooling season.⁴
- Bypass energy recovery ventilation systems that leak potentially contaminated exhaust air back into the outdoor air supply.

References

1 – **ASHRAE Position Document on Infectious Aerosols**, ASHRAE Environmental Health Position Committee, ASHRAE, 1791 Tullie Circle NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

2 – **CDC Employer Information for Office Buildings**, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/office-buildings.html>

3 – **ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2013, Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality**, ASHRAE Standing Standard Project Committee, ASHRAE, 1791 Tullie Circle NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

4 – **ASHRAE Standard 55-2017, Thermal Environmental Conditions for Human Occupancy**, ASHRAE Standing Standard Project Committee, ASHRAE, 171 Tullie Circle NE Atlanta, GA 30329