

COVID-19 Crisis Main Street Checklist

Staying Connected



“Social distancing” doesn’t mean “social isolation.” As the COVID-19 crisis continues to develop, we’ve gathered some quick tips, ideas, and inspiration about ways to stay connected with your Main Street team and community while working remotely during this pandemic.

Working Remotely

- ✓ **Optimize Your Workspace.** Take time to designate a place within your house to be your new workspace. Make sure this space has good lighting and a sturdy chair. This clearly defined space will help your work-life balance, as well as help you avoid health issues related to sitting at a computer for long periods of time.
- ✓ **Self-care.** It can be hard to draw those lines between work-life and homelife when your office becomes your house. Be sure to take breaks, stay hydrated, and maintain usual working hours.

Connecting with Your Team

- ✓ **Utilize Technology.** There are many tools out there that can help you connect with your colleagues more effectively while working remotely. If your team hasn’t already, consider activating the chat features in Gmail or Outlook. Stand-alone platforms like Slack also provide teams with chat capabilities.
- ✓ **Stay Engaged.** Be sure you are logged into the email or chat software that your team uses so you can reply promptly—even if it’s just to say, “I can’t talk right now.” And, don’t forget that a quick phone call is often the easiest and most effective way to stay connected.
- ✓ **Use Video.** Seeing the faces of your colleagues is a great way to feel like you’re all at the same meeting. Consider using Skype, Zoom, GoToMeeting, or Google Hangouts as a way of including a video feature into your calls.
- ✓ **Know Your Tech.** Using video and audio are great ways to feel connected, but it’s hard to feel that connection during tech troubles. Be sure to test both the audio/video system you are using as well as mics and headphones before jumping into staff calls.
- ✓ **Recognize Successes.** Recognizing the successes of your colleagues on a regular basis is always a great way to both celebrate your teammates and connect as a staff, but it’s especially important when you are working remotely. Pro tip: go beyond “Well done;” being specific with your praise indicates that you took the time to review their work!

Connecting with Your Community

- ✓ **Discussion Spaces.** From Shelter-in-Place mandates to practicing social distancing, people are being kept away from the third spaces in your downtown that organically generate conversations and community. Create virtual “third spaces” to encourage your town to keep connected. Whether it’s a virtual town hall meeting or a Facebook post asking your followers how they #SupportLocalSafely, creating online discussion spaces keeps your community engaged.
- ✓ **Designate a Facilitator.** When hosting virtual meetings or discussion forums, it can be challenging to make sure all participants are heard. Designate a facilitator to guide the discussion and highlight voices that may be getting lost.
- ✓ **Virtual Tours.** Host “tours” of shops, museums, or interesting features along your Main Street. These can be video tours complete with a guide and script or a collection of photos online with descriptions written below.

For additional resources, please visit mainstreet.org/covid19resources