

# Back to Business: Gym/Studio Re-opening Guidelines



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Gyms, studios, and fitness centers have been included, with physical distancing restrictions, in the [Opening Up America Again](#) plan. NESTA has collected the important guidelines, that you as a personal trainer, fitness professional and/or a gym owner need to know, before re-opening or providing your services to your clients. Read the following critical guidelines you need to execute, in order to re-open your business and keep your facility, employees, and clients safe. If you are a fitness professional who lives outside of United States, you can use this guide as well and check with your local or national government agencies for specifics. **Note: Please check with your local city, county, state or other government guidelines to make sure you are compliant.**

## How to Prepare Your Gym or Studio to Reopen

While gyms are included in Phase One on a federal level, many states that have opened or are about to open, have not included gyms in their Phase One. It is up to each state government to decide what guidelines should be set as well as the timeframe for reopening gyms and studios. Be sure to look up your state-specific guidelines, as well as county/city-specific guidelines.

- Place signage at any entrance to instruct clients and members that they cannot enter if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, has symptoms of COVID-19, or have had contact with a person that has or is suspected to have COVID-19.
- Place signage at any entrance and throughout your facility to instruct clients and members about the enhanced sanitation and disinfecting procedures, social distancing requirements, and other instructions and limitations.
- Space equipment a minimum of six feet apart, or every other piece of equipment. Be sure to check your specific state/guidelines for the correct spacing of equipment.
- If group fitness classes or training are authorized in your state, use grid tape to mark spots in the classrooms.
- Be prepared to have signs and areas marked off where clients and members are not authorized to go. Keep in mind that many states are requiring pools, basketball courts, steam rooms, saunas, tanning beds, and child care services, to be closed. Consider closing off "lounge areas" or anywhere members can congregate.

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- Stock up on cleaning supplies, masks, gloves, thermometers, tape to mark floors, etc. Create new processes and procedures and put them in writing. Plan their execution in detail.
- Set up your gym/studio, but avoid removing or moving equipment if possible. Place an "x" over every other piece of equipment to align with social distancing guidelines and denote which machines are open and which aren't.
- Educate your team members, trainers, and coaches on proper execution of the new processes and procedures. Give them a step-by-step action plan. Schedule a training meeting with team members and personal trainers before re-opening.
- Inform trainers and team members of the start of the day and end of day temperature checks if you plan on implementing those.
- Train team members on new protocols, both sanitation and social distancing and require designated staff members to patrol and enforce sanitation and social distancing requirements.
- Require team members to clean and sanitize bathrooms and locker rooms regularly throughout the open hours in addition to the regular cleaning schedule.
- Inform your clients and members. Send out newsletters frequently and consistently to keep your members and clients up to date on any and all changes that are occurring.

## Sanitizing Gym Equipment

- Floors:** Wood floors are tricky surfaces to clean. Skip the home remedies you may find on the internet and go with a disinfectant cleanser specifically made for hardwood floors and follow the directions closely. Mats and rubber flooring are much easier to keep clean. With mats, you can just wipe them down with a disinfectant cloth and then let them dry after each use. For rubber flooring, each day, sweep away any dust or lint using a vacuum. Then, mop it with a gallon of warm water and a couple of drops of mild dish soap. Avoid harsh chemicals and vinegar because they can cause the rubber to deteriorate.

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**Treadmills, Ellipticals & Other Machines:** With machines, first and foremost, unplug them before doing any cleaning. Then, wipe down surfaces with disinfectant wipes. Be sure to get in the nooks and crannies around handles and seat seams. Then, let the machine dry. It's best to wipe down your machine equipment every day after a workout.

**Free Weights & Benches:** To sanitize free weights and benches, simply wipe them down with a disinfectant wipe after you use them or spray them with a disinfectant like Lysol. Make sure they completely dry before using them again since the cleanser needs time to kill the bacteria, plus they'll be a little slippery.

**Resistance Bands:** Resistance bands are a little more difficult to clean because they are floppy and stretchy. To make matters worse, most cleaning solutions can deteriorate the material. The best you can do is dip your bands into warm water with a couple of drops of mild dish soap mixed in after your workout. Swish the bands around for a few seconds, then rinse them with warm water and let the bands air dry. Don't put them in the sun to dry because sunlight can deteriorate the material, as well.

## Before Opening Day

Email your updated "Waiver of Liability" that is specific to the coronavirus. Ask your clients or members to sign and send back the waiver. Have extras available on opening day/week for clients who were not able to sign beforehand.

Along with your updated liability waiver, email, and post your new gym/studio expectations and requirements. You can have clients acknowledge this with a signature as well.

Make sure to highlight any services that will continue to be canceled like childcare or group fitness classes.

## During Daily Operation

You and your staff need to be wearing a mask and gloves. Set-up a contactless check-in system for your clients and members and require face mask or coverings for anyone entering/using the facility.

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Screen clients and members at the entrance. If they are exhibiting a cough, shortness of breath, or other respiratory symptoms ask them to return home. For clients who are healthy enough to use the facility, encourage them to wash their hands, and use hand sanitizer frequently while using facility and equipment, as well as when they are leaving.



Take the temperature of team members and clients. Any member or trainer exhibiting a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit should not be allowed in the facility.



Instruct your clients and members to wipe down equipment before and after use.

## NESTA Suggestions



Call your clients and give them an update over the phone, whether they've been working out with you or not. Talk about different options, whether they prefer to stay at home and do online workouts with you, or come on in.



Group fitness classes are a no-go in most states, and extremely limited in others. Continue live streaming workouts, and if you haven't set up virtual or online personal training consider doing so.

Online personal fitness training takes many forms. It can be a collection of streaming videos that are live or pre-recorded and shared through a platform or app like Zoom. It can include live training and coaching sessions offered in a variety of ways. There are even some hybrid training where coaching is blended with in-person and online training.



Check out our guide on [setting up an online personal training business](#) and our tips for virtual training/coaching via Zoom.



Stay connected with your clients and members. Keep in mind that some of your clients won't be able to or won't feel comfortable jumping back into training in person at the gym or studio. Give your clients and members the option to continue online training especially if they are in a more at-risk demographic.

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## NESTA Suggestions Continued

- The first time a member enters your facility, take time to walk around with them personally. Show them the steps and precautions you are taking to protect their health.
- Maintain and continue to check-in with the community you have built online.
- Consider setting aside time midway through the day to close the facility and disinfect.

## Expanding Your Offerings

Lockdown has prompted people to pause and reassess their lifestyle. Our clients are paying more attention to sleep, healthy nutrition, and their wellness in an effort to strengthen their immune system and overall health, so why not take your training, knowledge, and skills to the next level. Integrating additional coaching with your personal training will create additional revenue streams.

If you want to become a one-stop-shop for your clients, one of our most popular courses is the [Fitness Nutrition Coach](#) course, and you can find a variety of health and wellness based certifications, including [sleep science](#), [stress management](#), and [wellness coaching](#) through the Spencer Institute.

We are giving away the complete comprehensive training for [online coaching and training](#) with the purchase of a certification from NESTA and the Spencer Institute. We are also giving your free access to our [Home Gym Profit Center](#). It teaches you everything you need to know from business, to compliancy, to home gym set up. There's nothing to buy. Just grab your copy now.

NESTA is here to help you thrive during this crisis and provide our members with constant support during this unprecedented time. We have over 25 certification and education courses to help you with every aspect of your career. As always, we welcome your thoughts and feedback. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve the fitness industry for nearly 30 years in over 65 countries.

Stay healthy,

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