



By [Karen Clark Cole](#)

Dear friends of Blink,

In response to Washington State's November 15th new Phase 2 restrictions and guidelines, Blink has revisited our health and safety protocols and evaluated the in-person research lab studies that are currently in progress.

At this time, we have determined that all of our current and future research studies may continue on as planned, with our highly cautious, hospital level Covid-19 protocols in place. We remain committed to our clients and their success – and thank them for their trust and patience in our company and our process.

We continue to have the majority of our employees working from home, and at no time will our Seattle office exceed the 25% maximum capacity guideline.

The following is an outline of Blink's health and safety protocols and procedures, which have been in place since we opened our Seattle research labs earlier this summer.

Please stay safe and as always, we are open to your feedback and questions.

Sincerely,
Karen

Karen Clark Cole
Chief Executive Officer



On-site health and safety

- **Temperature Checks:** All staff, participants, clients, and guests are required to have their temperature checked upon arrival each day by a host. If your temperature is 100.4 degrees or above, they will be asked to go home. Note: Temperatures can fluctuate throughout the day, and anything below 100.4 is not considered a fever. A person knows their body best, and it is their decision to go home if they have a temperature above average, but less than 100.4. See [this article](#) for more information.
- **Health Questionnaire:** All staff members, participants, clients, and guests are required to complete a health questionnaire upon arrival each day. If they do not meet our health requirements, they will be asked to go home.
- **Face Masks:** All staff members, participants, clients, and guests are required to wear a face mask properly (covering mouth and nose) for the duration of their visits. This requirement applies to labs, restrooms, conference rooms, and other public spaces. Hosts and senior managers have the discretion to dismiss participants and guests who do not comply with this policy. Note for staff members: Staff are welcome to book a meeting room or observation room for the duration of their visit to work out of. If staff are in a closed room alone, they are not required to wear a face mask.
- **Hand Washing:** We recommend that staff members, participants, clients, and guests wash or sanitize their hands frequently. Hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol will be located throughout the space for their use.
- **Social Distancing:** All staff, participants, clients and guests should not gather in groups larger than 5 people and should maintain at least 6

feet of distance at all times. Hosts, senior managers and moderators have the discretion to dismiss participants and guests who do not comply with this policy.

- **Cleaning Agents:** Blink staff will use Clorox wipes, isopropyl alcohol wipes, Lysol spray, Sani-Cloth wipes, face masks and gloves to complete COVID-19 cleaning procedures.
- **PPE:** KN-95 face masks, face shields, disposable masks and gloves will be available onsite.
- **Parking:** During COVID-19, Blink will provide parking vouchers to staff members to park in the building's garage.

Communication and onsite team:

- **Senior Managers:** Rotating senior managers will be onsite daily to oversee research studies. Senior managers are members of the leadership team who are familiar with COVID-19 policies developed by the COVID-19 Lab Committee. Senior managers will have final say in any situation that cannot be resolved by normal protocols.
- **Hosts and Moderators:** Hosts, researchers, recruiters, and project managers will communicate through the #host channel in Slack. This allows everyone to have visibility and ensure information is not lost between individuals.
 - Hosts will notify researchers when their participant has arrived.
 - Hosts will notify researchers and call participants if a participant is not on time.
 - Researchers will notify hosts when a participant has completed their session.
 - Researchers will notify hosts when a lab is vacant and ready to be cleaned.
 - Hosts will notify researchers when a lab has been cleaned.
- **Lab Briefing Document:** All onsite staff and contractors will meet prior to a study pilot to review study procedures and required cleaning protocols.
- **COVID Communication:** If a staff member, participant, client or guest begins to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms, the studio manager should be notified immediately. She will contact the on-site senior manager, who will communicate with any on-site staff members about the potential case. The name of the person who is possibly infected will not be shared with any Blink staff members other than HR and leadership.
- **Wayfinding:** Social distancing signage and safety recommendations are placed throughout the space as reminders.
- **Vaults:** Sensitive client devices must be stored in onsite vaults overnight and on weekends. Keys to vaults must be checked out from the studio manager. Note: Lost keys will incur a \$150 personal expense.

Lab safety:

- **Moderator and Participant:** Blink staff and contractors will not conduct research in the same room as participants. During research sessions, moderators and participants will be located in separate rooms. Room to room communication will be conducted through Zoom or equivalent.
- **Participant Arrival:** Participants will only be allowed in the Blink space 15 minutes prior to their session. Participants who arrive prior to their 15-minute check-in window will be asked to return at their designated check-in time.
- **Personal Devices:** Upon client request, participants will be required to secure any non-medical personal devices in onsite lockers. Moderators and senior managers have the discretion to dismiss anyone who does not comply with this policy.
- **Schedule:** Participant sessions will be scheduled a minimum of 45 minutes apart to accommodate COVID-19 cleaning protocols.
- **PPE:** Participants must wear masks at all times throughout their sessions. Any exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case basis by the COVID-19 Lab Committee. Researchers must wear masks except when working in a dedicated observation room by themselves.
- **HEPA Filters:**
 - For studies where participants will remove their masks during the study, our policy will be to run our HEPA filters on Turbo (which increases the speed of cleaning) for a minimum of 90 minutes before our labs are cleaned by a person wearing PPE. We will schedule sessions with a full 2 hours (120 minutes) between participants. This additional time will not be necessary if participants wear their masks for the entire session.
 - In all cases, we determine our protocols under the assumption that any individual could be infected with SARS-CoV-2. While specific research on the COVID-19 is incomplete, it is considered reasonable to apply a similar time period as that used for pathogens spread by the airborne route (e.g., measles, tuberculosis) and to restrict people without PPE from entering the room until sufficient time has elapsed for enough air changes to remove potentially infectious particles.
 - To determine a safe amount of time for the room to ventilate we used a [formula recommended by the CDC](#). It is based on how many air changes our ventilation system produces per hour (ACH). In our labs we have two ventilation systems; the HVAC that is building-wide, and our HEPA filtration systems that we have added to each lab. Our HEPA filters will produce 5 air changes per hour. According to the table provided, the air in the labs will be cleared for 99% efficiency in 46-69 minutes and 99.9% efficiency in 69-104 minutes.

Lab cleaning:

- **Host Responsibilities:** Following each session, labs must be unoccupied by participants and researchers for a minimum of 45 minutes. At that time, Blink hosts will complete our COVID-19 cleaning procedure.
COVID Cleaning Procedure:
 - Air out the lab for 45 minutes (a host will set a timer). Note: This step is only applicable when a participant wears a mask for the duration of their session. See above for the protocol if a participant does not wear a mask during their session.
 - Researcher or host hit "turbo" on HEPA air purifier^[1] and run for 45 minutes prior to anyone entering the room
 - Clean door handles and keypad with Clorox, Sani-cloth or isopropyl alcohol wipes
 - Clean room surfaces, chair arms, table tops, keyboard, chords and mouse with Clorox, Sani-cloth or isopropyl alcohol wipes
 - Turn off HEPA air purifier
- **Hourly Cleaning:** Each hour, hosts will restock PPE and use Clorox, Sani-Cloth, or isopropyl alcohol wipes to clean high-traffic public spaces, such as the reception area, the elevator lobby, the waiting area, and restrooms, including:
 - Seat where participant sat
 - Door handles and elevator buttons
 - Reception area
 - Town Hall and lunch tables
 - ADA restroom
 - Restrooms
- **Researcher Responsibilities:**
 - Devices and Equipment: Researchers will remove any devices that need to be swapped out with a clean device for the next participant. Researchers are responsible for cleaning any devices that are switched between sessions. Any devices or equipment that cannot be cleaned with standard materials such as Clorox, Lysol, Sani-cloth or isopropyl alcohol wipes must be placed in bins and quarantined for a minimum of three days.
 - Observation Rooms: Researchers will wipe down and sanitize observation room throughout the day.

COVID-19 onsite:

- **Informed Consent:** All Blink staff and contractors will complete an [Informed Consent](#) document stating they acknowledge the risk of contracting COVID-19 while onsite. This document is not a liability waiver.
- **Suspected COVID-19 Case:** All staff, participants, clients or guests who express or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while onsite will be sent home. Any staff who are unable to immediately leave will be isolated in Wellness 2. See our [COVID-19 policy](#) on what to do when an employee becomes ill.
- **Confirmed COVID-19 Case:** All staff who have had contact (see policy for definition of contact) with identified employee(s) will be quarantined for 14 days and self-monitor symptoms. Current studies may be rescheduled.

COVID-19 test resources and sites:

A list of COVID-19 testing sites can be found [here](#). A person can also book an appointment through their primary care provider. If a staff member, participant, client or guest suspects that they have COVID-19 or have been exposed to the virus, we ask that they please get tested as soon as possible and only visit our space after they have received a negative COVID-19 test.

Additional resources:

Below are some of the sources we have relied upon in creating our protocols. There is considerable consistency across all of their recommendations.

[CDC Guidance for Businesses](#)

[OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

[King County COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Massachusetts Safety Standards for Workplaces](#)

[City of San Francisco Guidance for Offices](#)

[San Diego County Safe Reopening Plan](#)

Thank you for your help in keeping our community healthy!