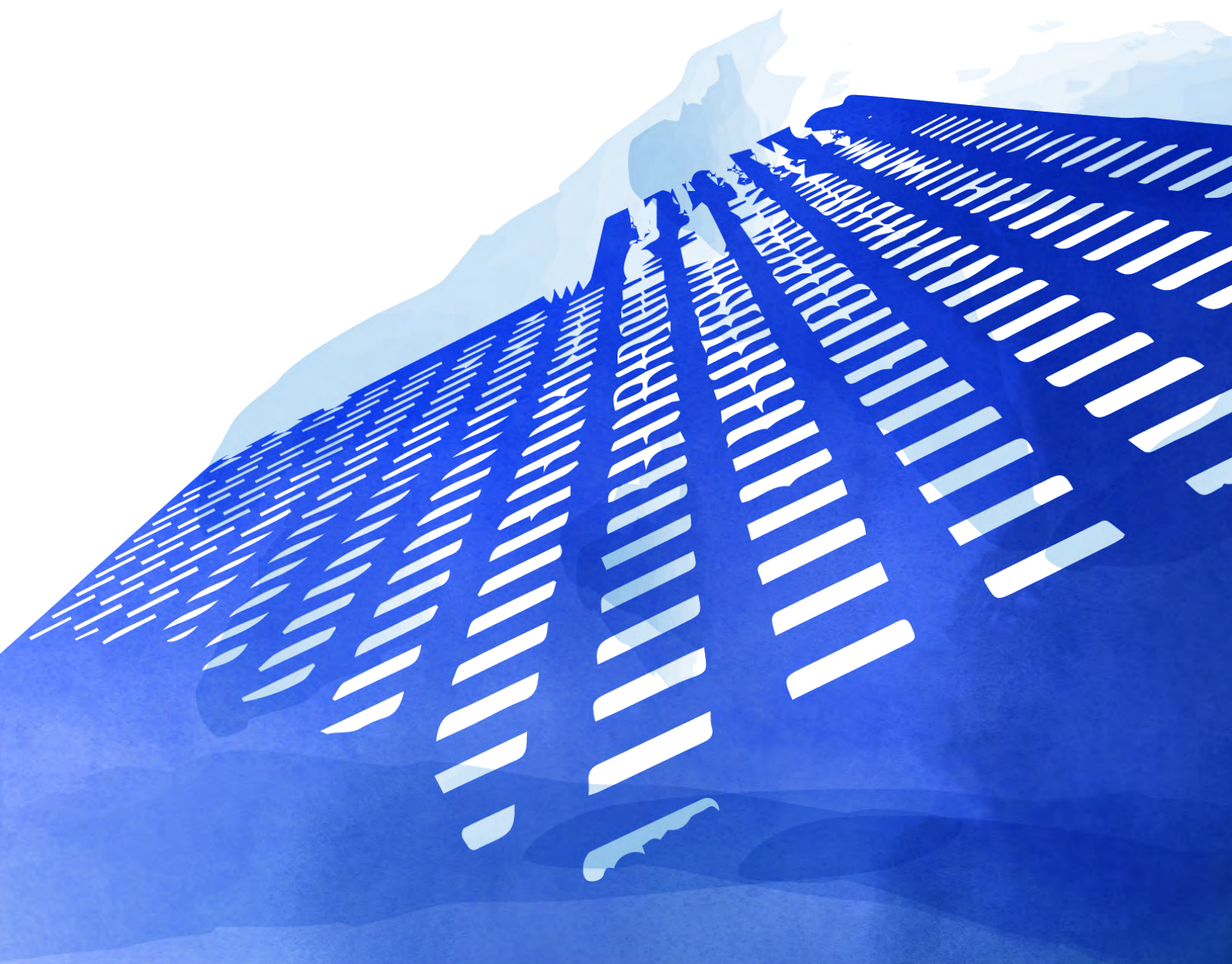




# How to Safely Reopen Your Business





This guide is for executives, facilities managers, health and safety leaders, and IT professionals who:

- Have significant responsibility or influence over when and how employees can return to the workplace.
- Are concerned about keeping employees healthy and safe.
- Use data as a decision-making tool.
- Want to make employees feel confident about returning to the workplace.



**Estimated reading time: 9 minutes**

# Where to start?

## Introduction

Resilience is safely  
returning to the workplace

## Scenario 1

Reopen and manage  
physical locations

## Scenario 2

Return while  
supporting employee  
safety and wellbeing

## Scenario 3

Engage your teams—  
remotely and onsite

## Conclusion

Returning with  
confidence

Introduction

# Resilience is safely returning to the workplace



Many workplaces around the world closed because of COVID-19, as government and business leaders sought to protect people from sickness. Depending on when you are reading this and where you are in the world, many companies may have returned to the workplace already, or they may be just starting to return, or still waiting.

There is no universal experience in this situation. Thus, there is no one-size-fits-all decision, either. So, while we can't tell you when to return, we can help you learn from the resilience of businesses that are already meeting these challenges. The essential leadership principles that have emerged can then guide you in navigating the question of when to return so your business can develop the same resilience. These include leading with empathy, leaning on your existing crisis management plan, moving quickly and together to make sure no time is lost and everyone is on board, listening to experts, and communicating frequently and transparently, especially with employees.

Every business leader must work within criteria that is specific to their own workplace. You need to consider:

- Local government directives.
- How you'll track employee health and other datapoints that create a feedback loop.
- How quickly you can react to changing conditions in the community and onsite.
- The emotional readiness of your employees.
- Business productivity needs.

It's a complicated situation. But no matter what your level of readiness, this e-book will help you understand how to return to the workplace with confidence using solutions that help strengthen the resilience of your people, teams, and organization.



## Scenario 1

# Reopen and manage physical locations

Open and operate your locations responsibly to provide employees with a safer environment, while ensuring your organization can quickly respond to—and communicate—changing circumstances.

With the big picture of a disrupted business landscape and the health and safety of your employees in mind, consider this approach to reopening and managing physical locations.<sup>1</sup>

### Advance

Return your workers in waves rather than all at once. Add new waves or increase existing ones over time and as circumstances remain stable or improve.

### Retreat

Reduce the number of onsite workers or withdraw them entirely if changing conditions in the community, among suppliers, or at your work site deem that necessary.

### Adapt

Establish fast feedback loops to learn about the true status of employees and facilities so you can apply lessons from each site and each retreat.

### Repeat

Practice and value resilience as your company adapts and tries again.

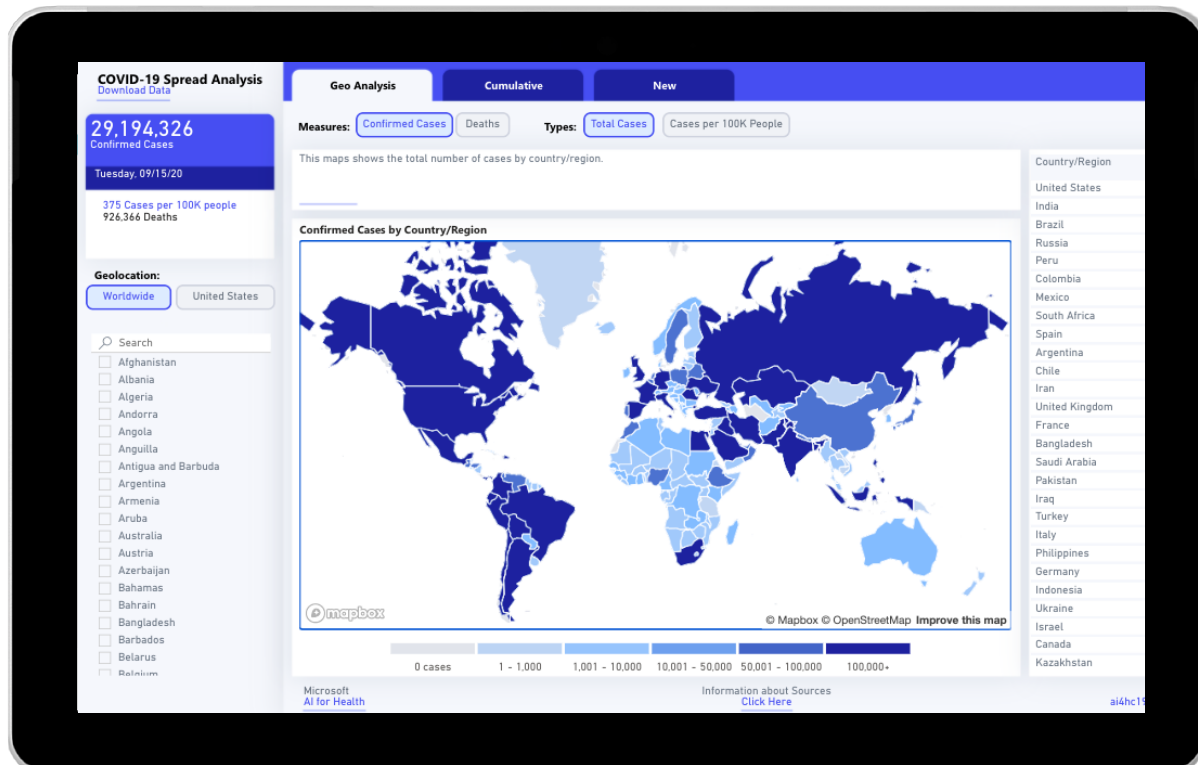
<sup>1</sup> “[Back to work](#),” Bain & Company, June 2020.



# Microsoft AI for Health keeps you informed

As part of our commitment to empower nonprofits, researchers, and organizations with AI and data science, we created an interactive visualization of COVID-19 data. See the big picture or drill into your county for data on testing rates and risk levels.

[See the interactive data map >](#)



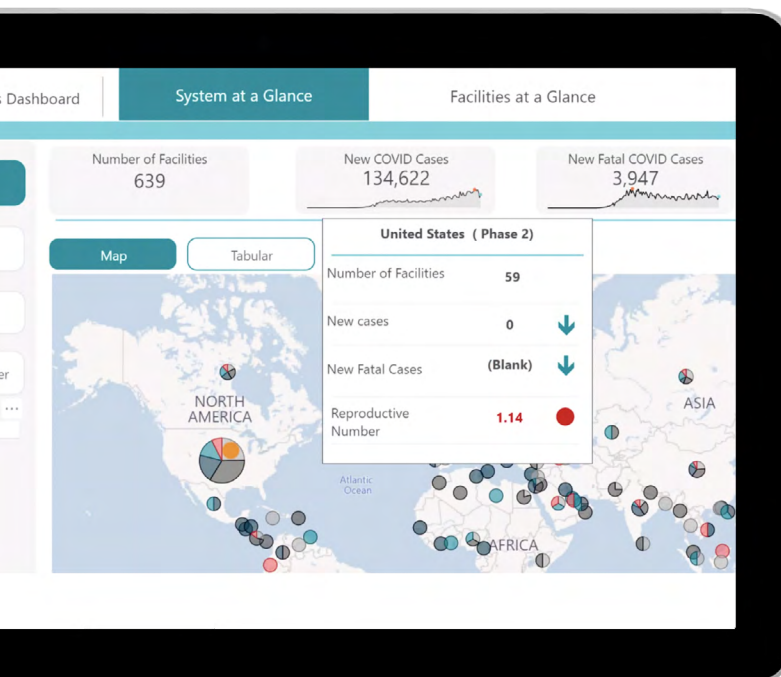
Data map captured on Tuesday, 09/15/20

# Solutions that will help reopen and manage physical locations

## Location readiness dashboard

Microsoft Power Platform

[Learn more >](#)



➔ **Who it's for:** Company leadership.

➔ **What it does:** This module consolidates signals and scores from country, state, city, campus, and facility levels into a readiness model that can be viewed from a single dashboard.

➔ **Why this matters:** Data helps leadership make clear decisions.

- See the most current COVID-19 data across the world and drill down to facility level.
- Compare metrics to establish goals and targets for locations.
- Review and adhere to guidelines set for each location by government agencies.
- Monitor locations daily to advance or retreat phases.

[Learn more >](#)



## Safer buildings with IoT solutions

Built on Azure

[Learn more >](#)



### Who these solutions are for:

Facilities leadership and management.



### What they do:

These solutions monitor critical environmental data such as human body temperature, effective physical distancing, hand sanitization compliance, and air quality. With accurate real-time reporting, you can act and respond quickly to increased risk in your facilities.



**Why this matters:** Reopening and managing physical locations safely requires a substantial shift in how we think about those spaces.

- Remove the guesswork about how to set up a safe physical space.
- Reassure employees about the safety protocols for inside a building.
- Rely on data for rapid response (retreat, advance) when necessary.
- Help to keep people safe while also supporting productivity and a sense of normalcy.



# Touchless meeting experiences

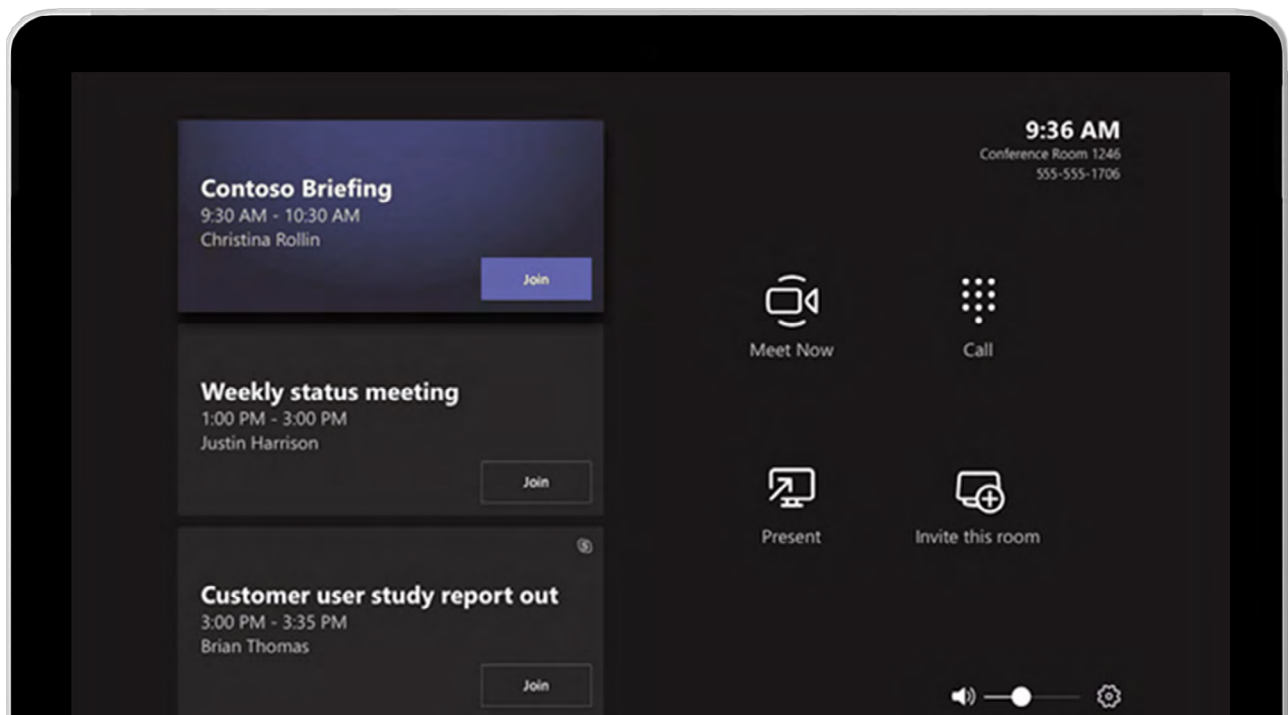
## Microsoft Teams Rooms

➔ **Who it's for:** Employees.

➔ **What it does:** Enables touchless experiences on Microsoft Teams devices for shared spaces.

➔ **Why this matters:** Supports inclusive collaboration between remote and in-person attendees, and maintaining social distancing in meeting rooms.

- Join and leave meetings without touching the shared device.
- Use the Teams mobile app to adjust meeting settings and experiences.
- Coordinate meetings with Teams Rooms and Surface Hub, and manage meeting room capacity notifications.



## Scenario 2

# Return while supporting employee safety and wellbeing

Protect your employees with new safety protocols and intelligently monitor the health of your entire organization to help make data-driven decisions about who should work where.

Creating a set of criteria for reopening can build confidence in the decision to do so. Consider these five criteria for a soft reopening of a physical site.

**1. Government and health authorities have eased restrictions.**

A quantitative and qualitative review by local leadership can also reassure employees that it is safe to return to the workplace.

**2. Your worksite has been adapted to meet health and safety guidelines.**

Ensuring your physical space can help employees maintain distancing, and hygiene requirements will help keep everyone safe and healthy.

**3. Guidance for in-person working has been shared with employees.**

This includes attendance planning (how many people are allowed in the office at once), as well as clear guidelines for people who are at risk, and symptom-reporting requirements.

**4. Technology and onsite support is in place.**

You already have the tools you need to make data-driven decisions, with the ability to track government restrictions, monitor employee COVID-19 cases, facility readiness, and supply availability.

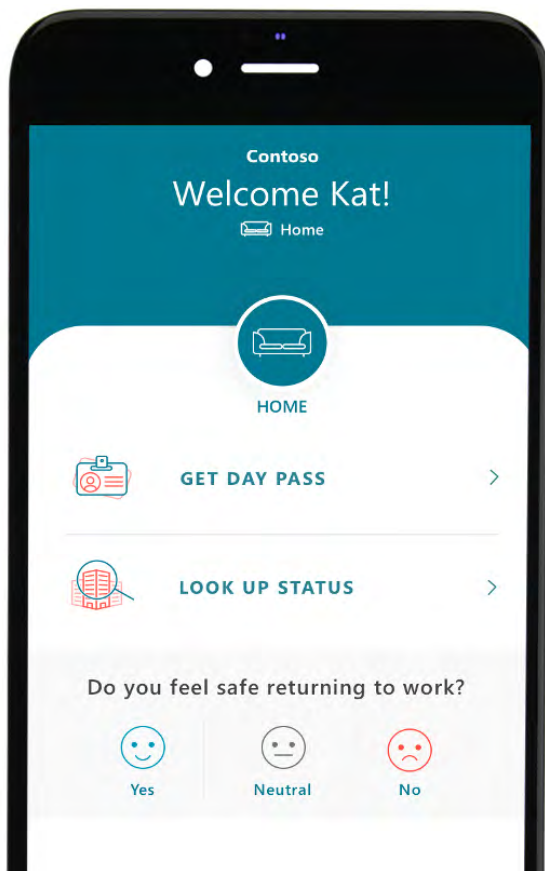
**5. You have a strong plan for employee communications.**

The best way to reassure and calm any anxiety is to communicate clearly and transparently as often as necessary.

# Solutions that will help support employee safety and wellbeing

## Employee health and safety management app

Microsoft Power Platform



- ➔ **Who it's for:** Employees.
- ➔ **What it does:** This module lets employees check in at specific locations, do a self-screen and attest to their state of health, and receive a day pass for entry to that location through an app interface.
- ➔ **Why this matters:** Tracking employee health daily gives management the ability to act quickly if necessary.

- Employees let management know where they'll be working physically.
- Configure the app to your company's needs and branding.
- Identity and security login using Azure Active Directory.
- Self-service bot streamlines check-in and screening.

Back to scenarios



# Workplace care management dashboard

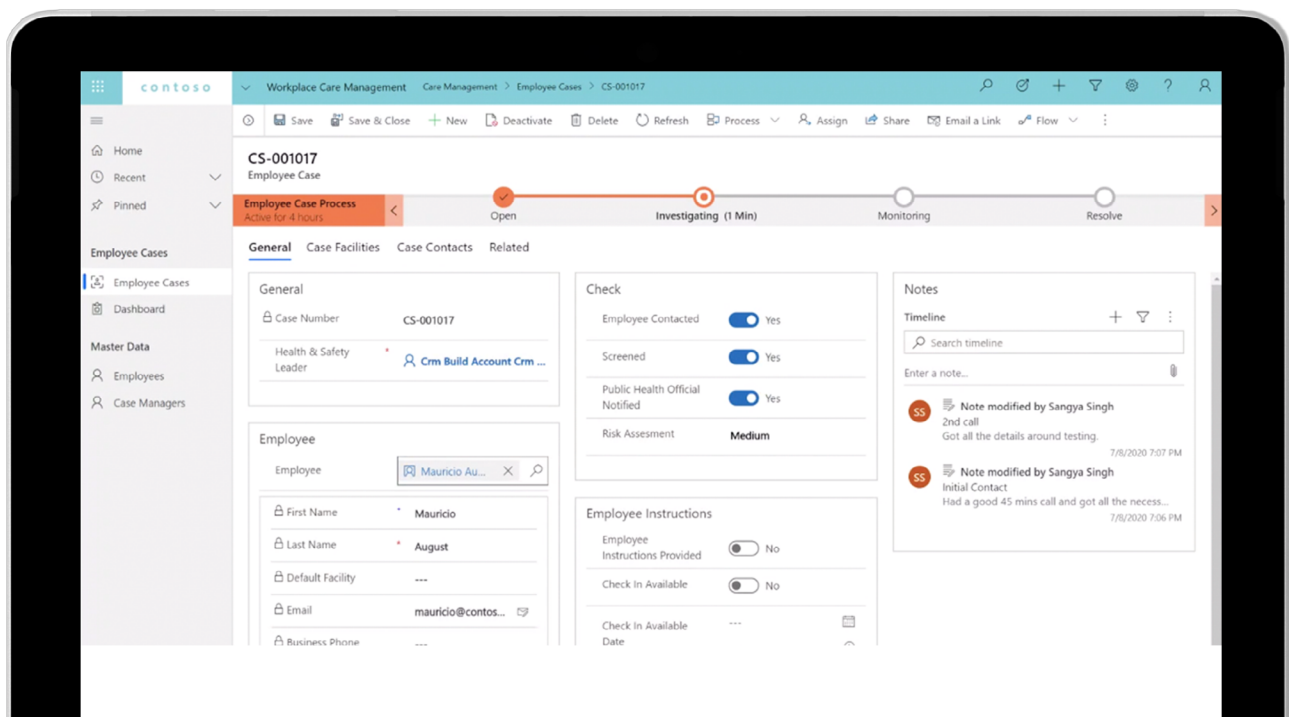
## Microsoft Power Platform

➔ **Who it's for:** Health and safety teams.

➔ **What it does:** This module helps proactively track and manage COVID-19 cases across locations.

➔ **Why this matters:** To remain open, health and safety leaders need clear visibility into occupancy and infection rates.

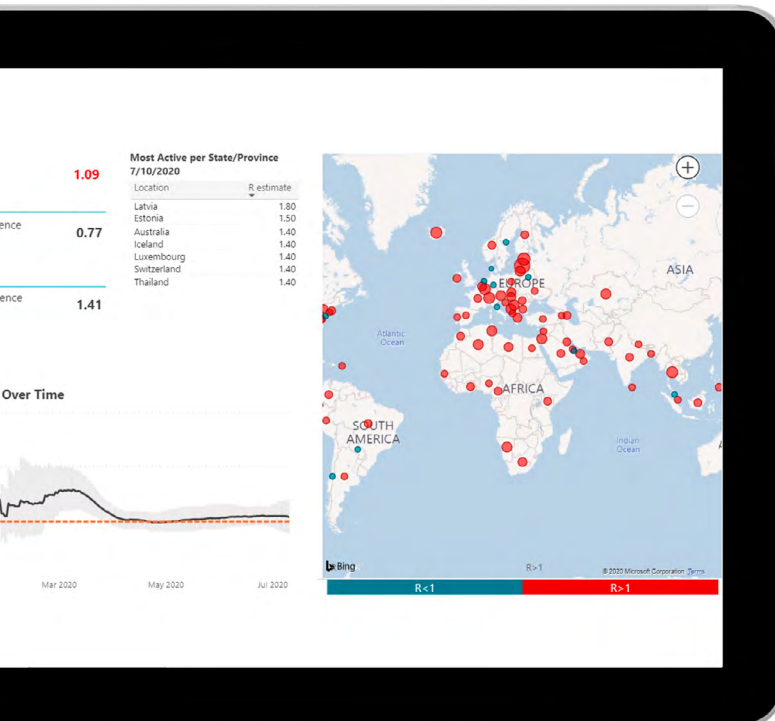
- Health and safety team member is assigned an employee under investigation for illness, employee is directed to testing, and other safety measures are performed.
- Identify hotspots for safety improvements.
- Import data from third-party systems and determine exposure.
- Roll up data to executive dashboards for situational awareness.





# Location management dashboard

Microsoft Power Platform



- ➔ **Who it's for:** Facility managers.
- ➔ **What it does:** This module delivers data so you can continuously monitor occupancy and safety factors.
- ➔ **Why this matters:** An agile response during a crisis depends on up-to-the-minute information.
  - Monitor locations daily to advance or roll back phases, including status, occupancy, and census data.
  - Track burn rate of critical supplies such as personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, and air filters.
  - Track key staff availability, including security, cleaning, and maintenance.
  - Crowdsource data from front-line staff and integrate with existing systems.

## Contactless interfaces

Built on Azure IoT



➔ **Who these solutions are for:** Facilities leadership and management.

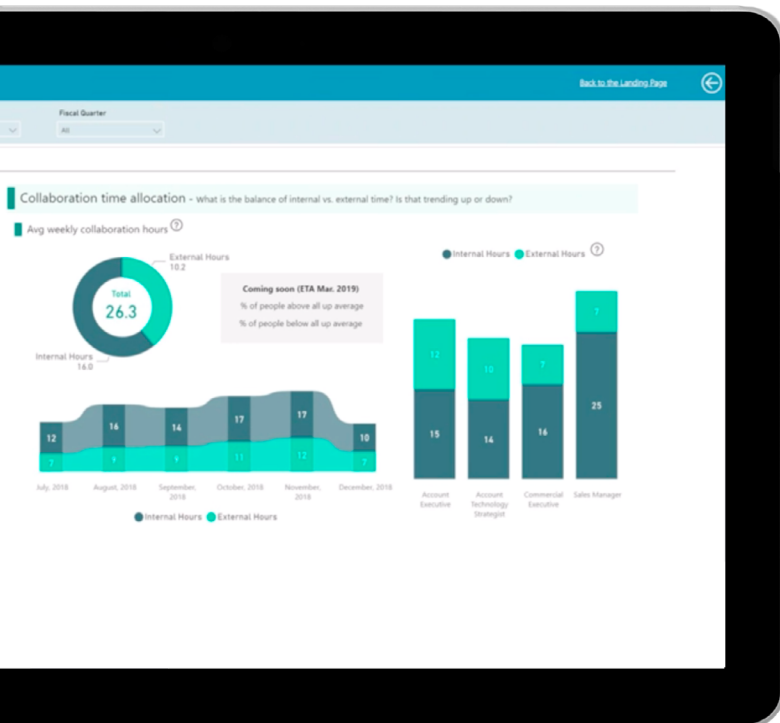
➔ **What they do:** Multiple solutions in this category create contactless interfaces for public touchpoints using intelligent and perceptive IoT edge devices with the storage, computing, AI, and machine learning capabilities of the Azure cloud.

➔ **Why this matters:** Minimizing shared touchpoints between people can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. This is hard to do in public spaces.

- Use speech, image, gesture, or multimodal input for things such as building and room access, elevator controls, retail and vending machine sales, and transit and traffic signaling.
- Collect and analyze data to continually retrain and update models to improve interface accuracy and performance.

# Workplace Analytics

## Microsoft 365



➔ **Who it's for:** Company leadership and team managers.

➔ **What it does:** Gain visibility into how work is being done and how employees spend their time.

➔ **Why this matters:** View insights from everyday work in Microsoft 365 applications on important measures such as employee wellbeing, meeting culture, organizational resiliency, and more.

- Leverage insights from the business continuity dashboard to understand how collaboration patterns have changed.
- Understand productivity and engagement trends to help teams collaborate more effectively, create more focus time, and establish a better work-life balance.

## Scenario 3

# Engage your teams— remotely and onsite

Support the flow of work wherever it happens—at home, at the workplace, on the go, or a combination. Help everyone stay connected, productive, and secure.

As you consider an onsite scenario that includes a streamlined and safe experience, consider your responses to this assessment.

### **What kind of experience do you want your employees to have?**

Many people may feel anxiety about exposing themselves and their families to higher risk of illness. To address these fears, demonstrate your safety and preparedness and give employees a measure of control over their situation. With Microsoft Teams enabled-meeting rooms, you can offer touchless meeting experiences.

### **How can you ensure employees are healthy before they return to the workplace?**

Leadership needs the answer to this question, but so do employees. You can boost employee confidence in the return to the workplace by showing them that screening measures are in place to keep everyone healthy.

### **How will your employees know which facilities are open?**

A lot of effort goes into making a facility safe for groups of people. You may not have the time or resources to reconfigure and disinfect every location. Making sure employees know which places are open and safe for work demonstrates your concern for their wellbeing.

### **What should you do if an employee is not healthy?**

Have strong protocols in place before anyone returns to the workplace. You can then take swift and clear action to protect employees if someone is ill.

### **Do you want to know how your employees are doing?**

Employee sentiment can help with your ongoing evaluation of your reopening plan. Tracking sentiment across employees over time can show areas you may need to address or guide you to new protocols.

# Solutions that help you engage your teams, remotely and onsite

## Smart and secure disinfecting solutions

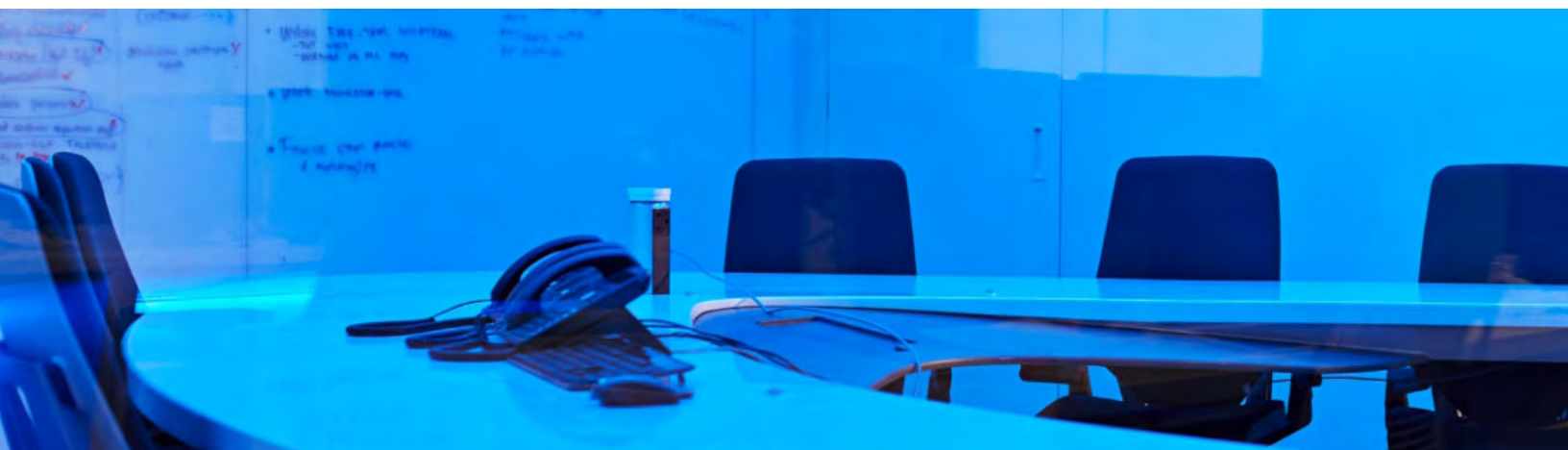
Built on Azure IoT

➔ **Who these solutions are for:** Facilities leadership and management.

➔ **What they do:** Multiple solutions in this category enhance cleaning practices, such as patented LED lighting systems which deliver radiant energy in the nonvisible ultraviolet spectrum to kill viruses.

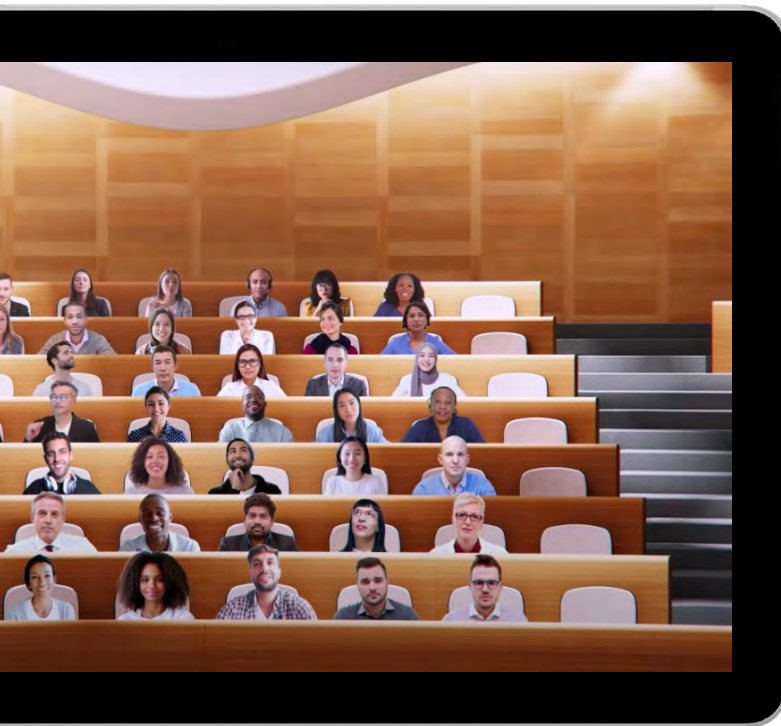
➔ **Why this matters:** Getting business back to normal depends on preventing virus infections.

- The system uses radar proximity sensors to detect when people are present.
- Whenever a space is unoccupied, the panels emit ultraviolet light to heavily reduce or eliminate viruses and bacteria.
- The modular system can scale to fit any space, from a reception counter to an entire campus.



## Connecting employees working remotely and onsite

### Microsoft Teams



- ➔ **Who it's for:** Employees.
- ➔ **What it does:** Microsoft Teams is where you stay connected, organized, and get things done together.
- ➔ **Why this matters:** Being productive in an evolving environment is hard, whether working remotely, onsite and an ongoing fluidity between the two. Enabling this more fluid model will be critical for every organization.
  - Meet, chat, call, and collaborate from anywhere.
  - Schedule video calls or spontaneously start a video meeting to stay connected with your team.
  - Reduce video meeting fatigue while enjoying a more natural, human meeting experience using together mode.

## Conclusion

# Returning with confidence

Whether you're reopening a store, a factory, an office, or a school, mitigating risk for your people is your top concern. As you move toward bringing employees back, give your teams the tools to help them stay safe and productive on the job.

Simple solutions that give visibility into health status and site safety are more than just quick solutions—they tell your employees that you are moving forward with intention and care. Solutions that actively keep employees safe onsite also build confidence. Solutions that help employees connect with each other lead to greater productivity. That's resilience at work.

**Learn more about returning to the workplace with resilience.**

**[Start now](#) >**



## Conclusion

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