For most practices, ramping back up as shelter-in-place orders expire doesn’t mean just picking up where you left off. You’ll need a phased reopening that combines increased awareness, communication, and safety precautions. Here are steps you can take for a smooth transition.

Do this now …

✔ Keep sick and well patients separated.
✔ Ask patients to call from their vehicle when they arrive.
✔ Provide face masks or ask patients to wear their own.
✔ Limit patient visitors.
✔ Offer telemedicine encounters, when appropriate.
✔ Install temporary barriers at reception areas (e.g., plexiglass).
✔ Have tissues and hand sanitizer available.
✔ Disinfect and declutter all patient areas.

Then …

✔ Call patients to reschedule appointments and send previsit instructions.
✔ Update your policies and procedures manual with any changes.
✔ Revise your scheduling template by lengthening appointment times.
✔ Increase communication through emails and newsletters.
✔ Reactivate automated messaging.
✔ Determine if the practice’s hours should be extended temporarily.
✔ Record a video about keeping staff and patients safe to share online.

Followed by …

✔ Let your patients know you’ve reopened!
✔ Update practice information on your website and social media.
✔ Reassure patients it’s safe to come into the practice.
✔ Rekindle your relationship with patients.
✔ Automate processes like online bill pay, appointment scheduling, and your patient portal.
✔ Ensure correct coding and that all charges are captured.
✔ Stay on top of payer changes.

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