

COVID-19 WORKPLACE GUIDANCE

SYMPTOMS

COVID-19 Infection can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms like diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, headache, muscle aches, fatigue, loss of appetite, loss of smell, sore throat or runny nose. Other people, referred to as asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all. Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

HOW COVID-19 SPREADS

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, including:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouth, nose or eyes of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- A person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has COVID-19 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes,
- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (i.e., experiencing fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this type of asymptomatic transmission with this new coronavirus, but this is also not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

STEPS ALL EMPLOYERS CAN TAKE TO REDUCE WORKERS' RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

1. Implement basic infection prevention measures:

- Require frequent and thorough hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs.
 - Provide workers, customers, and worksite visitors with a place to clean their hands.
- Provide resources that promote personal hygiene. (tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels)
- Require frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces throughout the facility using an approved disinfectant. A list of these approved disinfectants can be found on the CDC's Coronavirus website.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick
 - Consider 14 days away from work or negative COVID-19 test to return to workplace
- Consider flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts) when possible, to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others
- Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.

2. Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals:

- Perform active or self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - Daily temperature checks
 - Daily monitoring of possible symptoms
- Develop policies and procedures for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Remove potentially infectious people from workplace
 - Require designated timeframe to pass (e.g., 14 days) before allowing return to work or
 - Negative COVID-19 test
- Provide a face mask for employees to wear while at the workplace. This mask acts to contain potentially infectious respiratory secretions at the source (i.e., the person's nose and mouth).
- Separate work stations to > 6 feet

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Use:

PPE include: gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks when appropriate.

All types of PPE must be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the worker.
- Properly fitted
- Consistently and properly worn when required.
- Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary.
- Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.
- Face shields may also be worn on top of a mask to protect the eyes from droplet contamination



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For more information or if you have questions, contact
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ENGINEERING CONTROLS

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work related hazards. In workplaces where they are appropriate, these types of controls reduce exposure to hazards without relying on worker behavior and can be the most cost-effective solution to implement.

Engineering controls for COVID-19 include:

- Installing high-efficiency air filters
- Increasing ventilation rates in the work environment
- Installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards
- Installing a drive-through window for customer service

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

Administrative controls require action by the worker or employer. Typically, administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard. Examples of administrative controls for COVID-19 include:

- Requiring sick workers stay at home
- Minimizing contact among workers, clients, and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with telework
- Establishing alternating days or extra shifts that reduce the total number of employees in a facility at a given time, allowing them to maintain distance from one another while maintaining a full onsite work week.
- Providing workers with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

- Training workers who need to use protective clothing and equipment how to put it on, use/wear it, and take it off correctly, including in the context of their current and potential duties. Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers.

EXPOSURE LEVELS:

HIGH EXPOSURE RISK

High exposure risk jobs are those with high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19.

MEDIUM EXPOSURE RISK

Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who may be infected with COVID-19, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 positive. In areas where there is ongoing community transmission, workers in this category may have contact with the general public (e.g., schools, high-population-density work environments, some high-volume retail settings).

LOWER EXPOSURE RISK (CAUTION)

Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with COVID-19 nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the general public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.

EXPOSURE RISK	ENGINEERING CONTROLS	ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS:	Guidelines and process for identifying and isolating suspected or confirmed individuals and for protecting workers.	PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
HIGH	Ensure appropriate air-handling systems are installed and maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement policies that reduce exposure • Limit visitors to place of business • Enhanced medical monitoring of workers (temperature and symptom check) 		Gloves, a gown, a face shield or goggles, and either a face mask or a respirator, depending on their job tasks and exposure risks.
MEDIUM	Install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, where feasible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider requiring all employees wear a mask while at facility. • If using cloth masks, launder daily • Limit customers' and the public's access to the worksite or restrict access to only certain areas. • Consider strategies to minimize face-to-face contact (e.g., drive through windows, phone-based communication, telework). 		Face mask for all employees while in facility. Additionally, evaluate for the need of gloves, a gown, a face shield or goggles, depending on the employee's job tasks and exposure risks.
LOW	None recommended for workers in the lower exposure risk group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor public health and CDC's communications about COVID-19 recommendations and ensure that workers have access to that information. • Collaborate with workers to designate effective means of communicating important COVID-19 information. 		Consider mask use for all employees while in facility.

For more information or if you have questions, contact Sandy Bozarth, Manager of Prevention and Infection Control at NGHS at sandy.bozarth@nghs.com or 770-219-1729.