

## SAFETY AND HEALTH GUIDANCE

# COVID-19 Infection Prevention in Construction

April 24, 2020

California employers are required to establish and implement an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) to protect employees from all worksite hazards, including infectious diseases. This guidance does not impose any new legal obligations. It contains information for construction employers on ways to update their IIPPs to include information on employee training and preventing the spread of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes COVID-19, at construction sites. This is mandatory in most California workplaces since COVID-19 is widespread in the community.

### Train Employees on COVID-19

Provide training in a form that is readily understandable by all employees on the following topics:

- Information related to COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – check for updates frequently - including:
  - **What COVID-19 is and how it is spread.**
  - **Preventing the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick.**
  - **Symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek medical attention.**
  - How an infected person can spread COVID-19 to others even when they don't feel sick.
- Additional helpful information is on **California's COVID-19 Response** webpage.
- The importance of frequent hand-washing with soap and water (or using hand sanitizer as a last resort where employees cannot feasibly get to a sink or hand washing station), including:
  - Following CDC guidelines to scrub for at least 20 seconds.
  - When employees arrive at work and before they leave work.
  - Before and after eating or using the toilet.
  - After close interaction with other persons.
  - After contacting shared surfaces, equipment or tools.
  - Before and after wearing masks or gloves.



- After blowing nose or sneezing.

NOTE: Hand sanitizers must have at least 60% alcohol. They are less effective than hand-washing in preventing the spread of COVID-19 but can be used as an interim measure if a hand-washing station is not immediately available.

- Maintaining more than six feet of separation with others and eliminating close contact with others (see Physical Distancing information on next page).
- Methods to avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- The use of cloth face coverings, including:
  - Cloth face coverings are not personal protective equipment (PPE) and do not protect the person wearing the face covering.
  - **CDC has issued guidelines** that everyone should **use cloth face coverings** when around other persons. Employers should provide these coverings for their employees or at least encourage them to use their own.
  - Cloth face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent hand washing.
  - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.

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- Face coverings should be washed after each shift and should be discarded if they no longer cover the nose and mouth, have stretched out or damaged ties or straps, cannot stay on the face, or have holes or tears.
- Coughing and sneezing etiquette, including covering a cough or sneeze with a tissue or a sleeve instead of a hand.
- Safely using cleaners and disinfectants, which includes:
  - The hazards of the cleaners and disinfectants used at the worksite.
  - Wearing personal protective equipment (such as gloves).
  - Ensuring cleaners and disinfectants are used in a manner that does not endanger employees.
- The importance of not coming to work if they have a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if the symptoms become severe including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
- Use repeated safety stand-downs or toolbox/tailgates – while maintaining physical distancing - to re-emphasize the training.
- Designate a site-specific COVID-19 officer at every job site to observe and ensure site workers are implementing what they have been trained to do.

## Increase Cleaning and Disinfection

Establish and implement the following procedures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Make hand-washing stations more readily available and encourage their use.
- Employers should change productivity expectations to allow extra time for employees to wash their hands thoroughly and frequently.
- Establish procedures to routinely clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces and objects (e.g., door handles, steering wheels, touch screens, mobile equipment controls, carts, shared power tools) throughout the workday, including:
  - Using disinfectants that are [EPA-approved](#) for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.
  - Providing EPA-registered disposable wipes for

employees to wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use.

- Following the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., safety requirements, protective equipment, proper dilution, contact time).
- Following safe work practices such as never mixing products together and using adequate ventilation.
- Cleaning visibly dirty surfaces first before disinfection. Disinfectants are less effective if used on soiled surfaces.
- Ensuring there are adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices, including cleaning products and tools and chemical resistant gloves. Make sure disinfectants are available to workers throughout the worksite.
- Cleaning and disinfecting vehicles between shifts and between workers.

## Increase Physical Distancing

Physical distancing, also referred to as social distancing, is an infection control measure that can stop or slow down the spread of an infectious disease by limiting contact between people. Use the following distancing measures:

- Practice physical distancing at all times, including during work, breaks and in vehicles.
- Plan for office staff to have the ability to work from home.
- Stagger break and lunch times and spread out where employees spend their breaks by providing additional seating and shade areas.
- Limit crew size by staggering or increasing the number of work shifts.
- Maintain separation of six feet or more during work:
  - Limit the number of employees gathered at the start of a shift, in break areas or during trainings and other meetings to allow employees to spread out.
  - Limit the number of personnel riding construction passenger elevators at one time.
  - Ensure employees allow for at least 6 feet of clearance between each other when lining up for the lunch truck and restrooms.
  - Hold meetings electronically rather than in person whenever possible.
  - Perform job interviews and orientations over the phone or using video conferencing.
  - Identify choke points where workers are forced

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- to stand together (e.g. hallways, hoists, buses) and control them.
  - Provide additional seating and shade structures.
- If employees are dispatched from a hiring hall, encourage the hiring hall to implement physical distancing measures, such as using additional locations for dispatch.
- Limit interaction with other contractors.
  - Where possible, limit the number of trades in the same area at the same time.
  - Maintain distance during interactions and deliveries.
- Encourage employees to avoid large gatherings and practice physical distancing during non-work hours.
- Create specific instructions for deliveries to your worksites.
  - Establish a drop-off location and all the procedures to be used at the drop-off point.
  - Create signage to easily identify drop-off points. Include contact information on the signs to assist with questions leading up to delivery and upon arrival.
  - Create procedures to disinfect deliveries, such as wiping down boxes and delivered items.
- Provide alternative methods to reduce the spread of infection when physical distancing is not possible. Engineering controls such as physical barriers between workers and face coverings like bandanas, scarfs, buffs, neck gaiters or homemade masks can help reduce community spread of the virus.
- In addition to physical distancing, provide face coverings or encourage employees to use their own face covers. Ensure they are used in accordance with CDC guidelines.

## Ensure Good Hygiene Practices

Ensure toilets and hand-washing facilities are readily accessible to all employees at all times. Employers should adjust productivity expectations to allow extra time for employees to thoroughly and frequently wash their hands.

- Restrooms must be clean and sanitary.
- Handwashing facilities must be located at or near the restrooms.
- Soap or other suitable cleansing agent and single-

use towels must be provided.

- Additional handwashing supplies should be placed as close to work areas and break areas as possible to allow for frequent handwashing.
- Encourage more frequent hand-washing.
- Encourage more thorough hand-washing. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- For delivery drivers, normally accessible restrooms on routes (e.g., restaurants, coffee shops) may be closed. Employers should provide employees alternative restroom locations and allow time for employees to use them.
- If employees have limited access to hand-washing or hand sanitizing, employees as a last resort can use disposable gloves to limit hand contact with potentially contaminated surfaces. Employers should encourage employees to change gloves frequently and before touching their face, smoking, eating or using the restroom. In addition, provide an adequate supply of gloves and make them readily available. Employees should wash or sanitize hands as soon as possible after removing gloves.
- Provide hand sanitizer throughout worksites and to delivery drivers for times when access to soap and water may be limited.
- If respirators and other PPE is worn to protect against other hazards at work, hands should be washed before putting on PPE and after taking it off. Reusable PPE should be cleaned and sanitized per manufacturers' instructions.

At this time, health experts do not recommend the use of respirators by the general public for protection against COVID-19. However, if available, employers must provide them to workers in the construction industry when needed to protect against other respiratory hazards.

## Implement Safe Work Practices

- Limit the sharing of tools as much as possible. If tools must be shared try to group them to be used by people who reside together or travel to work together.
- If fans or other means of ventilation are used on the job, place them to avoid blowing air from one worker or group of workers to another.
- Encourage workers to drive to worksites or parking areas by themselves. They should avoid having passengers or carpooling together unless they are

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already sheltering in place together. If carpooling cannot be avoided riders should sit as far apart as possible, wear face coverings and wash hands after the trip.

- Discourage shaking hands.
- Discourage the sharing of food and water. Provide single use bottles rather than using shared water stations or dispensers.

## What to do with Workers Who Might Be Sick with COVID-19

- Immediately send employees with acute respiratory illness symptoms home or to medical care as needed.
- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Ensure employees who are out ill with fever or acute respiratory symptoms do not return to work until both of the following occur:
  - At least three full days pass with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and improvement in respiratory symptoms.
  - At least seven full days pass since symptoms first appeared.
- Ensure employees who return to work following an illness promptly report any recurrence of symptoms.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor and follow **CDC-recommended precautions**.
- Encourage sick workers to stay home by implementing work policies that do not penalize workers for missing work because they have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Consider paid sick leave benefits to help prevent the spread among workers who might otherwise work out of economic necessity. Educate eligible employees on other benefits they can access if symptoms, illness or caring for an ill family member prevents them from working.
- The **Families First Coronavirus Response Act** requires certain employers to provide employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19.
- If someone goes home because they are sick, the area where the person worked and the tools and equipment they used should be disinfected prior to use by others.
- Establish procedures to notify local health officials upon learning that someone has a COVID-19 infection. These officials will help employers determine a course of action.
- Employers can implement health screening programs to ensure that employees showing up to work are healthy. Employers may choose to prohibit employees with a high temperature (e.g., above 100.4 degrees F) from entering the worksite. Train employees on self-screening before they come to work. If conducting workplace screening, provide employees performing screening with appropriate personal protective equipment. In light of personal protective equipment shortages, use gloves, eye protection and a face covering. Have screened employees wear a face covering or cover their nose and mouth with cloth or other material during screening. If possible, use touchless thermometers. Disinfect contact-thermometers between employees. Ensure screeners maximize their distance from the employee being screened.
- Immediately send employees with acute respiratory illness symptoms home or to medical care as needed. Establish procedures to notify local health officials upon learning that someone has a COVID-19 infection. These officials will help employers determine a course of action.

## COVID-19 Guidance for the Construction Workforce

OSHA is committed to protecting the health and safety of America's workers and workplaces during these unprecedented times. The agency will be issuing a series of industry-specific alerts designed to keep workers safe.

When working in the construction industry, the following tips can help reduce the risk of exposure to the coronavirus:

- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Allow workers to wear masks over their nose and mouth to prevent them from spreading the virus.
- Continue to use other normal control measures, including personal protective equipment (PPE), necessary to protect workers from other job hazards associated with construction activities.
- Advise workers to avoid physical contact with others and direct employees/contractors/visitors to increase personal space to at least six feet, where possible. Where work trailers are used, all workers should maintain social distancing while inside the trailers.
- Train workers how to properly put on, use/wear, and take off protective clothing and equipment.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Promote personal hygiene. If workers do not have immediate access to soap and water for handwashing, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals from [List N](#) or that have label claims against the coronavirus.
- To the extent tools or equipment must be shared, provide and instruct workers to use alcohol-based wipes to clean tools before and after use. When cleaning tools and equipment, workers should consult manufacturer recommendations for proper cleaning techniques and restrictions.
- Keep in-person meetings (including toolbox talks and safety meetings) as short as possible, limit the number of workers in attendance, and use social distancing practices.
- Clean and disinfect portable jobsite toilets regularly. Hand sanitizer dispensers should be filled regularly. Frequently-touched items (i.e., door pulls and toilet seats) should be disinfected.
- Encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns.

For more information, visit [www.osha.gov/coronavirus](http://www.osha.gov/coronavirus) or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).

*OSHA issues alerts to draw attention to  
worker safety and health issues and solutions.*

## Additional COVID-19 Resources for Construction

- **California Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response**
- California Division of Occupational Safety and Health. **Cal/OSHA Interim Guidelines for General Industry on 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**
  - **Cal/OSH Injury and Illness Prevention Program**
  - **Log 300 recordkeeping requirements**
  - Reporting Work-Connected Injuries - **Section 342**
- California Department of Public Health. **Face Coverings Guidance**
- California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Resources for Employers and Workers**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. **Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **How It Spreads**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Symptoms**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease. **Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings (Interim Guidance)**
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): **Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility**
- Federal OSHA: **COVID-19**
- Los Angeles County: **COVID-19: What you need to know about cloth face coverings**
- New York Times: **How to Stop Touching Your Face**
- Ohio Department of Health. COVID-19 Information for Businesses and Employers: **Screening Employees for COVID-19**
- The Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR): COVID-19 Resources (**English**), (**Spanish**)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. **Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2** (the virus that causes COVID-19)
- U.S. Department of Labor. **Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights**



<p align="center"><b>LA Department of Building and Safety COVID-19 Safety Guidance for Construction Sites ("LA Guidance")</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>OSHA COVID-19 Guidance for the Construction Workforce ("OSHA Guidance")</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Infection Prevention in Construction ("Cal/OSHA Guidance")</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers must create a comprehensive COVID-19 exposure plan, which includes control measures such as social distancing, symptom checking, hygiene; decontamination procedures, and training.</li> <li>• Practice social distancing by maintaining a minimum 6-foot distance from others.</li> <li>• Preclude gatherings of any size, and anytime two or more people must meet, ensure minimum 6-foot separation.</li> <li>• All workers and visitors on site shall wear face coverings over their noses and mouths while performing their work. Face coverings referenced in this guidance can be fabric coverings, such as scarves and bandana coverings. Reusable face coverings must be frequently washed, minimum once a day, for the health and safety of users and others. Single use coverings must be properly discarded into trash receptacles.</li> <li>• Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) as appropriate for the activity being performed.</li> <li>• The owner/contractor shall designate a site specific COVID-19 Supervisor to enforce this guidance. A designated COVID-19 Supervisor shall be present on the construction site at all times during construction activities. The COVID-19 Supervisor can be an on-site worker who is designated to carry this role.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>OSHA Guidance includes the items in the LA Guidance, plus the following items:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise workers to avoid physical contact with others.... Where work trailers are used, all workers should maintain social distancing while inside the trailers.</li> <li>• Train workers how to properly put on, use/wear, and take off protective clothing and equipment.</li> <li>• Use Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals or that have label claims against the coronavirus.</li> <li>• To the extent tools or equipment must be shared, provide and instruct workers to use alcohol-based wipes to clean tools before and after use. When cleaning tools and equipment, workers should consult manufacturer recommendations for proper cleaning techniques and restrictions.</li> <li>• Keep in-person meetings as short as possible, limit the number of workers in attendance, and use social distancing practices.</li> <li>• Encourage workers to report any safety and health concerns.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Cal/OSHA Guidance includes the items in the LA Guidance and/or the OSHA Guidance, plus the following items:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides detailed information about topics to include when training employees. The topics are listed on pages 1-2.</li> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides the following new cleaning and disinfection procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Change productivity expectations to allow for extra time for employees to wash hands;</li> <li>○ Make sure there are adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices;</li> <li>○ Clean and disinfect vehicles between shifts and between workers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides the following new suggestions for physical distancing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plan for office staff to have the ability to work from home;</li> <li>○ Increase number of work shifts;</li> <li>○ Hold meeting electronically rather than in person if possible;</li> <li>○ Perform job interviews and orientations over the phone or using video conferencing;</li> <li>○ Provide additional seating and shade structures;</li> <li>○ If employees dispatched from a hiring hall, encourage the hiring hall to implement physical distancing measures;</li> <li>○ Specific instructions are provided for deliveries to</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify “choke points” and “high-risk areas” where workers are forced to stand together, such as hallways, hoists and elevators, break areas, and buses, and control them so social distancing is maintained.</li> <li>• Minimize interactions when picking up or delivering equipment or materials, ensure minimum 6-foot separation.</li> <li>• Stagger the trades as necessary to reduce density and maintain minimum 6-foot separation social distancing.</li> <li>• Discourage workers from using other workers’ phones, desks, offices, work tools and equipment. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.</li> <li>• Post, in areas visible to all workers, required hygienic practices including not touching face with unwashed hands or with gloves; washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, cleaning AND disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, machines, shared tools, elevator control buttons, and doorknobs; covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing as well as other hygienic recommendations by the CDC.</li> <li>• Place wash stations or hand sanitizers in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene.</li> <li>• Require anyone on the project to stay home if they are sick, except to get medical care.</li> <li>• Have employees inform their supervisor if they have a sick</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the worksite (<i>see</i> page 3, left column);</li> <li>○ Use physical barriers between employees if physical distancing not possible.</li> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides the following new recommendations to ensure good hygiene practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For delivery drivers, employers should provide employees with alternative restroom locations and allow employees time to use them, given normally accessible restrooms may be closed.</li> <li>○ If employees have limited access to hand washing or hand sanitizing, employees as a last resort can use disposable gloves.</li> <li>○ If respirators and other PPE is worn, hands should be washed before putting on PPE and after taking it off. PPE should be cleaned and sanitized.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides the following new recommendations for implementing safe work practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Limit the sharing of tools as much as possible. If tools must be shared try to group them to be used by people who reside together or travel to work together.</li> <li>○ If fans or other means of ventilation are used, place them to avoid blowing air from one worker to another.</li> <li>○ Encourage workers to drive to work by themselves unless they shelter in place with the passenger. If carpooling cannot be avoided, sit as far apart as possible.</li> <li>○ Discourage shaking hands.</li> <li>○ Discourage sharing food/water.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Cal/OSHA Guidance provides a listed of detailed</li> </ul>
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<p>family member at home with COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain a daily attendance log of all workers and visitors.</li><li>• Employers must permit their employees to wash their hands at least every 30 minutes.</li><li>• Employers must make sure employees have access to a clean and sanitary restroom, stocked with all necessary cleansing products like soap and sanitizer.</li></ul>		<p>steps to take if a worker might be sick with COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ See page 4 of Cal/OSHA Guidance for all steps the employer should take.</li></ul>
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