



Summary of OSHA COVID-19 Guidance to Prevent Spread in the Workplace

COVID-19 Prevention Programs

1. Conducting a hazard assessment to identify where and how workers might be exposed to COVID-19 at work.
2. Identify a combination of measures that will limit the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, such as engineering controls, workplace administrative policies, personal protective equipment (“PPE”), and other measures, prioritizing controls from most to least effective.
3. Instruct workers who are infected or potentially infected to stay home and isolate or quarantine to prevent or reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
4. Implement protections from retaliation and set up an anonymous process for workers to voice concerns about COVID-19-related hazards.

Return to Work Criteria

1. Use a symptom-based strategy for identifying, separating, and sending home workers according to OSHA, although there may be limited circumstances where a test-based strategy is appropriate.
2. Under a symptom-based strategy, workers who think or know they had COVID-19 and had symptoms should only return to work after at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; at least 24 hours have passed with no fever without fever-reducing medication; and other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months and need not delay the end of isolation).

Note: Some workers may need to isolate longer than 10 days, as recommended by their doctor. Please keep in mind that while the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) permits employers to ask for a doctor’s note to verify that workers are healthy and able to return to work, OSHA does not encourage such a practice given the potential delays and demands on the healthcare system.

3. Follow local health department quarantine guidelines for workers who have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual. Quarantine can end after 10 days after an individual’s last contact with COVID-19 without testing and if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
4. Quarantine can end after seven days following an individual’s last contact with COVID-19 after receiving a negative test. The test must occur at least five days after the individual’s last exposure.

Social Distancing Measures

1. Encourage a distance between workers of at least 6 feet by implementing various measures such as limiting the number of people in one place at any given time, increasing the physical space between workers and/or customers, altering work spaces to add physical cues reminding individuals to physically distance from one another, offering vulnerable workers duties that minimize their contact with others, and prohibit handshaking or other forms of physical contact.

Engineering Controls

1. Establish barriers such as plexiglass or flexible strip curtains at fixed workstations where workers are not able to remain at least six feet away from other people.
2. Improve ventilation by increasing ventilation rates whenever possible, increasing fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors, and using fans when weather permits; reducing or eliminating air recirculation, and improving central air filtration to the MERV-13 or the highest compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter to limit bypass.

Face Coverings and PPE

1. Require the use of face coverings.
2. Ensure that face coverings are made of at least two layers of a tightly woven breathable fabric and do not have exhalation valves or vents.
3. Ensure that face coverings fit snugly over the nose, mouth, and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face.
4. Provide all workers with face coverings at no cost to them.
5. Require visitors, customers, non-employees, etc. to wear a face covering unless they are under the age of two or are actively consuming food or beverages on site.

Sanitization, Cleaning, and Disinfecting Practices

1. Ensure that workers, customers, and visitors have adequate supplies and time to clean their hands frequently and cover their coughs and sneezes.
2. Install posters encouraging hand hygiene and physical distancing at the entrance to a workplace and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
3. Perform regular cleaning and disinfection of all frequently touched surfaces and portable jobsite toilets.
4. Prohibiting the sharing of objects or tools between workers or ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfection of shared tools.
5. Provide disposable disinfecting wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use.
6. Store and use disinfectants in a responsible manner and advise workers to always wear gloves or additional PPE appropriate for the chemicals being used.