COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance for Facilities

This guidance is based on the Kentucky Department for Public Health's "COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidance for Meatpacking Facilities;" however, many of the items apply to all facilities. In order to minimize the risk from COVID-19 in the workplace, take the following steps:

Employee and Visitor Screening

- Instruct all employees that they should not to report to work if they are having any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Conduct a disease screening <u>each time</u> an employee reports to work or a visitor enters the facility.
  Use the following verbal screening, in appropriate language(s), for all persons:
    - Have you had any of the following symptoms since your last day at work or the last time you were here? Please answer "Yes" or "No" to each question:
        - A new fever (100° F or higher) or feeling feverish?
        - A new cough?
        - Shortness of breath?
        - A new sore throat?
        - New muscle aches?
        - Any gastrointestinal symptoms? (i.e. diarrhea, vomiting, etc.)
    - Is there anyone in your household who is ill or has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
    - Have you been in contact with anyone who is ill or has been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- Conduct temperature screening upon each employee's arrival to the facility. This should be done with proper social distancing and hygiene. If it cannot be done with proper social distancing and hygiene, consider alternative strategies such as employee self-temperature checks on-site.
- If an employee answers "Yes" to **any** of the screening questions **or** has a temperature above **100° F** confirmed with a thermometer, the employee should <u>not</u> be allowed to work. These employees should be evaluated further by an occupational health nurse, if on-site, who can determine if the employee can go home to recover, or should report to a health care provider for assessment.
    - These employees should be provided information on the facility's return-to-work policies and procedures. Human resources and the employee's supervisor should be notified in order to remove them from the schedule during illness.

Educate and Train Workers on Reducing the Spread of COVID-19

- Supplement workers' normal and required job training with additional training and information about COVID-19, including recognizing signs and symptoms of infection, and ways to prevent exposure to the virus.
    - OSHA provides additional information about training on its COVID-19 webpage that can be found here: https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html
- All communication and training should be easy to understand and should:
    - Be provided in the preferred languages spoken or read by the employees.
    - Written at the appropriate literacy level.

- o Consider incorporating the use of a trusted cultural or ethnic employee leader to help disseminate information to groups of employees who are non-English speakers.
- o Include accurate and timely information about:
  - Signs and symptoms of COVID-19, how is spreads, risk of workplace exposures, and how employees can protect themselves.
  - Proper handwashing practices and use of hand sanitizer stations.
  - Cough and sneeze etiquette.
  - Other infection control precautions (i.e. putting on or taking off masks and social distancing measures).
- Employers should place simple posters in all of the preferred languages and placed in common areas (i.e. break rooms, locker rooms, carpool waiting areas, etc.) to encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and proper hand hygiene practices.
  - o Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed several free posters available to download in a variety of languages, available here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc

Managing Sick Workers

- If an employee appears to have, or reports, symptoms (i.e. fever, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, gastrointestinal, etc.) upon arriving to the facility, or during their shift, they should be separated immediately for evaluation by the occupational health nurse, if one is on-site. The nurse should determine if the employee can go home to recover, or should report to a health care provider for assessment. If the facility/establishment does not have medical staff on-site, the employee should be sent home and advised to contact their medical provider.
- If an employee becomes ill at work, their work area must be cleaned and disinfected immediately before employees may be assigned to their work area.
- If an employee becomes a laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19, employers should inform anyone they have come into contact with within the facility of their possible exposure, but should maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Employers should provide guidance to their employees based on the section: "Recommendations for Employees who are Contacts to Laboratory-Confirmed Cases" in this document.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Fully clean and disinfect work area equipment and common areas at least daily, and at every shift change. Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered disinfectants to sanitize surfaces.
- If an employee becomes ill at work, their work area must be cleaned and disinfected immediately before another employee may be assigned to their work area.
- Check that you are following label directions and observing contact times to ensure cleaning and disinfection is effective.
- Pay special attention to high touch areas such as stair railings, tools, guards, doorknobs, computers, etc.
- Assess the workplace environment for any hazards that can be eliminated to reduce the amount of shared areas that are touched by employees (i.e. prop open doors to avoid touch door handles) where appropriate and not against other code requirements.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued the following guidance, "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility." That guidance can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html
  - Increase staffing for cleaning and disinfecting necessary to increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection throughout the facility including break areas, lunchrooms, and bathrooms, ensuring it can be done with proper social distancing and hygiene.
  - Ensure that cleaning staff are following proper guidelines outlined in this guidance (i.e. wearing gloves, frequent handwashing, etc.).
- Ensure the facility is adequately ventilated, and use air filters in systems where this is feasible.

Distancing

- Implement strict personal distancing guidelines in the facility.
- Implement operational changes that allow for employees' physical distancing of at least 6 feet as required by CDC guidelines and to effectively use personal protective equipment, including masks and face shields.
- The following distancing measures are recommended as long as they do not interfere with current control interventions in place for routine work safety and health at the facility:
  - Install partitions of plexiglass or stretched plastic on a frame of nonporous, smooth material to provide barrier protection between employees where physical distancing of 6 feet cannot be consistently maintained.
  - Designate one-way entrances and exits in and out of the facility to support 6-foot physical distancing for employees.
  - Designate an area for isolating employees who show symptoms of COVID-19 infection, such as a wellness area, isolated first aid station, or other area where access can be restricted.
  - Mark out 6-foot distances or circles for employees to stand in while they wait to punch in, to conduct health assessments, to perform handwashing, waiting for transportation, and in other areas where employees would normally congregate.
- Space out lockers to ensure 6-foot distances between employees in locker room areas.
- Mark out a 6-foot line in front of desks used by staff.
- Whenever possible, provide an option to call in to meetings from isolated areas (i.e. offices, cubical, or from home).
- For all in-person meetings, ensure 6-foot distances between chairs and people and implement cloth mask wearing to control spread of pathogens through talking and breathing.
- Designate staff to monitor and instruct employees about compliance with distancing protocols and hygiene requirements.
- Routinely inspect, maintain, clean, and disinfect separation barriers and other safeguards.

Production, Work-Shift Schedules and Work-Break Schedules

- Adjust line speeds so employees can maintain distancing.
- Stagger work-shift schedules, or create new working shifts with fewer employees per shift, to prevent congregating in changing rooms, entrance areas, transport areas, health-screening areas, and time clock areas.
- Revise break times to prevent congregating in cafeterias and breakrooms.

- Discourage staff from congregating in common areas (i.e. cafeterias, breakrooms, outdoor smoking areas, etc.)
- Designate additional areas for breaks and meals.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Facial Coverings

- Require that all employees routinely wear facemasks, face coverings, or disposable masks along with the standard PPE that is needed for routine work.
- Limit the use of filtering face piece respirators such as N95s by following other COVID-19 exposure control strategies and use of other facial coverings.
- Required PPE, along with training, is to be provided and paid for by the employer (i.e. personal thermometers, facemasks, etc.).

Personal Hygiene

- Require and allow employees sufficient time to wash their hands frequently, including arrival and departure from the workplace, before and after using the restroom, before eating and drinking, and after touching surfaces that may be contaminated.
- Have handwashing facilities easily available that can be accessed without employees congregating in groups.
- Maintain ample supplies of soap and hand towels for handwashing.
- Provide additional (portable) handwashing stations, where needed.
- Provide work areas with hand sanitizer and sanitizer wipes.
- Require cough and sneeze etiquette.

Employee Carpooling Recommendations

- Encourage employees to avoid carpooling to and from work, if possible.
- If carpooling, including the use to company shuttles, is necessary for employees to get to work or be transported within the facility, the following control measures should be implemented:
    - Limit the number of people within each vehicle, this may require the use of more vehicles.
    - Encourage employees to maintain social distancing while waiting for and riding in the vehicle as much as possible.
    - Encourage employees to use good hand hygiene before entering the vehicle and upon arrival at the destination.
        - This means providing hand washing and sanitizing stations close to locations where employees are dropped off within the facility.
    - Encourage employees who are riding in a shared van or car space to wear a mask.
    - Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces after each carpool or shuttle trip (i.e. door handles, seatbelt buckles, etc.)
    - Encourage employees to follow coughing and sneezing etiquette while riding in the vehicle.
        - This may mean providing written/visual educational materials within each van or car to promote this behavior among passengers.

Communication

- Communicate with employees about actions being taken to prevent COVID-19 exposure through routine meetings/calls, postings (including electronic postings), the company website and start-of-day reminders.
- Institute a process for employees to report COVID-19 symptoms and other hazards in the workplace.
- Remind employees to not to come to work if they are having symptoms of COVID-19, and fully inform and allow employees to use sick leave and other benefits if they are ill.
- Provide information in languages understood by employees, and prominently post instructions and reminders about illness symptoms, handwashing, and hygiene etiquette, and to report if they are feeling ill.
- Encourage incorporation into disease transmission prevention planning of known, trusted and natural leaders in cultural sub-groups within the workplace, and use them as champions to relay guidance and messaging within their cultural groups.

Orientation of COIVD-19 Business Plan

- Provide an orientation for employees about the company's COVID-19 business plan and the measures taken to minimize exposure to COVID-19, including changes to production, maintenance, human resources, and employee safety.
- Include information about COVID-19, such as illness symptoms, methods of transmission, proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and other safeguards to prevent exposure.
- Managers and supervisors will monitor the effectiveness of the COVID-19 business plan.
- It is recommended that workplaces promote a zero-tolerance policy for noncompliance among employees who are not following the COVID-19 business plan.

Business Travel

- Restrict or suspend business travel (in-state and out-of-state).
- Use virtual platforms for meetings when possible.

Working Remotely

- Allow employees to work remotely if they are able to perform their job duties.
- Limit employees in business offices to only those deemed critical to facility operations.

Visitor Restrictions

- Visitation of any kind from any one should be prohibited or restricted as much as possible.
- Follow CDC risk-assessment guidance, which can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html/. Limit visitors to those essential to business operations and restrict where visitors can go within the facility.

Employment and Human Resources Items

Employment Status

- Clarify employment status with employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, including alternative work shifts, working from home, not working, and wage changes.

Incentive Programs

- Modify employee incentive programs to ensure employees stay home when they are sick to protect others working at the facility.
- Clearly communicate that employees will not face adverse consequences for staying home when they are sick.

Paid Time Off (PTO) and Sick Leave Policies

- Allow flexibility on PTO accrual maximums.
- Allow employees to use PTO if they or someone in their household has symptoms of, or tests positive for, COVID-19.
- Relax attendance policies during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- If a doctor's note is not currently required to be absent from work, do not require employees to have a doctor's note in advance of approving an absence.

Medical Assistance
- Provide access to medical professionals, including tele-medicine options, if an on-site nurse is not available.
- Waive the five-day waiting period for short-term disability benefits for employees who are sick with COVID-19.

Isolation

- Employees showing symptoms of COVID-19 must be isolated from other employees.
- Human resources should help arrange for sick employees to return home.

Other Support Services

- Offer employee assistance services to deal with added stresses and financial impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The OHSA General Duty Clause states, "each employer shall furnish to each of his employees' employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or

likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees." https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/oshact/section5-duties

Employer Provided Housing

- **If you provide housing, ill persons MUST be separated from well persons.**
- Discuss grouping options available for the operation.
    - Ideally, each ill person should have a private room and a dedicated bathroom. If this is not feasible and there is more than one ill employee, ill employees may be grouped together, but separated from non-ill employees.
    - For ill individuals, consider using a large, well-ventilated room.
    - In areas where ill employees are staying, keep beds at least 6 feet apart, use temporary barriers between beds (such as curtains) and request that ill persons sleep head-to-toe.
- Separate ill employees with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 infections from ill employees with suspect COVID-19.
- **Even if you do not normally provide housing, consider providing temporary housing to ill employees living in households in which self-quarantining is not possible.**
- Provide care to the employees while sick and recovering. Contact your local public health department for assistance with needed services.
- If the employee is at greater risk of developing severe illness (i.e. aged 65 years or older or with an underlying condition such as chronic lung disease, chronic heart disease, diabetes, cancer or weakened immune system), call a health care provider.
- If the employee's symptoms are getting worse, call a health care provider.
- If the employee has trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, or other emergency signs, call 911.
- Follow CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfection of the home or facility.

What can you expect if an employee is laboratory-confirmed with COVID-19?

- For all laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19, the local health department who serves the patient's county of residence will contact the ill employee to interview them.
- Public health officials may make recommendations about high-risk contacts of the infected person to stay at home (self-quarantine) for 14 days.

When can an ill employee return to work?

- All ill employees should be excluded from work and/or remain in isolation until **all** the following criteria are met:
    - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since* being recovered, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
    - Improvement in respiratory and other symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea); **AND**
    - At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared.*
- Additionally, upon returning to work, it is an expectation that a surgical face mask will be worn for universal source control in the work setting.

Recommendations for Employees who are Contacts to Laboratory-Confirmed Cases

- Employees who are identified as a contact of a laboratory-confirmed case should be evaluated in order to determine if they should stay at home and be excluded from work.
- Those contacts who are considered 'high-risk' should stay at home and be excluded from work. 'High-risk' is defined as:
    - Individuals who have close interactions inside or outside of the workplace with one or more confirmed cases, including large community or social gatherings, where the previously noted mitigation recommendations may not have been followed. (i.e. close contact, household contact, contact in a carpooling group, close contact in workplace common areas, or other interactions outside the workplace – while not adhering to distancing recommendations or wearing proper PPE.)
- Those contacts who are considered 'low-risk' can report to work as long as they are asymptomatic. They will have to carefully follow the health and safety guidelines that have been developed for the facility.
    - 'Low-risk' contacts are defined as individuals whose only interaction occurs within the workplace, and contact with confirmed cases is minimal. All interactions must follow previously mentioned mitigation recommendations for passing in the hallway, standing in line at clock-in stations, or working next to one another on the production line – all while adhering to distancing recommendations and wearing proper PPE.

Additional Resources

- CDC Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers - Interim Guidance from CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OHSA) https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html
- OHSA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 can be found here: https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf
- CDC General COVID-19 Resources for Businesses and Employers can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html