Protecting the Safety and Health of Workers
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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OSHA Boston-South
This information has been developed by an OSHA Compliance Assistance Specialist and is intended to assist employers, workers, and others as they strive to improve workplace health and safety. While we attempt to thoroughly address specific topics [or hazards], it is not possible to include discussion of everything necessary to ensure a healthy and safe working environment in a presentation of this nature. Thus, this information must be understood as a tool for addressing workplace hazards, rather than an exhaustive statement of an employer’s legal obligations, which are defined by statute, regulations, and standards. Likewise, to the extent that this information references practices or procedures that may enhance health or safety, but which are not required by a statute, regulation, or standard, it cannot, and does not, create additional legal obligations. Finally, over time, OSHA may modify rules and interpretations in light of new technology, information, or circumstances; to keep apprised of such developments, or to review information on a wide range of occupational safety and health topics, you can visit OSHA’s website at www.osha.gov.
COVID-19 typically causes mild respiratory illness, but can cause severe disease, including pneumonia-like illness (novel coronavirus-infected pneumonia or NCIP).

Typical symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath, chills, muscle pains, sore throat, new lost of taste and smell, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

Symptoms begin 2-14 days after exposure.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Almost 1 in 4 workers, or 38 million Americans, are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying conditions or age, according to a report by the Kaiser Family Foundation, a nonprofit that focuses on national health issues.
Workers at high risk are considered those who have diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, body mass index (BMI) above 40, moderate to severe asthma, functional limitation due to cancer as well as workers 65 and older.

The next four slides show **30 open COVID-19 fatality investigations** being conducted in Region I as of June 15, 2020.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augusta</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braintree</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concord</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andover</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Region I COVID-19 Statistics

COVID-19 Fatalities by State

- Massachusetts: 60%
- Connecticut: 23%
- Rhode Island: 10%
- New Hampshire: 4%
- Maine: 3%
Region I COVID-19 Statistics

Region 1 COVID 19 Fatalities by NAICS
(Minimum  2 fatalities)

- 58% Nursing and Residential Care
- 19% Supermarkets and Grocery
- 15% Hospitals
- 8% General Merchandise Stores
OSHA is closely coordinating with CDC, including NIOSH, and other agencies to monitor the ongoing pandemic.

The risk of exposure in many workplaces likely reflects the risk to the general public in the community where the workplace is located.

Risk increases when workers have frequent, close contact with the general public or other coworkers.
Workers in some sectors have increased risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2 from known or suspected sources of the virus, including in:

- Healthcare
- Laboratories
- Emergency response
- Mortuary services and other deathcare

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Other sectors have increased risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2 because of frequent and/or close contact with the general public, including in:

- High-volume retail operations
- Retail pharmacies
- In-person customer service positions
- Airline operations
- Border protection and passenger screening
Occupational exposure risks

- Workers in other sectors, including some in critical infrastructure, may be at risk because of frequent or long-duration contact with coworkers:
  - Food processing (including meatpacking)
  - Manufacturing
  - Construction
  - Oil and gas
  - Other sectors where workers would typically be within 6 feet of one another
Exposure risk – very high

- Healthcare workers (e.g., doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, EMTs) performing or present for aerosol-generating procedures (e.g., intubation, cough induction procedures, bronchoscopies, CPR, some dental procedures and exams, invasive specimen collection) on known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

- Healthcare or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

- Morgue workers performing autopsies on the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having COVID-19 at the time of their death.

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Exposure risk – high

- Healthcare delivery and support staff (e.g. doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff who must enter patients rooms) exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients. (While NO aerosol generating procedures are being performed.)

- Medical transport workers (e.g., ambulance vehicle operators) moving known or suspected COVID-19 patients in enclosed vehicles.

- Mortuary workers involved in preparing the bodies of people who are known to have, or suspected of having COVID-19 at the time of their death.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Exposure risk – medium

- Jobs that require frequent (i.e., more than a few minutes) and/or close (i.e., within 6 feet) contact with people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2, but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

  - Examples include:
    - Critical retail workers, such as those in pharmacies and grocery stores.
    - Transit workers, such as bus drivers, subway operators, and taxi drivers.
    - Workers in other transportation operations.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Exposure risk – low (caution)

- Jobs that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent close contact with (within 6 feet) of the general public.
- Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.
Existing OSHA standards protect workers from exposure

- Follow existing OSHA standards to help protect workers from exposure to SARS-CoV-2 and infection with COVID-19.

- Employers should also remember that OSHA can use the General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), of the Occupational Safety and Health Act to ensure that workers are protected from recognized safety and health hazards that may cause serious harm.

Relevant OSHA requirements

- Personal Protective Equipment (29 CFR 1910 subpart I), including:
  - PPE General Requirements (1910.132)
  - Eye and Face Protection (1910.133)
  - Respiratory Protection (1910.134)
- Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030)
- Recordkeeping (29 CFR part 1904)
OSHA enforcement

OSHA:

- Typically responds to emergencies, including disease outbreaks, in a technical assistance posture.
- Provides compliance assistance to employers to help ensure workers are protected.
- Provides technical assistance and support to other federal agencies, as well as state/local partners.
- Implemented interim enforcement plan for investigating COVID complaints, while ensuring the safety of workers, employers, and inspectors.

OSHA enforcement authority

- During emergency response operations, even when OSHA is operating in a technical assistance and support mode, OSHA standards remain in effect and OSHA retains its ability to enforce the OSHA standards under the OSH Act.
- Enforcement of OSHA standards follows the jurisdiction in place before the emergency, such as in states operating OSHA-approved occupational safety and health programs called State Plans.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA has provided enforcement discretion for some of its requirements, including:

- Respiratory Protection standard (29 CFR 1910.134)
- Other health standards with respirator requirements
- Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illness (29 CFR Part 1904)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memorandum</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Respiratory Protection Annual Fit-Testing for N95 Filtering Facepieces During the COVID-19 Outbreak</td>
<td>March 14, 2020 - present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement Guidance for Respiratory Protection and the N95 Shortage Due to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic</td>
<td>April 3, 2020 – present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement Guidance for Use of Respiratory Protection Equipment Certified Under Standards of Other Countries or Jurisdictions During the COVID-19 Pandemic</td>
<td>April 3, 2020 - present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded Temporary Enforcement Guidance on Respiratory Protection Fit-Testing for N95 Filtering Facepieces in All Industries During the COVID-19 Pandemic</td>
<td>April 8, 2020 - present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement Guidance on Decontamination of Filtering Facepiece Respirators in Healthcare During the COVID-19 Pandemic</td>
<td>April 24, 2020 – present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA has developed a variety of guidance materials for workers and employers on how to stay healthy during the pandemic.

OSHA.gov/coronavirus includes information on implementing the hierarchy of controls when workers have specific exposure risks.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA Guidance: Returning to Work

OSHA’s booklet on returning to work emphasizes infection prevention strategies appropriate for reopening workplaces:

- Hazard Assessment
- Hygiene
- Social distancing
- Identification and isolation of sick employees
- Employee training
- Other workplace controls and flexibilities
- Anti-retaliation practices

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA guidance

OSHA has developed alerts for:

- Stockroom and Loading Dock Workers
- Nursing Home and Long Term Care Facility Workers
- Retail Pharmacies
- Rideshare, Taxi, and Car Service Workers
- Dental Practitioners
- Restaurants & Beverage Vendors offering Takeout
- Construction Workers
- Package Delivery Workers
- Retail Workers
- Other risk and infection prevention topics

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA Guidance: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

FAQ topics include:

- General Information
- Cleaning and Disinfection
- Cloth Face Coverings
- Employer Requirements
- Healthcare
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Restrooms and Handwashing Facilities
- Retaliation
- Return to Work
- Testing for COVID-19
- Training
- Worker Protection Concerns
- Industry-Specific
  - Construction
  - Health Care

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
OSHA guidance- JHA- Assess the hazards

- OSHA guidance helps employers comply with OSHA standards.
- Guidance is based on anticipated hazards and risks, and incorporates standard, contact, and airborne precautions, and use of face/eye protection.
- Guidance should be adapted based on employer’s hazard assessment and workers’ tasks.
For all workers, regardless of specific exposure risks:

- Practice good and frequent hand hygiene.
- Follow good cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

This Is an OSHA Requirement:

1910.141(d)(2)(ii) Each lavatory shall be provided with hot and cold running water, or tepid running water.
1910.141(d)(2)(iii) Hand soap or similar cleansing agents shall be provided.
Employers should implement protocols for regularly cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces in the work environment.

- Wipe down surfaces such as door push bars, vehicle door handles, tools, and other areas that customers, visitors, or workers frequently touch.

- Follow manufacturer’s instructions for use of all EPA-approved cleaning and disinfection products.

- CDC provides detailed guidance for environmental cleaning and disinfection.
Recommend use of EPA-registered household disinfectant
- [https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)

Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
Many products recommend:
- Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label)
- Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

From CDC.gov
Develop Policy, Procedures, and Practices:

• The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and how the disease is potentially spread, the fact that infected people can spread the virus even if they do not have symptoms.

• All policies and procedures that are applicable to the employee's duties as they relate to potential exposures to SARS-CoV-2. It is helpful to provide employees with a written copy of those standard operating procedures.

• Covid-19 Coordinator to answer questions and monitor

For more information, visit www.osha.gov/coronavirus or call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742).
OSHA guidance training employees

- Train all workers about their risk of occupational exposure to COVID-19 as well as on what to do if they have traveled to high-risk areas or been exposed to possible cases.
- For workers at particular risk of exposure (e.g., in healthcare, others), discuss:
  - Sources of exposure to the virus and hazards associated with that exposure.
  - Appropriate ways to prevent or reduce the likelihood of exposure, including use of engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and PPE.
- Some OSHA standards (e.g., BBP, PPE) require worker training.
Train Employees on the following:

- Maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from customers/individuals, inside construction trailers, meeting rooms, office visiting rooms, lobby areas
- Appropriate hygiene
- The proper way to cover coughs
- Alternatives to shaking hands and importance of workers not touching their own faces
- Driving to work sites
- PPE types, proper use, limitations, location, handling, decontamination, removal, and disposal
- Wearing masks over their noses and mouths to prevent spreading the virus.
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces like tools, handles, and machines – use EPA disinfectants.
- The importance of staying home if they are sick.

OSHA hierarchy of controls

For U.S. workers and employers of workers with potential occupational exposures to COVID-19:

- Identify and isolate suspected cases.
- Implement other precautions appropriate for the worksite and job tasks, and according to the hierarchy of controls.

[www.osha.gov/coronavirus]
OSHA Guidance- hierarchy of controls

What should standard, contact, and airborne precautions consist of in workplaces where workers may be exposed to COVID-19? OSHA guidance breaks this down by worker type.

- **Engineering controls**, such as redesigning floor layouts, physical barriers like Plexiglas shields, improve ventilation, can limit most workers’ exposures.

- **Administrative controls** and safe work practices include measures, such as limiting public access to lobby's/common areas, staggered work shifts, 6 foot social distancing, hygiene procedures, etc.

- **PPE** (healthcare) may include gloves, gowns, goggles or face shields, and N95 or better respirators. Non healthcare promote wearing face coverings.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Examples Safe Work Practices/Administrative Controls:

- Screen all visitors
- Adopt staggered work schedules,
- Identify choke points where workers are forced to stand together.
- Elevators and personnel hoists, ensure 6 feet distance between passengers in all directions and equip operators with appropriate respiratory protection and other necessary PPE.
- Coordinate site deliveries
- Keep in-person meetings as short
- Ensure availability of handwashing facilities.

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/construction.html
Develop and Implement a COVID-19 Plan.

- Conducting daily employee health checks and screenings
- Identify a Covid-19 Coordinator
- Conducting a hazard assessment of the workplace
- Implementing policies and practices for social distancing in the workplace
- Improving the building ventilation system
- Call ahead and ask if anyone who was recently at the job site is sick or quarantined. If the answer is yes, postponing the job if possible.
- If you are sick, stay home, so you do not expose customers or co-workers to possible infections.

Covid-19 Plan Continued

- **Discuss details of the job in advance** over the phone or via email or text to minimize face-to-face contact
- **Utilize exterior access** to fire protection systems, when possible
- **Wear protective gear and masks** when performing work, and remove safely when you immediately leave
- **Clean and sanitize all equipment and surfaces** Coronavirus can live on system surfaces like metal for up to 5 days, plastic for 2-3 days, and copper for about four hours
- **Take care of payments and paperwork digitally**, if possible
- **Follow recommended CDC practices for handwashing** and OSHA Guidelines
Worker Rights

All workers have the right to:

- Raise a safety or health concern with their employer or OSHA, request personal protective equipment, or report a work-related injury or illness, including COVID-19.

- Receive information and training on job hazards in their workplace.
Whistleblower Protections under the OSH Act

- Employers cannot retaliate (fire, lay off, demote, etc.) against employees for engaging in activity protected under the OSH Act.

- Protected activity includes:
  - Requesting personal protective equipment
  - Wearing personal protective equipment
  - Reporting a work-related injury or illness, including COVID-19, to an employer or OSHA
  - Reporting an unsafe condition to an employer or OSHA
  - Requesting guidance on workplace safety from an employer, OSHA, or other government entity
Work Refusals under the OSH Act

- Under the OSH Act, employees have the right to refuse to perform an assigned task if they:
  - Have a reasonable apprehension of serious injury or death arising from a hazardous condition at the workplace; and
  - Refuse in good faith to expose themselves to the hazardous condition; and
  - Have no reasonable alternative; and
  - Have insufficient time, due to the urgency of the situation, to eliminate the danger through resort to regular statutory enforcement channels (i.e., contacting OSHA or an OSHA State Plan); and
  - Where possible, sought from their employer, and were unable to obtain, a correction of the dangerous condition.
COVID-19 can be a recordable illness if a worker is infected as a result of performing their work-related duties. However, employers are only responsible for recording cases of COVID-19 if all of the following are met:

- The case is a confirmed case of COVID-19 (see CDC information on persons under investigation and presumptive positive and laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19);
- The case is work-related, as defined by 29 CFR 1904.5; and
- The case involves one or more of the general recording criteria set forth in 29 CFR 1904.7 (e.g., medical treatment beyond first-aid, days away from work).

OSHA is providing enforcement discretion around recordkeeping for most sectors.

Visit OSHA’s Injury and Illness Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements page for more information.

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
All employers are required to notify OSHA when an employee is killed on the job or suffers a work-related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye.

- A fatality must be reported within 8 hours.
- An in-patient hospitalization, amputation, or eye loss must be reported within 24 hours.
How to Report Fatalities and Severe Injuries

- During business hours, call the nearest OSHA office
- Or call the OSHA 24-hour hotline 1-800-321-6742 (OSHA)
- Or report online at osha.gov/report
This section provides guidance for construction employers and workers, such as those engaged in carpentry, ironworking, plumbing, electrical, heating/ventilation/air conditioning/ventilation, masonry and concrete work, utility construction work, and earthmoving activities. This guidance supplements the general, interim guidance for all workers and employers of workers with potential occupational exposures to SARS-CoV-2.
For continual updates

- Visit OSHA’s website to sign up to receive OSHA information:
  - QuickTakes biweekly newsletter
  - Tip of the Day
  - www.osha.gov/contactus

- Follow OSHA on social media
  - Twitter: @OSHA_DOL
  - Facebook: Follow the Department of Labor page

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
COVID-19

Overview

This webpage provides information for workers and employers about the evolving coronavirus pandemic. The information includes links to interim guidance and other resources for preventing exposures to, and infection with, the novel coronavirus—officially named SARS-CoV-2, which causes the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/

News and Updates

Find the latest OSHA resources related to COVID-19, including:

- **Stockroom and Loading Dock Workers (Spanish)**. (June 2, 2020).
- **Social Distancing at Work (Spanish)**. (May 28, 2020).

Highlights

- Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 (Spanish)
- Worker Exposure Risk to COVID-19 (Spanish)
- Guidance for specific industries
- OSHA Alerts:
  - Stockroom and Loading Dock Workers (Spanish)
  - Social Distancing at Work (Spanish)
  - Nursing Home and Long Term Care Facility Workers (Spanish)
  - Retail Pharmacies (Spanish)
  - Rideshare, Taxi, and Car Service Workers (Spanish)
  - Dental Practitioners (Spanish)
  - Restaurants & Beverage Vendors Offering Takeout or Curbside Pickup (Spanish)
  - Construction Workforce (Spanish)
  - Manufacturing Industry Workforce (Spanish)
  - Package Delivery Workforce (Spanish)
  - Retail Workers (Spanish)
  - Prevent Worker Exposure to Coronavirus (COVID-19) (Spanish)
OSHA Posters

- Nine Steps to Reducing Worker Exposure to COVID-19 in Meat, Poultry, and Pork Processing and Packaging Facilities Poster (available in 18 languages)
- Seven Steps to Correctly Wear a Respirator at Work (available in 15 languages)
- Ten Steps All Workplaces Can Take to Reduce Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus Poster (available in 13 languages)

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
Ten Steps All Workplaces Can Take to Reduce Risk of Exposure to Coronavirus Poster

(OSHA 3994 - 2020) **English:** PDF
(OSHA 3995 - 2020) **Spanish:** PDF
(OSHA 4014 - 2020) **Arabic:** PDF
(OSHA 4009 - 2020) **Brazilian Portuguese:** PDF
(OSHA 4005 - 2020) **Chinese Simplified:** PDF
(OSHA 4004 - 2020) **Chinese Traditional:** PDF
(OSHA 4007 - 2020) **French Creole:** PDF
(OSHA 4013 - 2020) **Hmong:** PDF
(OSHA 4011 - 2020) **Korean:** PDF
(OSHA 4010 - 2020) **Polish:** PDF
(OSHA 4012 - 2020) **Russian:** PDF
(OSHA 4006 - 2020) **Tagalog:** PDF
(OSHA 4008 - 2020) **Vietnamese:** PDF
OSHA guidance continued - Spanish

- Stockroom and Loading Dock Workers (Spanish). (June 2, 2020).
- Social Distancing at Work (Spanish). (May 28, 2020).
- Nursing Home and Long Term Care Facility Workers (Spanish). (May 14, 2020).
- Retail Pharmacies (Spanish). (May 14, 2020).
- Rideshare, Taxi, and Car Service Workers (Spanish). (May 14, 2020).
- Dental Practitioners (Spanish). (May 11, 2020).
- Restaurants & Beverage Vendors Offering Takeout or Curbside Pickup (Spanish). (May 1, 2020).
- Construction Workforce (Spanish). (April 21, 2020).
- Package Delivery Workforce (Spanish). (April 13, 2020).
- Retail Workers (Spanish). (April 8, 2020).
- Prevent Worker Exposure to Coronavirus (COVID-19) (Spanish). (March 2020).

www.OSHA.go
Please frequently check OSHA’s webpage at www.osha.gov/coronavirus for updates
OSHA/CDC Additional Resources


Resuming Business TOOLKIT Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Interim Customizable Non-Healthcare Workplace Infection Control Assessment and Response (WICAR) tool — Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

For continual updates

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  - www.osha.gov/contactus

- **Follow OSHA on social media**
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  - Facebook: Follow the Department of Labor page

www.osha.gov/coronavirus
MASSACHUSETTS

Contact the office nearest you.

OSHA Area Offices

These federal OSHA offices cover private sector employers and workers in Massachusetts:

- **North Boston Area Office**
  Shattuck Office Center
  138 River Road, Suite 102
  Andover, MA 01810
  (978) 837-4460
  (978) 837-4455 FAX

- **South Boston Area Office**
  639 Granite Street, 4th Floor
  Braintree, MA 02184
  (617) 565-6924
  (617) 565-6923 FAX

- **Springfield Area Office**
  1441 Main Street, Room 550
  Springfield, MA 01103-1493
  (413) 785-0123
  (413) 785-0136 FAX

On-Site Consultation Program

[Massachusetts On-site Consultation Program](#)
NH and RI OSHA Area Offices

Concord Area Office
J.C. Cleveland Federal Bldg 53 Pleasant Street,
Room 3901
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 225-1629
(603) 225-1580

Providence Area Office
380 Westminster Mall,
Room 543
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 528-4669
(401) 528-4663

https://www.osha.gov/contactus/bystate/region1
On-site OSHA Consultation

Free

MA Department of Labor Standards
OSHA Consultation Program
Wall Experiment Station
37 Shattuck Street
Lawrence, MA 01843

phone: 617-626-6504
fax: 978-687-0013
email: Masscon@state.ma.us
Questions?

- Peter Barletta
  OSHA Braintree Area Office
  Email: barletta.peter@dol.gov
  Phone: 781-664-2904

- OSHA Directorate of Technical Support and Emergency Management
  Phone: 202-693-2300

www.osha.gov/coronavirus