




Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

COVID-19 Critical Infrastructure Sector Response Planning

Critical Infrastructure Sectors

Functioning [critical infrastructure](#)   is imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency for both public health and safety as well as community well-being. These workers perform job tasks across [16 critical infrastructure sectors](#) .


COVID-19 Critical Infrastructure Response Plan

While guidance specific to critical infrastructure workers and employers has been developed, employers should still review the [resources for businesses and employers](#), as these recommendations are also applicable to protecting the critical infrastructure workforce.

Create or update your COVID-19 response plan to prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace. Employers should continue to respond in a flexible way to varying levels of disease transmission in the community and be prepared to refine your response plans as needed. This may include activities in one or more of the following areas:

- Maintain healthy business operations
- Reduce transmission among employees and the public
- Maintain a healthy work environment

When creating or updating your COVID-19 response plan, be sure to:

- Implement the CDC recommendations in the [Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019](#) to help prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Comply with applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements for protecting critical infrastructure workers who remain on the job during the COVID-19 pandemic. [OSHA](#)  has published guidance and enforcement information for workplaces.

CDC Interim Guidance for Critical Infrastructure Workers Exposed to COVID-19

[CDC's critical infrastructure guidance](#) provides exceptions to current home quarantine practices after an exposure to COVID-19. The guidance advises that employers may permit workers who have had an exposure to COVID-19, but who do not have symptoms, to continue to work, provided they adhere to additional safety precautions, such as measuring the employee's temperature and assessing for symptoms of COVID-19 before each work shift ("pre-screening"), asking the employee to self-monitor for symptoms during their work shift, and wearing a [cloth face covering](#). While this guidance is designed to ensure that work in critical infrastructure sectors can continue, critical infrastructure employers have an obligation to manage the continuation of work in a way that best protects the health of their workers and the general public.

When following the CDC interim guidance, consider adapting your COVID-19 business response plan with the following elements:

Maintain healthy business operations

- Reintegrating exposed, asymptomatic workers to onsite operations, while discussed in the critical infrastructure guidance, should not be misinterpreted as always being the first or most appropriate option to pursue in managing critical work tasks

Critical work tasks:

- Home isolation may still be the most preferred and viable option for exposed workers.
- Minimize the number of workers present at worksites, balancing the need to protect workers with support for continuing critical operations.
- Anticipate and monitor staff absences due to illness or exposure by:
 - Identifying and prioritizing job functions essential for continuous operation,
 - Cross-training employees to perform critical job functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent, and
 - Matching critical job functions with other equally skilled and available workers who have not experienced an exposure to COVID-19.
- Consider special accommodations (e.g., telework, reassignment of duties to minimize contact with others) for employees who are members of a [vulnerable population](#).

Reduce transmission among employees and the public

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.
- Immediately send any employee who becomes sick during the day home or to seek further care from a healthcare provider.
- Have sick employees follow [CDC-recommended guidance](#). Employees should not return to work until the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#) are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Pre-screen employees (e.g., measuring the employee's temperature and assessing symptoms of COVID-19 prior to starting work) and perform regular medical monitoring (e.g., the employee should self-monitor for symptoms or follow up with the employer's occupational health program) of exposed workers.
 - Consult with an occupational health provider and [state and/or local health officials](#) to ensure that medical monitoring is conducted appropriately.
- Ensure exposed workers wear a facemask or [cloth face covering](#) in accordance with CDC and OSHA guidance and any state or local requirements.
- Implement social distancing to minimize the chances of workers exposing one another.
- Educate employees about how they can reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Maintain a healthy work environment

- Work with facility maintenance staff to enhance ventilation by increasing air exchanges in rooms.
- Modify workstation layouts to ensure all employees remain at least six feet apart.
- Close common areas where employees are likely to congregate and interact or enforce social distancing protocols and use other methods to physically separate employees.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning frequently touched surfaces and shared objects to minimize the potential for cross contamination; for example, clean before and after shifts or immediately before and after the use of shared objects.
- Communicate with your employees about [job stress related to COVID-19 and ways to cope with that stress](#).