



Global Cold Chain Alliance: COVID-19 Information for Cold Storage Warehouses

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Acknowledgements

This document was prepared by the staff of the Global Cold Chain Alliance.

The Global Cold Chain Alliance would also like to recognize the contributions of the World Food Logistics Organization's Scientific Advisory Council.

Document Purpose

This document is to serve as a "Rapid Response Guide" for GCCA members impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The contents of this document are a collection of information shared by reputable government agencies and scientific institutions, compiled by GCCA. While **this document will be updated often**, local, state, provincial and federal mandates should always take precedence over the contents of this document. For the safety and wellbeing of employees and customers, we encourage our members to maintain open lines of communication with public health agencies in your area.

This guide attempts to answer common questions that may arise during each of the following five stages of intervention:

1. Background
2. Planning
3. Responding
4. Recovering
5. Resources

Selecting an item in the Table of Contents will redirect you to that section of the guide. This document has been formatted in manner that will allow you to copy or send individual pages to your team. Feel free to disseminate the information in whichever manner you deem appropriate.

GCCA welcomes any questions in our Community Forum thread at http://bit.ly/GCCA_COVID19 as well as sharing best practices here http://bit.ly/GCCA_COVID19_Community

The information promulgated by the Global Cold Chain Alliance is not intended to be a comprehensive resource with respect to the refrigerated warehousing industry. While the material has been compiled with care, GCCA and the authors of the manual have not validated all of the information contained herein and do not assume any responsibility for its use, accuracy, or applicability. All users of the information unconditionally agree: (1) not to hold GCCA, or the authors responsible in any manner or to any extent for the user's action(s) or the consequences of such action(s) relating to the use of the information provided and (2) to indemnify GCCA, and the authors for all expenses, fees, costs, damages, awards, or other amounts incurred related to or arising from the user's use of the information. As used above, GCCA shall mean the core partners of GCCA, and each organization's directors, officers, employees, volunteers, members, and agents.

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About the Global Cold Chain Alliance

Comprised of its Core Partners, including the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses (IARW), the World Food Logistics Organization (WFLO), the International Refrigerated Transportation Association (IRTA), and the Controlled Environment Building Association (CEBA), the Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA) represents all major industries engaged in temperature-controlled logistics. GCCA unites partners to facilitate communication, networking, and education for the perishable food industry. For more information about GCCA, visit www.gcca.org.

Vision

The Global Cold Chain Alliance will be the recognized authority in forging a universally strong cold chain where every product retains quality and safety through each link.

Mission

The Global Cold Chain Alliance unites partners to be innovative leaders in the temperature-controlled products industry.

More information on GCCA and all its Core Partners can be found at www.gcca.org.

About the GCCA Scientific Advisory Council

From legal issues to food storage questions, GCCA and its team of experts on the [WFLO Scientific Advisory Council](#) can help you with your cold chain questions through the GCCA Inquiry Service

The WFLO Scientific Advisory Council is an eminent group of food scientists, logistics, and packaging experts from around the world. The council provides cutting-edge research and advice to members of the Global Cold Chain Alliance and its Core Partners.

Want to ask the Scientific Advisory Council a question? [Submit an inquiry today](#). The inquiry service is a member-only service.





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Background

How is the virus spread?

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC):

- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
 - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Source: [CDC - How to Protect Yourself](#) updated 3/17/2020

Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

- People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
- Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with this new coronavirus, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Source: [CDC - How It Spreads](#) updated 3/17/2020

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases, can be fatal. Symptoms **typically include fever, cough, and shortness of breath**. Some people infected with the virus have reported experiencing other non-respiratory symptoms. Other people, referred to as asymptomatic cases, **have experienced no symptoms at all**.

According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

Source: [United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) updated 3/17/2020





Planning

What can individuals do to protect others in the workplace?

1. **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
2. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
3. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.
4. **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.
5. Put **distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community.
6. **Stay home if you are sick**, except to get medical care.
7. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissues in the trash.
8. **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily**. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

Source: [CDC - How to Protect Yourself](#) updated 3/17/2020



What can our organization do to protect people working and entering our workplace?

1. **Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.**

- Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.
- Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
- Employers should maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

2. **Separate sick employees**

- CDC recommends that employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately.

3. **Emphasize staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees**

- Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Provide soap and water, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained.

4. **Perform routine environmental cleaning particularly for frequently touched surfaces daily.**

- No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time
 - [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)
 - [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)
 - [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)-Fighting Products](#) (PDF)

5. **Advise employees before traveling** to check the CDC's traveler's health notices and not travel if they have symptoms of acute respiratory illness.

Source: [CDC - How to Protect Yourself](#), [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) updated 3/17/2020





We handle food – how do we ensure the safety of the food and our employees?

United States

The **U.S. Food & Drug Administration released its first set of guidelines** on March 17, 2020 outlining specific recommendations for *Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*. The guidelines help to answer the following relevant questions:

- Is the U.S. food supply safe? **YES** ([see full answer](#))
- Will there be food shortages? **NO** ([see full answer](#))
- Where should the food industry go for guidance about business operations? ([see answer](#))
- A worker in my *facility* (food processing facility/farm) has tested positive for COVID-19. What steps do I need to take to ensure that the foods I produce are safe? ([see answer](#))
- Do I need to recall food products produced *or stored* in the facility during the time that the worker was potentially shedding the virus while working? ([see answer](#))
- If a worker in my *facility* (food processing facility/farm) has tested positive for COVID-19, should I close the facility? If so, for how long? ([see answer](#))
- What steps do I need to take to clean the facility/equipment to prevent the spread of COVID-19? ([see answer](#))
- Do I need to ask other workers who may have been exposed to a worker who tested positive for COVID-19 to self-quarantine for 14 days? ([see answer](#))
- What measures are FDA (and CDC, state partners, etc.) taking to ensure that we remain able to address foodborne illness outbreaks during the COVID-19 pandemic? ([see answer](#))

The full set of answers and resources can be found here: [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#), *italicized text added by author*; updated 3/18/2020





United States Regulations

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a statement on March 13, 2020 on USDA Guidance on COVID-19 Health Questionnaires. Here is an excerpt from the full statement:

We are aware and share your concerns about the health and safety of your plant/facility and the general public, as well as your desire to solicit information from our employees. Due to privacy-related laws and regulations covering our employees, the USDA Office of General Counsel **has advised employees not to complete and sign questionnaires about their medical conditions or attest to their medical conditions.** However, USDA has taken the following actions to address the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

All United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) managers and employees have received guidance from the Agency on protocols, preventative measures and mitigation guidelines regarding COVID-19. USDA guidance is consistent with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance. The Agency continues to provide additional guidance to all managers and employees.

All USDA employees are required to follow USDA guidance and policy.

Source: Letter to FSIS-Regulated Establishment Facility Management from USDA FSIS Office of Field Operations, updated 3/13/2020



Canada

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a statement on food safety on March 17, 2020 as part of a larger statement. Here is an excerpt from the [full statement](#):

The CFIA has strong measures in place to ensure the safety of Canada's food supply. There is **currently no evidence that food is a likely source or route of transmission of COVID-19**. The Agency continues to monitor the current situation closely in collaboration with our federal, provincial, territorial and international partners. If the CFIA becomes aware of a potential food safety risk, appropriate actions will be taken to protect Canada's food supply.

Imports and exports of food to and from Canada are not currently affected. Should the situation change, the CFIA will keep industry updated and share information as it becomes available.

All Canadian federally licensed establishments adhere to rigorous, internationally accepted standards and food safety requirements including strong sanitation and hygiene requirements.

The World Health Organization has issued precautionary recommendations including advice on the need for all Canadians to follow good hygiene practices during food handling and preparation, such as washing hands, cooking meat thoroughly and avoiding potential cross-contamination between cooked and uncooked foods.

For the latest and most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit canada.ca/coronavirus.

Source: [Government of Canada – Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Information for industry](#) updated 3/18/2020

Canadian Regulations

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a statement on food safety on March 17, 2020 as part of a larger statement. Here is an excerpt from the [full statement](#):

Please note that **CFIA employees are not in a position to sign COVID-19 Screening Forms or similar documents, or to be directed by industry**. CFIA employees are required to follow the policies, procedures and terms of employment established by their employer, the CFIA. Additionally, CFIA inspectors are **not obligated to share personal information** with regulated parties regarding their personal travels or health conditions.

Source: [Government of Canada – Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Information for industry](#) updated 3/18/2020

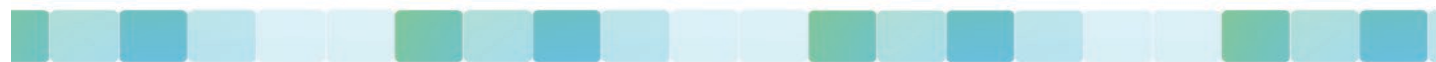


What are other cold storage operators doing to help mitigate risk of spreading COVID-19?

- **Disinfect equipment and frequently touched surfaces before shifts begin and after shifts are complete.** “High touch” surfaces include Material Handling Equipment (MHE)/forklifts, tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, control panels, computer screens and monitors. See this list of [EPA-approved disinfectants](#).
- **Disinfect PPE with EPA-approved disinfectant spray.** Freezer gear including freezer jackets, gloves, and hats can be sprayed with disinfectant spray before and after shifts are complete. See this list of [EPA-approved disinfectants](#).
- **Limit or prohibit visitors, including drivers, from entering the facility.** Rent external bathroom trailers to provide drivers with private bathroom facilities. Ensure these are cleaned and disinfected as often as permanent bathrooms in the facility.
- **Limit driver contact with staff.** If you do have drivers interacting with office staff, ask drivers to **use hand sanitizer** before handing off paperwork or other points of physical contact.
- **Keep senior management physically separate** from each other for business continuity purposes. Members have reported conducting daily management briefings via video teleconferencing.
- **Limit team member movement** by asking management not to visit multiple sites; instead to stay at one specific site or facility.
- **Stagger shift start/end times** to reduce communal traffic at entry points and in locker rooms.
- **Provide individually wrapped boxed lunches as much as possible.** This reduces the need for employees to go off-campus, limiting potential opportunities for exposure. It also provides an opportunity to support local food retailers who may be suffering from reduced business.
- **Designate space for on-site childcare** given school and daycare closures, reducing the need for working parents to take a leave of absence.
- **Permit employees to carry a negative balance in their sick time.** Show your teams that you care and will work with them through this challenging time; while also mitigating the risk of exposure to other employees.

Additional measures to be added as members share how they are responding. Visit the http://bit.ly/GCCA_COVID19_Community to participate in the conversation.

Source: GCCA member forum updated 3/18/2020





Can employers take temperatures of employees as they come into work?

The general answer is it is probably okay. There is some risk (ADA, EEOC, privacy) but we think there is less risk that the action will be challenged because of the “pandemic” declaration. That said, the general recommendation is to have employees/visitors do an initial questionnaire assessing travel, general health and contact. Then, only individuals that can complete the questionnaire satisfactorily will have their temp checked, as others may be sent home based on their inability to answer the questionnaire satisfactorily. Jackson Lewis has experience preparing these guidelines/questionnaires for specific clients. If anyone wants assistance creating a questionnaire or guidelines for this scenario, please contact GCCA's employment law expert team at Jackson Lewis.

Source: [JacksonLewis](#) updated 3/18/2020



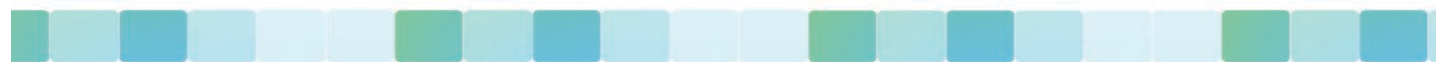


What should we consider when creating an infectious disease outbreak response plan?

All employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from COVID-19 while ensuring continuity of operations. All employers need to identify and communicate their objectives, which may include one or more of the following: (a) reducing transmission among staff, (b) protecting people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications, (c) maintaining business operations, and (d) minimizing adverse effects on other entities in their supply chains. Some of the key considerations when making decisions on appropriate responses are:

- Disease severity (i.e., number of people who are sick, hospitalization and death rates) in the community where the business is located.
- Impact of disease on employees that are vulnerable and may be at higher risk for COVID-19 adverse health complications.
- Prepare for possible increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members, dismissals of early childhood programs and K-12 schools due to high levels of absenteeism or illness:
- Employers should plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.
- Cross-train personnel to perform essential functions so that the workplace is able to operate even if key staff members are absent.
- Assess your essential functions and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products. Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).
- Employers with more than one business location are encouraged to provide local managers with the authority to take appropriate actions outlined in their business infectious disease outbreak response plan based on the condition in each locality.
- Coordination with state and local health officials is strongly encouraged for all businesses so that timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses in each location where their operations reside.

Source: [*CDC – Interim Guidance for Business and Employers*](#) updated 3/18/2020





Develop a Site-Specific Crisis Manual/Emergency Response Plan

A crisis manual does three things. It identifies potential crisis, lays out specific actions for addressing the crisis, and identifies those persons responsible for carrying out those actions.

When preparing for a crisis, answer these questions:

- What do I do as a first response?
- What do I tell the employees?
- What do I say to customers?
- How do I respond to the news media?
- What are my legal obligations?
- If there are fatalities, how will that be handled?
- How does insurance play a role?
- How do I minimize the company's loss?
- How do I preserve goodwill with customers and the public?

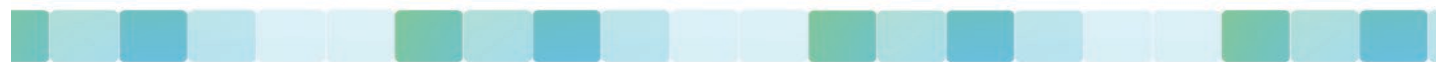
Any crisis management plan should include identifying an emergency response team, key contact information for employees, contractors and other stakeholders (insurance companies, customers, security agencies, etc.), and a back-up management plan in the event that management is impacted. The emergency response plan should be written as succinctly as possible and be well-organized.

Source: [*IARW Guide to Effective Warehouse Crisis Management*](#) updated 3/17/2020

For **sample emergency response plan documentation, checklists and media releases**, see pages 35 through 46 of the manual.

Ensure the plan is flexible and involve your employees in developing and reviewing your plan. Conduct a focused discussion or exercise using your plan, to find out ahead of time whether the plan has gaps or problems that need to be corrected. Share your plan with employees and explain what human resources policies, workplace and leave flexibilities, and pay and benefits will be available to them. Share best practices with other businesses in your communities (especially those in your supply chain), chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.

Source: [*CDC – Interim Guidance for Business and Employers*](#) updated 3/18/2020





Maintain business continuity

A business continuity plan describes how an organization will continue to function during or after some kinds of emergency, disaster or event. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) has produced a free, [15-page publication](#) focused specifically on situations involving infectious diseases. It involves planning how your key services or operations can be continued. Remembering that each business and operation is unique, the topics listed in this publication offer some basic suggestions. You will need to create a specific plan that best suits your business and operational needs.

Source: [CCOHS – Flu and Infections Disease Outbreaks Business Continuity Plan Free](#)
updated 3/18/2020





Responding

Are there test kits available to my employees?

At this point in time we do not know the availability of test kits across the United States. GCCA has partnered with other food associations to advocate the need for food warehouse facilities to have must have continued access to coronavirus test kits to ensure a healthy and adequate workforce. **GCCA will continue to provide any updates as they become available about the accessibility of testing kits.**

It was noted in the recent *Coronavirus Guidelines for America* from the White House and CDC, that “If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and **food supply**, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule. You and your employers should follow CDC guidance to protect your health at work.”

Source: [*The President’s Coronavirus Guidelines for America*](#) updated 3/17/2020

How long can the virus survive in cold environments?

Researchers from the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UCLA and Princeton University examined how long COVID-19 survives in the air as well as on copper, cardboard, plastic and stainless steel and then compared it with SARS, the coronavirus that emerged in late 2002 and killed nearly 800 people.

They found that COVID-19 was detectable in aerosols for up to three hours, up to four hours on copper and up to 24 hours on cardboard. The new coronavirus can also last up to three days on plastic and stainless steel, the scientists concluded, adding the amount of the virus left on those surfaces decreases over time. Aerosols are solid or liquid particles that hang in the air, including fog, dust and gas commonly used in medical procedures like ventilation and nebulizers.

This study was done in ambient temperature conditions.

Studies on the survivability of COVID-19 at lower temperatures have not yet been completed. Similar types of viruses can survive longer at lower temperatures, and years in the frozen state. **GCCA will continue to update this section as more research emerges.**

Source: [*CNBC - Coronavirus lives for hours in air particles and days on surfaces, new US study shows, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services – New coronavirus stable for hours on surfaces*](#) updated 3/18/2020



Who should we contact if one of my employees is suspected of having COVID-19?

1. **Call your Doctor:** If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice. Be sure to call before going to the doctor's office or emergency room, and they will tell you what to do.

OR call your Local Health Department:

If you do not have a routine doctor, contact your local health department and they will be able to redirect you to the appropriate resources. A full list of local health departments by US State can be found here: [Directory of Local Health Departments by State](#) and for Canadian Provinces and Territories contact information be found on this list of [Public Health Authorities](#).

2. **Wear a facemask:** If possible, put on a facemask before you enter the building. If you can't put on a facemask, try to keep a safe distance from other people (at least 6 feet/3 meters away). This will help protect the people in the office or waiting room.
3. **Follow care instructions** from your healthcare provider and local health department. Your local health authorities will give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

Business Contacts

The CDC strongly encourages all businesses to coordinate with the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CTSE) so that timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses in each location where their operations reside. Since the intensity of an outbreak may differ according to geographic location, local health officials will be issuing guidance specific to their communities. [State Contact list](#).

Source: [CDC - What To Do if You Are Sick](#), [CSTE- After Hours/EPI-On-Call Contact Lists](#) updated 3/17/2020





Is COVID-19 a reportable illness under OSHA regulations?

Instances of COVID-19 **are not reportable** (i.e., **mandatory obligation to notify OSHA by phone or in writing**) for any employer, unless there is a known workplace exposure to COVID-19 (such as in the case of a healthcare setting) and there is a death or hospitalization for a period of 24 hrs or more. In addition, employers are only required to record (i.e., make a notation on their OSHA 300 logs, if required to be maintained) if the instance of COVID-19 is work-related and results in lost time or medical treatment beyond first aid.

Employers should not presume that an instance of COVID-19 is work-related and should assess on a case-by-case basis. For the majority of industries, COVID-19 occurrence will be from community or personal contact spread, and not tied specifically to a work-related exposure. However, employers in the health care arena will have different reporting and recording obligations as it can be assumed that they will have had work-related contact given the current pandemic.

Source: [JacksonLewis](#) updated 3/18/2020

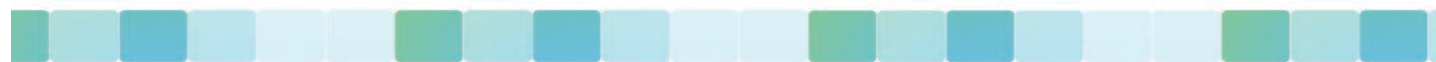
Should exposure occur in the workplace, what is an appropriate response?

In all workplaces where exposure to COVID-19 may occur, prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical first step in protecting workers, visitors, and others at the worksite.

1. Immediately isolate people suspected of having COVID-19. Move potentially infectious people to a location away from workers, customers, and other visitors.
2. Take steps to limit spread of the person's infectious respiratory secretions, including by providing them a facemask and asking them to wear it, if they can tolerate doing so.
3. If possible, isolate people suspected of having COVID-19 separately from those with confirmed cases of the virus to prevent further transmission, including in screening, triage, or healthcare facilities.
4. Restrict the number of personnel entering isolation areas, including the room of a patient with suspected/confirmed COVID-19.
5. Protect workers in close contact* with the sick person by using additional engineering and administrative control, safe work practices and PPE.

**CDC defines "close contact" as being about six (6) feet (approximately two meters) from an infected person or within the room or care area of an infected patient for a prolonged period while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact also includes instances where there is direct contact with infectious secretions while not wearing recommended PPE. Close contact generally does not include brief interactions, such as walking past a person.*

Source: [U.S. OSHA – Control and Prevention](#) updated 3/18/2020





A worker in my *facility* (food processing facility/farm) has tested positive for COVID-19. What steps do I need to take to ensure that the foods I produce are safe?

Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. **Currently, there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 by food.** Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses like norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness. Foodborne exposure to this virus is not known to be a route of transmission.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality. Sick employees should follow the CDC's [*What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)*](#). Employers should consult with the local health department for additional guidance.

While the primary responsibility in this instance is to take appropriate actions to protect other workers and people who might have come in contact with the ill employee, facilities should re-double their cleaning and sanitation efforts to control any risks that might be associated with workers who are ill regardless of the type of virus or bacteria. For example, facilities are required to maintain clean and sanitized facilities and food contact surfaces.

See: [*FSMA Final Rule for Preventive Controls for Human Food*](#).

- Food facilities are required to use EPA-registered “sanitizer” products in their cleaning and sanitizing practices.
- In addition, there is a list of EPA-registered “disinfectant” products for COVID-19 on the [*Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 list*](#) that have qualified under EPA’s [*emerging viral pathogen program*](#) for use against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.
- **IMPORTANT:** Check the product label guidelines for if and where these disinfectant products are safe and recommended for use in food manufacturing areas or food establishments.
- *Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#) italicized question text edited by author updated 3/18/2020*



How should we clean and disinfect after a person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in our facility?

Timing and location of cleaning and disinfection of surfaces

- At a school, daycare center, office, or other facility that does not house people overnight:
 - It is recommended to close off areas used by the ill persons and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
 - Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

Source: [CDC - Environmental Clean and Disinfection Recommendations](#) updated 3/17/2020

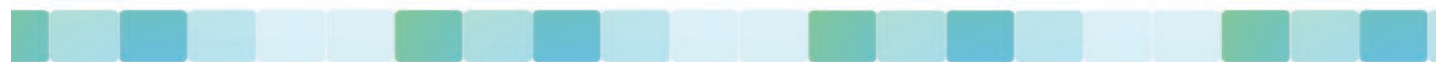
Should food facilities (grocery stores, manufacturing facilities, restaurants, etc.) perform any special cleaning or sanitation procedures for COVID-19?

CDC recommends routine cleaning of all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. CDC does not recommend any additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning at this time.

View the EPA-registered disinfectant products on the [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 list](#) that have qualified under EPA's [emerging viral pathogen program](#) for use against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Restaurants and retail food establishments are regulated at the state and local level. State, local, and tribal regulators use the [Food Code](#) published by the FDA to develop or update their own food safety rules. Generally, FDA-regulated food manufacturers are required to maintain clean facilities, including, as appropriate, clean and sanitized food contact surfaces, and to have food safety plans in place. Food safety plans include a hazards analysis and risk-based preventive controls and include procedures for maintaining clean and sanitized facilities and food contact surfaces. See: [FSMA Final Rule for Preventive Controls for Human Food](#).

Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#) updated 3/18/2020





Recovering

Do I need to recall food products produced in the facility during the time that the worker was potentially shedding the virus while working?

We do not anticipate that food products would need to be recalled or be withdrawn from the market because of COVID-19, as there is currently no evidence to support the transmission of COVID-19 associated with food or food packaging.

Additionally, facilities are required to control any risks that might be associated with workers who are ill regardless of the type of virus or bacteria. For example, facilities are required to maintain clean and sanitized facilities and food contact surfaces.

Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#) updated 3/18/2020

If a worker in my facility (food processing facility/farm) has tested positive for COVID-19, should I close the facility? If so, for how long?

Food facilities need to follow protocols set by local and state health departments, which may vary depending on the amount of community spread of COVID-19 in a given area. These decisions will be based on public health risk of person-to-person transmission – not based on food safety.

Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#) *italicized question text edited by author* updated 3/18/2020

Do I need to ask other workers who may have been exposed to a worker who tested positive for COVID-19 to self-quarantine for 14 days?

Employers need to follow guidelines set by state and local authorities. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality. Sick employees should follow the CDC's [What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). Employers should consult with the local health department for additional guidance.

Source: [U.S. Food & Drug Administration](#) updated 3/18/2020





When is it safe for an infected employee to come back to work?

People with COVID-19 who have stayed home (home isolated) can stop home isolation under the following conditions:

- *If you will not have a test* to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
 - You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
 - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
AND
 - at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared
- *If you will be tested* to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
 - You no longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
 - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
AND
 - you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. Your doctor will follow [CDC guidelines](#).

Source: [CDC - What To Do if You Are Sick](#) updated 3/17/2020



Resources

Labor and Workforce Solutions

We recognize IARW warehouse members might need assistance finding additional associates to backfill many roles within the warehouse facility in the event that one or more of your teammates tests positive for COVID-19 and is away from work for an extended period of time. In that event, we have compiled a list of resources that could be helpful to you in filling those positions.

Staffing Agencies and Contact Information

Bluecrew

Cynthia Fisher, Account Executive
cynthia@bluecrewjobs.com | 757 408-3128

Jobble

Alec Mahony
alec@jobble.com | 508 566 7403 | info.jobble.com/hire/global-cold-chain-alliance

Othrsource

Todd Kieffer, Senior Vice President
www.othrsource.com | todd@othrsource.com

Trillium Staffing

Andrew Carter, National Product Manager Construction Division
jcarter@trilliumconstruction.net | Office: 615 538 5413 | Cell: 615 240 9337

Job Descriptions

If you need to quickly post positions, utilize the standard warehouse position descriptions in the IARW Guide to Effective Warehouse Administration. Provided are templates of job descriptions that members can easily use off-the-shelf for their own purposes.

[Download the Guide to Effective Warehouse Administration](#)





Employment Law

Receive legal guidance on employment law questions and issues related to COVID-19 from Jackson Lewis. GCCA has a special relationship with employment lawyers at the firm Jackson Lewis. Through this special relationship, Jackson Lewis lawyers will aid members in understanding if they need legal assistance with labor and employment issues at no cost. If it is determined that legal assistance is needed, members will receive a 15% discount on Jackson Lewis rates if they decide to use Jackson Lewis as their legal representation. You can either contact GCCA staff first or Rachel Ehlers directly for any questions related to COVID-19.

Rachel Ehlers, Attorney at Law, Jackson Lewis P.C.
Direct: +1 512 362 7409 | Rachel.Ehlers@jacksonlewis.com

Supplies

Thermometers

At an FDA briefing call on March 18, 2020 it was recommended that food industry work with the healthcare agencies to procure touchless thermometers. Listen to the [full briefing](#) here.

GCCA has also reached out to several different manufactures of thermometers and at this time there does not seem to be a shortage, unlike at the retail level. We would suggest contacting companies to understand delivery timelines and quantity requirements.

Exergen
617 923 9900 | www.exergen.com

Braun
1 800 477 0457 | www.braunhealthcare.com

Kinsa Health
415 236 4811 | sales@kinsahealth.com | www.kinsahealth.co



Cleaning Supplies

Below is a list of vendors that supply industrial cleaning products to assist you in sourcing supplies for your facilities:

Grainger

[Review Products](#)

Phone: 1-800-GRAINGER

(1-800-472-4643)

[Contact/Email](#)

WebrestaurantStore

[Review Products](#)

[Online Chat](#)

Global Industrial

[Review Products](#)

Phone: 1-888-978-7759

[Contact](#)

Uline

1-800-295-5510

[Review Products](#)

customer.service@uline.com

ReStockIt

[Review Products](#)

[Online Chat](#)

P&G Professional

[Review Products](#)

[1-800-332-7787](tel:1-800-332-7787)

Cleanitsupply.com

[Review Products](#)

1-800-998-3295

[Online Chat](#)

Uno Clean

[Review Products](#)

224.654.6500

sales@unoclean.com

MSC

[Review Products](#)

1-800-645-7270

Dobmeier

[Review Products](#)

1-800-870-2006



Communication Templates

Helping Your Customers or Suppliers

This is a template you can send to your customers or suppliers to help them respond to the pandemic.

Dear Customer (or Supplier),

With the impacts of COVID-19 on our local business community already in effect, in addition to good hand hygiene and common-sense precautions with your employees and patrons, [company name] encourages all local businesses to consider the following:

For your business: Prepare for negative economic impacts.

- Capital: Create, confirm, or expand your line of credit.
- Staffing: Develop staffing plans for varying levels of customers and revenue (what does an 80% scenario plan look like?).
- Insurance: Check with your insurance provider to understand your coverage and options.

For your customers: Make your place of business as hygienic as possible and communicate what you are doing to customers so they feel comfortable visiting.

For your employees: Check, modify, and communicate HR policies regarding remote working, sick-leave, and compensation during health crisis. Try to ensure your policies are as flexible and non-punitive as possible. Sick employees should be encouraged to stay home.

For your workflow: Cross-train employees for key functions so that daily schedules can continue relatively uninterrupted by potential employee absences. Where relevant, consider staggering start and end times to reduce large numbers of people coming together at the same time; and create and test remote employee collaboration systems (consider apps such as Slack and Zoom).

For your cashflow: Communicate with your landlord (or tenants) and lenders about expectations and request flexibility (better to have that conversation now).

For yourself: Eat well, sleep, and exercise. Taking care of yourself in this time of stress will improve your resistance to infection and resilience in managing difficult business situations. And of course, wash your hands all the dang time and don't touch your face, or anyone else, for that matter.

For your Company: For us to best serve you, we need to know and share what our members are doing to manage risks. To that end, please tell us what's working and what you need from us!

Our office will [remain open] OR [have reduced hours] as a "Handshake-Free Zone" and we are a ["go" on all upcoming shipments] OR [cancelling upcoming events]. Please keep an eye on our website for updates on events, company news, and resources to help your business weather this trying time.



Communicate Business Changes to Your Staff

The [company name] is committed to providing a safe working environment for you and to minimizing the potential economic and business impact for our customers. We want to assure you that we have a plan in place to address the current COVID-19 situation. To ensure a safe and productive workplace, the following strategies will be followed:

- We will continue to [conduct business as usual] [revise our days and hours open to] [list hours of operation.]
- We will evaluate business travel as it approaches.
- You are encouraged to use [respiratory etiquette](#) and safe [hand washing](#) practices. Additionally, you are encouraged to use hand sanitizer to supplement handwashing or when handwashing is not an option.
- You are asked to stay home if sick. If you arrive at work sick you will be sent home.
- We are aware of the impact that closed schools, child daycare or adult daycare centers have on many of you. If you are impacted by a closure, please notify your supervisor. Supervisors can coordinate working from home on a case-by-case basis.

Because of the potential that you or a family member may become ill or that our offices may need to close on short notice, we ask that you take your laptop home each evening. If you do not have a laptop, one will be made available for you.

As stated above, we have a plan in place to help ensure your safety. We will continue to follow the advice of government and health organizations to determine next steps.



Communicate a Health Reminder to Your Staff

Subject: What can we do during this time to reduce risk of COVID-19?

Dear Employees,

*Our role as a company in ensuring the country's food supply has been recognized by the **Department of Homeland Security as part of the country's critical infrastructure**. Your role and ability to remain healthy is paramount to accomplishing this mission. **So what can each of us do?***

- 1. **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.*
- 2. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.*
- 3. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.*
- 4. **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick.*
- 5. Put **distance between yourself and other people** if COVID-19 is spreading in your community by practicing social distancing.*
- 6. **Stay home if you are sick**, except to get medical care.*
- 7. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissues in the trash.*
- 8. **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily**. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.*

Source: [CDC - How to Protect Yourself](#) updated 3/17/2020

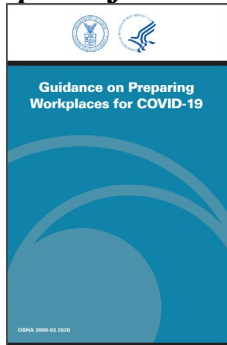
Thank you for your continued diligence and effort to ensure we keep our workplace as safe and healthy as possible. We will continue to follow up with relevant information from government and health organizations as we figure out next steps.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Printable and Sharable Resources

Select a resource to be directed to a version for sharing or printing

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19



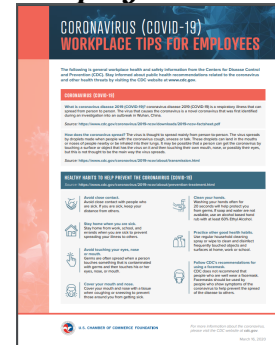
Source: OSHA/HHS 3/18/2020

Canadian Coronavirus disease: Awareness resources posters



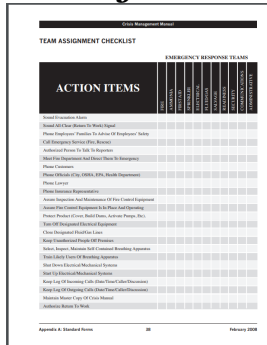
Source: Government of Canada 3/18/2020

Workplace Tips for Employee Poster



Source: US Chamber of Commerce 3/18/2020

Crisis Management Manual



Source: IARW Guide to Effective Warehouse Crisis Management 3/18/2020

COVID-19 Print Resources



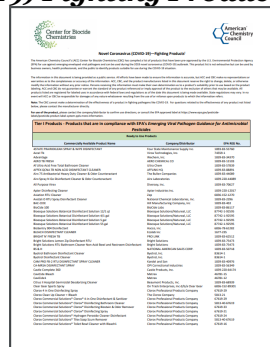
Source: CDC 3/18/2020

The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America



Source: OSHA/HHS 3/18/2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fighting Products



Source: American Chemistry Council 3/18/2020



Appendices

	Title	Organization/Author	Date Published
Appendix A	<u><i>Can the New Type of Coronavirus be Transmitted via Food and Objects?</i></u>	German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment	24 February 2020
Appendix B	<u><i>EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19</i></u>	United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	03 March 2020



Core Partners



Global Cold Chain Alliance
241 18th Street South, Suite 620, Arlington, VA, 22202