COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE:

Life Sciences

May 12, 2020

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OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by employees (where respiratory protection is not required) and customers/clients,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training employees on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

Purpose

This document provides guidance for the life sciences industry to support a safe, clean environment for employees. The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any employee rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.[1] Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has specific requirements for facilities that handle pathogens (title 8 section 5199) and additional safety and health guidance on their Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Infection Prevention webpage. CDC has additional information in their guidance for laboratories and for businesses and employers.

Worksites that Handle Infectious Pathogens

Research facilities, laboratories, and other locations that handle material that may contain pathogens and whose operations may disperse pathogens in the air must establish, implement, and maintain an effective written Biosafety Plan, administered by the facility's biological safety officer. The Biosafety Plan must include the following:

- List of job classifications with exposure to infectious pathogens.
- List of infectious pathogens known or reasonably expected to be present in laboratory materials and applicable biosafety measures.
- Procedures to ensure all incoming materials containing pathogens are treated as virulent, until verified as deactivated or attenuated.
- A risk assessment, performed by the biological safety officer, in accordance with CDC's Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories guidelines.
- Feasible engineering controls including containment equipment and procedures.
- Required safe work practice controls and prohibited unsafe work practices in accordance with the risk assessment and CDC guidelines.
- Necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), including respiratory protective equipment.
- Effective decontamination and disinfection procedures for laboratory surfaces, equipment, and tools.
- Procedures for communicating hazards to employees and providing required employee training.
- Emergency procedures for uncontrolled releases in the facility and untreated releases outside the facility.
- Provision of applicable vaccines to employees.
- Procedures to investigate and provide medical follow up to employees exposed to laboratory pathogens.
- Procedures to annually inspect facilities and annually audit the facility's biosafety procedures.

- Procedures to record and correct deficiencies found during inspections and audits.

Worksite Specific Plan

- All facilities, whether they handle pathogens or not, must institute a worksite specific plan to reduce COVID-19 transmission.
- Establish a written, worksite-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every facility, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas, and designate a person at each facility to implement the plan.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the facility is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among employees.
- Train and communicate with employees and employee representatives on the plan.
- Regularly evaluate the workplace for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected employee and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive employee(s) and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.

Topics for Employee Training

- If applicable, training on the facility's biosafety plan and all controls used to prevent transmission of aerosol transmitted diseases while working with pathogens.
- Information on COVID-19, how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using CDC guidelines.

- The importance of not coming to work if employees have a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on CDC's webpage.
- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when employees cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per CDC guidelines).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
    - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
    - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
    - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
    - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
    - Face coverings should be washed after each shift.
- Ensure temporary or contract workers at the facility are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary and/or contract workers.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19, including employee's sick leave rights under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-62-20.

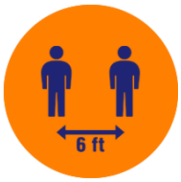
Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the establishment. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with workers to the extent possible. Both screeners and employees should wear face coverings for the screening.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker leaving the home for their shift and follows CDC guidelines, as described in the Topics for Employee Training section above.
- Encourage workers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- Employers should provide and ensure workers use all required protective equipment, including face coverings and gloves where necessary. Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.
- Workers (including contractors, temporary workers, and visitors) who are not otherwise required to wear respiratory protection are strongly recommended to wear face coverings at all times while on-site. Face coverings must not be shared. In operations where pathogens are handled, use the correct type of PPE.
- For those facilities in laboratory, research, or clinical settings, evaluate existing personal protective equipment practices and determine additional measures or necessary adjustments to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning on high traffic areas such as lunch areas, changing areas, and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevators controls. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces including laboratory equipment, tools, office supplies, doorknobs, toilets, and handwashing facilities.

- Clean touchable surfaces between shifts or between users, whichever is more frequent, including but not limited to working surfaces, tools, handles and latches, and controls on stationary and mobile equipment.
- Avoid sharing phones, desks, office equipment, or other items wherever possible. Never share PPE.
- Supply the necessary cleaning products so employees can clean and disinfect personal work areas. Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed.
- Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties. Modify hours to ensure regular deep cleaning of office, laboratory, and other facility spaces. Stagger breaks if feasible to ensure physical distancing and the chance to clean restrooms frequently.
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 listed on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer's directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves as required by the product instructions.
- Modify offerings in any on-site cafeterias or dining rooms, including using prepackaged foods, drink, condiment, and flatware dispensing options.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in work and break areas.
- For those facilities in laboratory, research, or clinical settings, evaluate existing cleaning and disinfecting protocols and determine additional measures or necessary adjustments to prevent exposure to COVID-19.



Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between employees. These can include use of physical partitions or visual

cues (e.g., floor markings or signs to indicate where employees should stand).

- Redesign office spaces, cubicles, laboratory rooms, etc., to ensure workspaces allow for at least six feet between employees. Decrease the capacity for conference and meeting rooms in order to maintain at least six feet of physical distance between employees. Designate separate entrance and exits and post signage to this effect.
- Utilize work practices, when feasible, to limit the number of employees at the office at one time. This may include scheduling (e.g., staggering start/end times), establishing alternating days for onsite reporting, returning to the office workspace in phases, or continued use of telework when feasible. Reassign lockers or limit/stagger locker use to increase distance between employees.
- Consider offering workers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with customers and other employee (e.g., managing inventory or administrative needs through telework).
- Transition all meetings and interviews to phone or digital platforms. For meetings that must be in person, adjust meetings and use smaller meetings to ensure compliance with physical distancing guidelines
- In areas where physical distancing is difficult to maintain, employees should have increased symptom screenings including temperature, visual, and verbal checks.
- Discontinue nonessential travel and encourage distance meetings via phone and internet.
- Require employees to avoid handshakes and similar greetings that break physical distance guidelines.
- Place additional limitations on the number of employees in enclosed areas, to ensure at least six feet of separation to limit transmission of the virus.
- Stagger employee breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Close breakrooms, use barriers, or increase distance between tables/chairs to separate workers and discourage congregating during breaks. Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade covers and seating that ensures physical distancing.
- Use the following hierarchy to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in research, production, and other work areas especially where physical

distancing is difficult to maintain: engineering controls, administrative controls, and PPE.

- Engineering controls include creating physical or spatial barriers between employees such as Plexiglas or other sturdy and impermeable partitions.
- Administrative controls include increasing the number of shifts to reduce the number of personnel present at one time and ensure adequate physical distancing.
- PPE includes face shields, some masks, and impermeable gloves. Note that some disposable equipment such as some face shields and respirators are prioritized for health care workers and workers that handle pathogens and should not otherwise be used.

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[1]Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. The life sciences industry must comply with all Cal/OSHA standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). Additionally, employers should be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.