

COVID-19 General Checklist for Energy and Utilities Employers

July 2, 2020

This checklist is intended to help energy and utilities employers implement their plan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and is supplemental to the [Guidance for Energy and Utilities Employers](#). This checklist is a summary and contains shorthand for some parts of the guidance; familiarize yourself with the guidance before using this checklist.



Contents of Written Workplace Specific Plan

- The person(s) responsible for implementing the plan.
- A risk assessment and the measures that will be taken to prevent spread of the virus.
- Use of face coverings, in accordance with the [CDPH guidance](#).
- Training and communication with workers and worker representatives on the plan.
- A process to check for compliance and to document and correct deficiencies.
- A process to investigate COVID-cases, alert the local health department, and identify and isolate close workplace contacts and infected workers.
- Update the plan as necessary to prevent further cases.
- Protocols for when the workplace has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidance](#).
- Employers engaged in construction of energy and utilities infrastructure should also refer to the directions for construction employers.
- Incorporate COVID-19 precautions into emergency planning for mass outages, fires, etc. (see detailed guidance).



Topics for Worker Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), preventing spread, and who is especially vulnerable.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).
- The importance of not coming to work if workers have a cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea, or if they or someone they had contact with has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To return to work after a COVID-19 diagnosis only after 10 days since symptom onset and 72 hours of no fever.

- When to seek medical attention.
- The importance of hand washing.
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time.
- Proper use of cloth face covers, including information in the [CDPH guidance](#).
- Information on leave benefits, including the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and workers' compensation benefits under the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#) while that Order is in effect.
- Train any independent contractors, temporary, or contract workers in these policies and ensure they have necessary PPE.



Individual Control Measures & Screening

- Symptom screenings and/or temperature checks.
- Encourage workers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- Provide and ensure workers use all necessary PPE.
- Encourage frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitizer.
- Provide disposable gloves to workers as a supplement to frequent hand washing for tasks such as handling commonly touched items or conducting symptom screening.
- Provide the necessary equipment and accommodations for line crews that may need to respond to grid disruption.
- Conduct daily safety briefings prior to field workers going on service calls.



Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning in high traffic areas.
- Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces.
- Clean and sanitize shared equipment between each use.
- Clean touchable surfaces between shifts or between users, whichever is more frequent.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure all water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.
- Use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and train workers on chemical hazards, product instructions, ventilation requirements, and Cal/OSHA requirements. Follow CDPH [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#).
- Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shifts.
- Clean and sanitize personal equipment at the end of each shift. Provide hand sanitizer to all field staff.
- Clean floors using a vacuum with HEPA filter or other methods that do not disperse pathogens into the air.

- Consider upgrades to improve air filtration and ventilation.
- Modify offerings in on-site cafeterias, including using prepackaged foods and flatware.



Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Implement measures to physically separate workers by at least six feet using measures such as physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings, colored tape, or signs to indicate to where workers should stand).
- Develop a process workflow for employees to use to identify suspected COVID-19 concerns during customer calls.
- Contact customers before visits to confirm appointments and check if there are infected people on premises.
- Allow field personnel to call a "safety stop" when they are reluctant to enter a dwelling or other building.
- Limit exposure for field technicians and personnel by implementing remote diagnostics and self-install/repair strategies wherever possible.
- Adjust in-person meetings, if they are necessary, to ensure physical distancing.
- Hold meetings and interviews by phone or virtual platforms.
- Limit the number of workers on-site at one time.
- Have field crews drive separate vehicles if feasible. Otherwise, keep the cab well ventilated and do not reassign or comingle crew members.
- Stagger worker breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols. Close or limit access to breakrooms, use barriers, or spread out tables/chairs. Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade and seating arrangements that ensure physical distancing.
- Post signage to designate separate entrances and exits.
- Reassign lockers or limit or stagger locker use.
- For field workers operating in a restricted area or containment zone, organizations should consider:
 - Offering alternate lodging, such as mobile homes and RVs equipped with washer/dryers, showers, and kitchens.
 - Dividing workers into small teams that do not comingle.
 - Instituting triple wellness checks with mandatory temperature and/or symptom screenings at arrival, at mid-shift, and when going off-duty, with a health survey.

Additional Considerations for Protecting Control Centers

- Identify essential workers to develop effective strategies for mitigating their risk of infection. Develop a plan if they need to be removed from the workforce.
- Segregate crews to limit cross-contamination.
- Limit outside visitors.
- Consider which, if any, personnel can perform their jobs in spaces adjacent to an existing control room.
- Where a shift of control center personnel is not in the same room, maintain open lines of communication.
- Workstations should allow for at least six feet of space between workers. Physical barriers between employees can be used for additional protection when six feet of distance is not possible.
- Contractors/vendors should be screened with a health questionnaire and/or temperature check. Access should be limited to critical activities only.
- Consider control room functions that can be performed remotely, like monitoring or data analytics.
- Control center support staff should be allowed to work remotely to the extent permissible.
- Logistics plans for housing operators onsite, including bedding, hygiene facilities, entertainment, and food accommodations, should be developed.

