



Workplace Steps to Controlling and Preventing COVID-19 Outbreaks

Alameda County recommends that employers respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19 in the workplace. When an outbreak is suspected or confirmed, follow these steps to ensure rapid control and to prevent future transmission.

Controlling COVID-19 in the workplace will help to:

- ✓ Protect public health and safety
- ✓ Safeguard the health and well-being of your workers
- ✓ Promote public confidence in your business as a safe workplace
- ✓ Maintain usual business operations

STEP 1: KNOW THE REQUIREMENTS	
	Review Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations: Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specifically, review the FAQs -- pay close attention to recent updates. ○ Continually check Cal/OSHA's website for updates.
	1. Review Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations on employer provided housing quarantine requirements .
	Visit ACPHD's Workplace Guidance webpage for local requirements, reporting instructions, and other resources.
	Revisit your COVID-19 Prevention Program to include the latest Cal/OSHA COVID-19 regulation updates.
STEP 2: TRACK AND REPORT CASES	
	See Assembly Bill 2693 (AB 2693) and Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations for employers reporting requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers must report major outbreaks (20 or more employee COVID-19 cases in an exposed group, as defined by subsection 3205(b)(7), visited the worksite during their infectious period within a 30-day period) to Cal/OSHA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Search Cal/OSHA Reporting and report your major outbreak to the nearest Cal/OSHA district office. • Report to Cal/OSHA all serious injury and illness resulting in hospitalization and death from COVID-19, even if work-relatedness is uncertain. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reports must be made immediately but not longer than 8 hours after the employer finds out. ○ Cal/OSHA prefers calls by phone but will also accept email reports to caloshaaccidentreport@tel-us.com. Details on reporting (https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Reporting-Requirements-COVID-19.html) ○ Contact information for your district offices can be found at: https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/report-accident-or-injury.html



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations and CDPH's COVID-19 Outbreak Definitions.
	<p>Report to ACPHD on a voluntarily basis through the SPOT portal if the following occur:</p> <p>ACPHD encourages all facilities to stay up to date on guidance for their specific settings. While ACPHD continues to support settings who are experiencing outbreaks, we are unable to work individually with all facilities. However, we will continue to share resources by email when we receive an outbreak report. In addition, if your setting is detecting unusual COVID illnesses such as more severe illness (e.g. hospitalizations or deaths), a more rapid spread of infections (e.g. having 1 case then 20), or cases with unusual symptoms (e.g. other than typical for COVID) consider completing the SPOT Intake Form and follow instructions to register. Once you are registered, enter new cases within 48 hours.</p>
	<p>Provide cases with CDPH's Isolation Guidance and Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations for exclusion requirements:</p> <p>Employers shall exclude from the workplace symptomatic COVID-19 cases as described below and employees excluded under section 3205.1. The employer shall demonstrate it has met the applicable requirements below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For cases with symptoms, with or without fever, from the day of symptom onset until at least 24 hours have passed. Excluded employees may return when 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms are mild and improving, or For cases with no symptoms, there is no infectious period and no recommended isolation. If symptoms develop, the criteria above. Face coverings are required until 10 days have passed since COVID-19 symptoms began, OR since the date of their first positive COVID-19 test. Please see FAQ for additional face covering requirements. Workers who test COVID-19 (+) and have high-risk conditions may qualify for treatment to prevent serious illness. Share ACPHD treatment website with your workers so that they can learn more and, if eligible, get access to treatment that could prevent life-threatening illness. <p>In addition to the above, pursuant to subsection 3205(c)(5)(C), when an order to isolate, quarantine, or exclude an employee is issued by a local or state health official, the employee shall not return to work until the period of isolation or quarantine is completed or the order is lifted even if the order exceeds the specified exclusion requirements in the COVID-19 Prevention regulations or CDPH recommendation.</p>
	<p>Stay up to date on your COVID-19 community levels, visit CDC's: COVID-19 Data Tracker.</p>
	<p>For guidance and questions, contact COVIDOB@acgov.org. If you have an urgent need after 5:00 pm weekdays or on the weekend, call Alameda County Fire Dispatch at (925) 422-7595 and ask to speak to the Public Health Duty Officer.</p>
<p>STEP 3: IDENTIFY CLOSE CONTACTS</p>	
<p><u>CLOSE CONTACT:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In indoor spaces 400,000 or fewer cubic feet per floor (such as home, clinic waiting room, airplane), a close contact is defined as sharing the same indoor airspace for a cumulative total of 15 	



minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three separate 5-minute exposures) during an infected person's infectious period.

2. In large indoor spaces **greater than 400,000 cubic feet per floor** (such as open-floor-plan offices, warehouses, large retail stores, manufacturing, or food processing facilities), a close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period during the infected person's infectious period.
3. Spaces that are separated by floor-to-ceiling walls (e.g., offices, suites, rooms, waiting areas, bathrooms, or break or eating areas that are separated by floor-to-ceiling walls) are considered distinct indoor airspaces.

Infectious period:

- Effective January 9, 2024, CDPH has adopted the following definition of "[infectious period](#)," which now applies to the COVID-19 Prevention regulations:
- For COVID-19 cases with symptoms, it is a minimum of 24 hours from the day of symptom onset. COVID-19 cases may return if 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and their symptoms are mild and improving, OR
- For COVID-19 cases with no symptoms, there is no infectious period for the purpose of isolation or exclusion. If symptoms develop, the criteria above will apply.

The definition of "infectious period" will change if CDPH updates its definition in a regulation or order.

- ✦ For the purpose of identifying close contacts and exposures, symptomatic persons who end isolation in accordance with this guidance are no longer considered to be within their infectious period. Such persons should continue to follow CDPH isolation recommendations, in addition, a well-fitting face mask is **required** through Day 10. Visit [CDPH's Isolation Guidance](#) for more information.

When doing **contact tracing** in your workplace, remember to:

1. Verify the shifts the cases worked during their infectious period through interviews or by reviewing the employment records.
2. Identify other workers who may have worked closely with the cases during their infectious period.
3. When a larger indoor space cannot be easily divided into smaller discrete spaces, then close contacts may be determined based on proximity to the positive case and duration of exposure.
4. Ask about carpooling or social gatherings outside of the work setting.
5. Consider close contacts that occurred onsite but were unrelated to work duties, especially activities that occurred during break times and in shared spaces.
6. Consider the following:
 - a. How and where do workers take meal breaks?
 - b. If workers change into uniforms onsite, how do they avoid crowding?



	Provide close contacts with CDPH Close Contact Guidance and Cal/OSHA Close Contact Guidance
STEP 4: TEST	
	View and follow Cal/OSHA Non-ETS testing requirements .
	An additional resource for testing is ACPHD's Testing Resource Page
	An additional resource for antigen testing is CDC's Antigen Testing Guidance
	Exposed workers who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 within the previous 30 days should not be retested unless symptomatic. View and Follow Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations .
	If a worker has symptoms of COVID-19, they should leave work and get tested even if fully vaccinated or previously infected with COVID-19.
STEP 5. PROMOTE VACCINATION	
	<p>Vaccination is a critical tool for protecting workers, businesses, and the public. When all or most of your workers are fully vaccinated and have received their booster, your facility will be better protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees can make appointments at https://www.primarybio.com/r/alco-vax-signup (In Alameda County) or state-wide at My Turn. ○ It is common to experience low grade symptoms for a day or two after vaccination. Explore options for setting up a mobile on-site vaccination clinic at Alameda County Mobile COVID-19 Vaccination Request Form. The mobile vaccination clinics need a minimum of 15 persons to vaccinate to come out to a site and they can handle up to 300 persons. Making vaccinations easy and accessible will increase vaccine acceptance. ○ For more information on COVID-19 vaccination go to ACPHD's COVID-19: Vaccinations webpage or if you have additional questions, call our community support line for assistance (510) 268-2101.
	For more information check CDC's Key Things To Know About COVID-19 Vaccines .
STEP 6: REVIEW WORKSITE PRACTICES	
	Per Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations, conduct a workplace evaluation to identify possible COVID-19 hazards. You should review all relevant policies, procedures, and operations. Identify opportunities for improvement and implement changes that will control and prevent spread.
	Review your Injury and Illness Prevention Program to include COVID-19 prevention regulations or maintain in a separate document. Cal/OSHA has a sample plan that you can use and adapt to your operations.
	Make sure that you are following all recommended infection control practices and that you have a system for monitoring and reinforcing compliance across your worksite. You should promote appropriate hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and, in some situations, proper PPE use.



	<p>For face covering recommendations and requirements please see Alameda County's Mask webpage. And CDPH's Face Covering Guidance</p>
	<p>In addition, Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations, has strict requirements for face coverings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> You are REQUIRED to provide and ensure use of face coverings during outbreaks and major outbreaks. <input type="checkbox"/> Employees who test positive must wear face coverings around others for 10 days. Please refer to the section in Cal/OSHA's Non-ETS FAQ on face coverings for additional face covering requirements. <input type="checkbox"/> Close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings and when near those at higher risk for severe COVID-19 disease. <input type="checkbox"/> In the setting of an outbreak, all employees in the exposed group regardless of vaccination status must wear face coverings when indoors, or when outdoors and less than six feet from another person, unless an exception applies (see Cal/OSHA Non-ETS FAQ). <input type="checkbox"/> You must monitor to ensure that they are worn over the nose and mouth while indoors except in certain situations (see Cal/OSHA Non-ETS FAQ). <input type="checkbox"/> You must provide face coverings to any worker who requests one regardless of vaccination status. <input type="checkbox"/> Upon request, employers shall provide respirators for voluntary use in compliance with Cal/OSHA's Non-ETS to all employees who are working indoors or in vehicles with more than one person. Whenever respirators are provided for voluntary use, you must provide effective training and instructions. <input type="checkbox"/> Employers shall evaluate the need for personal protective equipment to prevent exposure to COVID-19 hazards, such as gloves, goggles, and face shields, and provide such personal protective equipment as needed. <input type="checkbox"/> You must allow workers to wear face coverings if they wish to unless wearing a face covering would create a safety hazard.
	<p>Per the Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations, implement ventilation changes to mechanical ventilation systems including increasing filtration efficiency to at least MERV-13, or the highest efficiency compatible with the ventilation system. Evaluate whether HEPA air filtration units are needed. See CDPH Interim Guidance For Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments.</p>
	<p>Consider instituting stable work cohorts (by shifts, locations, and/or work duties). Do not float staff to different areas of the facility if at all possible.</p>
	<p>Pay careful attention to staff break times and locations!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Stagger break times <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage using outside space for breaks if weather permits <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage staff to use personal vehicles when removing their masks to eat/drink <input type="checkbox"/> If staff must take breaks together indoors, make sure to use a space where people can safely maintain a minimum 6-foot distance and space tables accordingly <input type="checkbox"/> Provide EPA approved disinfectant wipes so that staff can clean between uses <input type="checkbox"/> Provide hand sanitizer or handwashing stations <input type="checkbox"/> Post signage to remind workers to follow prevention practices
	<p>Minimize sharing of other equipment between workers; for equipment that must be shared, conduct frequent cleaning between worker use. Workers should not share headsets or other objects that may come into contact with their face, mouth, or nose.</p>



	Provide education as well as a plan for monitoring and daily reminders to address gaps in prevention practices.
MONITORING FOR ILLNESS & EXPOSURE	
	Place signs at all entrances that direct the public not to enter if they are experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
	Before each shift, preferably before entering the facility, workers should confirm that they are NOT experiencing symptoms suspicious for COVID-19: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever or chills • Cough • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • Fatigue • Muscle or body aches • Headache • New loss of taste or smell • Sore throat • Congestion or runny nose • Nausea or vomiting • Diarrhea </div> <p>Actively encourage workers to self-monitor, to report symptoms immediately, test for COVID-19, and to NOT report to work until return to work criteria have been met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that workers who recently tested COVID-19 (+) have met CDPH return-to-work criteria before entering the facility. • Make sure that workers who are close contacts follow Cal/OSHA Close Contact Guidance.
STEP 7: PROVIDE WORKER EDUCATION	
	Follow AB 2693 notification requirements when there has been a potential exposure.
	Always maintain strict confidentiality regarding the identity of the COVID-19 (+) case(s) in all communications. Avoid messaging that stigmatizes a site or group of people.
	ACPHD has a list of worker resources that should be shared with affected employees.
	Workers who test COVID-19 (+) and have high-risk conditions may qualify for treatment to prevent serious illness . Share the ACPHD treatment website with your workers so that they can learn more and, if eligible, get access to treatment that could prevent life-threatening illness .
	Cal/OSHA requires training on COVID-19 related benefit information. See Department of Industrial Relations COVID-19 Resources page for benefits that may be available to employees impacted by COVID-19 including paid sick leave and workers' compensation. It is extremely important that workers are aware of such benefits so that they are more likely to stay home when sick and keep COVID-19 out of the workplace.
	Per subsection 3205(c)(5)(E), Upon excluding an employee from the workplace based on COVID-19 or a close contact, the employer shall give the employee information regarding COVID-19-related benefits to which the employee may be entitled under applicable federal, state, or local laws. This includes any benefits available under legally mandated sick leave, if applicable, workers' compensation law, local governmental requirements, the employer's own leave policies, and leave guaranteed by contract.
	Share information on relevant laws and protections by referring to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission's (EEOC) What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws .
	Cal/OSHA's COVID-19 Prevention Non-Emergency Regulations requires that employers provide extensive worker training that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your facility's COVID-19 policies and procedures



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Worker benefits ○ COVID-19 transmission ○ Face coverings and respirators ○ Hand hygiene ○ Symptoms of COVID-19 and the importance of not coming to work when symptomatic. <p>See Cal/OSHA training requirements for further details.</p>
<p>FOOD FACILITIES</p>	
	<p>Food services facilities may contact Alameda County Department of Environmental Health for additional guidance related to food service by visiting www.deh.acgov.org or call (510) 567-6700.</p>
<p>TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF OPERATIONS</p>	
	<p>Consider voluntarily suspending all or part of operations when an outbreak has occurred in the workplace. Temporarily closure can be an invaluable tool that allows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Investigation of the exposure ✦ Deep cleaning and disinfection ✦ Reviewing, revising, and reinforcing prevention measures
	<p>If you need further assistance to manage an outbreak at your facility or if you have additional questions, do not hesitate to contact ACPHD’s workplace outbreak team by emailing COVIDOB@acgov.org.</p>
	<p>Keep in mind that under AB2693, Cal/OSHA may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ When, in the opinion of the division, a place of employment, operation, or process, or any part thereof, exposes workers to the risk of infection with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) so as to constitute an imminent hazard to employees, the performance of such operation or process, or entry into such place of employment, as the case may be, may be prohibited by the division, and a notice thereof shall be provided to the employer and posted in a conspicuous place at the place of employment. ◆ Review Assembly Bill 2693 (AB 2693) requirements. ◆ Pursuant to title 8, section 332.3, the Division may require an employer to take additional actions to protect employees against COVID-19 hazards through the issuance of an Order to Take Special Action.

RESOURCES and LINKS:

Please review and bookmark these important links. They include national, state, and local guidance and requirements for reopening and management of COVID-19 outbreaks.

Alameda County

[COVID-19 Workplace Guidance](#)

- [Alameda County COVID-19 Recovery Resources for the Workplace](#)



Isolation

- [Isolation Guidance](#)

Food facilities:

Department of Environmental Health [COVID-19 New Guidance for Food Facilities](#)

California

[Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Regulations Guidance and Resources](#)

Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Regulations [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Cal/OSHA Sample Model Program- Non-ETS](#) – links to fillable document

Full Text of Assembly Bill 2693 ([AB 2693](#))

[Cal/OSHA Consultation Services](#)

United States

CDC

[Ventilation in Buildings](#)

[Interactive Home Ventilation Tool](#).

NIOSH

Hierarchy of Controls can be viewed [here](#).

[Environmental Protection Agency List N: Disinfectants for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Department of Labor

[US Department of Labor COVID-19 Resources](#)

EEOC

[What you Should Know about COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws](#)