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COVID-19 Safety Measures for Agricultural Industry Workers and Worker Housing Issued May 5, 2020

Background COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. It is primarily spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces. Symptoms include fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath. COVID-19 is circulating in the community in Santa Clara County, surrounding areas, and around the country.

The Shelter in Place Order and Its Requirements

Legal Order The Santa Clara County Health Officer has issued a mandatory legal order (“Order”) extending shelter in place requirements through May 31, 2020. This new Order went into effect on Monday, May 4, 2020.

The Order directs all individuals living in the County to continue sheltering at their place of residence except to do essential work or essential activities. It also allows certain low-risk outdoor businesses to resume operating and certain outdoor activities to take place even though they are not essential.

The Order deems food cultivation (including farming, livestock, and fishing) an essential business and encourages it to continue operating to meet the public’s nutritional needs. Non-food agricultural operations are also allowed to operate, so long as all interaction with the public is restricted to outdoor areas.

Agricultural operations must follow the requirements in the Order and in this guidance document.

Consult the Order and visit the Santa Clara County Public Health Department website for answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and up to date guidance documents.

Face Covering Requirement *All workers must wear face coverings (or other respiratory protection as prescribed by Cal/OSHA for certain activities and pesticide applications) at all times during their workday. The only exceptions are for people for whom a face covering may not be safe (such as anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove a face covering without assistance).*

Face coverings *should not* be surgical or medical masks, which are in short supply and urgently needed by healthcare workers. Instead, face coverings such as

bandanas, scarfs, or home-sewn fabric coverings should be used. *Note that wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to follow social distancing and hygiene measures, including physically distancing yourself from others and frequently washing your hands.*

See the Health Officer's [Critical Face Covering Guidance](#) for more details

Social Distancing Protocol Requirement	<p>To continue operating, all businesses must complete and implement an updated Social Distancing Protocol for each of their facilities in the County frequented by personnel or the public. The protocol must be based on the form provided in Appendix A to the Order. Post a copy at or near each public entrance of your facility and provide a copy to all personnel. If you posted a Protocol to comply with the March 31 Health Officer Order, you must update it using the May 4 Order template.</p> <p>The Protocol template is available in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. It should be posted in English and any other language spoken by a significant portion of your personnel.</p> <p>The Protocol must explain how your business will achieve certain social distancing, employee health, and hygiene and sanitation measures.</p> <p>See the next section for further guidance on social distancing practices.</p>
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Social Distancing Practices

Maintain Adequate Social Distancing	<p>Ensure that workers maintain adequate social distancing (at least six feet between one another) at all times, including when working in the field or on the production line.</p> <p>If your facility is open to the public:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit the number of customers who can enter to ensure that people can easily maintain social distance at all times.• Place tape or other markings on the ground where lines form to show customers where to stand to maintain at least six feet social distance.
Prevent Unnecessary Contact	<p>Implement measures to prevent unnecessary physical contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not shake hands• Use barriers to provide additional separation where social distancing may not be practical (such as a processing line).
Transportation	<p>Employers who provide transportation may only transport workers in vehicles with adequate social distancing (workers must be able to sit at least 6 feet apart). Additional vehicles or multiple trips may be required to transport all workers to and from work sites.</p>

Sanitation and Hygiene

Prevention – Handwashing

Provide adequate soap and water, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or higher), and/or disinfectant at or near the facility or worksite entrance and at other appropriate locations for use by workers, including at locations where there is frequent interaction between workers and visitors (such as delivery drivers). Hand-washing facilities must be located at or near all restrooms.

All personnel must **wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds**. Provide regular breaks to enable hand-washing.

Workers' hands should be washed:

- When arriving at work and before leaving work
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, or smoking
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before and after eating food
- Before putting on gloves
- After close contact with others
- After touching shared surfaces or tools
- Before and after wearing masks or gloves
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After touching garbage
- After engaging in other activities that may contaminate the hands

Other Recommendations

- Assign an employee to keep soap and paper towels stocked at hand-washing stations at least every hour*
- Encourage personnel to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth*
- Minimize touching your phone or other personal items*
- All personnel must wash hands more frequently than normal*
- Provide extra garbage cans near restroom exits*

Provide regular staff training to ensure proper protocols are followed!

Prevention – Sanitizing Equipment and the Facility

Regularly disinfect all high-touch surfaces exposed to workers routinely throughout the day. Utilize disinfectant processes and products that are appropriate for your industry, and [listed by the EPA to be effective against COVID-19](#).

Worker Health

Screening

- All businesses must monitor worker health.
- Screen workers at the beginning of each shift for symptoms of illness.
 - Ask if they are experiencing any of the following: fever, tiredness, cough, muscle or body aches, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, night sweats, sore throat, headaches, confusion, or loss of sense of taste or smell.
 - If a worker shows any of these symptoms, send them home and instruct them to follow the instructions on the County's [COVID-19 Learn What to Do – If You Think You are Sick](#) webpage. Workers who are living with someone who has tested positive should also follow applicable instructions on this webpage.

If a Worker Tests Positive

- If a worker tests positive for COVID-19 and was working while showing symptoms or during the two days before symptoms began, the following steps shall be taken:
 - Immediately cease operation, close facility, and thoroughly sanitize it prior to reopening. Instructions for sanitizing your facility may be found on the CDC's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#) webpage. Your facility can reopen as soon as it has been sanitized in accordance with the CDC guidance.
 - Instruct the worker to follow the instructions on the County's [COVID-19 Learn What to Do – If You Think You are Sick](#) webpage.
 - Inform other workers that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 and the day(s) on which the potential exposure occurred. If you take this step, you should also instruct workers to closely monitor themselves for any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, coughing, and/or shortness of breath) for 14 days.

High Risk Workers

If you have personnel who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19, consider temporarily re-assigning them to non-public-contact duties.

Sick Leave Requirements

Effective April 16, 2020, California Executive Order N-51-20 requires that all employers with 500 or more workers who are engaged in the food supply chain are required to provide up to 80 hours of sick leave for full-time workers (as well as leave calculated on prior hours for those who work less than full-time). This includes farmworkers and those in food processing and packaging. Workers can access sick leave if they are (1) subject to a quarantine or isolation order, (2) advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine or self-isolate due to concerns related to COVID-19, or (3) prohibited by their hiring entity to work because of concerns related to the transmission of COVID-19.

Employers not subject to this law are strongly encouraged to expand access to emergency sick leave for their personnel to protect workers and their families from spread of COVID-19.

Worker Housing and Community Kitchens

Worker Housing

Agricultural worker housing facilities should meet these minimum standards:

- Worker housing facilities must meet state housing code requirements to prevent overcrowding.
- Beds in shared rooms should be arranged alternately head-to-toe and spaced at least six feet apart.
- Ensure housing units have adequate supplies of disinfectants and sanitizers.

Community Kitchens & Dining Areas

- Remind staff of best hygiene practices, including washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Allow staff to wash their hands every 30 minutes and additionally as needed, as required by Executive Order N-51-20.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing all hard surfaces, including tables, countertops, and cooking utensils utilized by personnel and patrons during pickup/delivery options. Please refer to the CDC's website to obtain guidance for "[Cleaning and Disinfecting for Community Facilities.](#)"
- Staff working in the kitchen must strictly follow social distancing requirements, including maintaining 6-foot distance from others.
- Staff must wear face coverings at all times.
- Staff and workers should not use the kitchen area if ill and should cough or sneeze into a tissue and immediately dispose of it.
- Food must be taken away from dining areas and not eaten on site.
- Stagger food service hours and mark queue area with tape to ensure adequate social distancing.

Toilet and Bathing Facilities

- Employers must provide washing and toilet facilities that have an adequate supply of cleansing agents, water, and single-use towels or hand dryers.
- Schedule or reduce number of large groups of workers showering/bathing at the same time.
- Clean and disinfect toilet and bathing facilities often throughout the day.

Additional Information

The information and requirements pertaining to COVID-19 may change as progress is made in reducing spread of the virus. Visit the County Public Health Department website for up-to date information: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/Pages/phd.aspx>.

Other Resources:

- For guidance on farmworker safety from the California Department of Public Health, visit: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Farmworker-Safety.aspx>
- For guidance for meat and poultry processing workers from the CDC, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html>
- For additional guidance by the County Public Health Department for workers and employers, visit: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/Pages/learn-what-to-do.aspx#tipsworkers>
- www.sccgov.org/cv19testing