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This guide is meant for general information purposes only. It is not legal, tax, or medical advice. Due to the many complexities surrounding the COVID-19 epidemic, including your industry and geographic locations, it is imperative that you discuss your particular return to the workplace needs with your legal counsel. Your Hays Consultants are here to help. Questions? Contact a Hays service team [HERE](https://www.hayscompanies.com/contact-us/).

[ COMPANY NAME ]

**Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan**

2020

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**Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Guide**

# **Introduction**

The risk of an infectious disease outbreak, epidemic or pandemic in the workplace must be managed so that [COMPANY NAME] can continue to operate safely, achieve organizational objectives and protect employees.

To help prevent the spread of infectious disease and protect employees, [COMPANY NAME] has created an infectious disease preparedness and response guide. This guide, which is based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance, highlights the responsibilities of managers and employees, and outlines the steps [COMPANY NAME] is taking to address infectious disease outbreaks such as COVID-19.

# **Planning and Implementation**

The implications of an infectious disease outbreak are diverse and significant. [COMPANY NAME] has developed plans and internal trigger points for their response actions based on the alert phase changes.

In the event of a pandemic such as COVID-19, guidance and input from federal, state and community agencies, medical experts, and key personnel and stakeholders including legal, insurance, customers and clients, distributors, and suppliers will be used to implement and direct this plan.

# **Exposure Assessment**

OSHA’s ***Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19*** (Publication 3990-03-2020) outlines steps employers should take to protect the health and safety of their workforces including the development of this infectious disease preparedness and response plan. In accordance with OSHA, this plan considers and addresses the level of risk associated with various worksites and tasks workers perform at our sites. The risks category classifications guide the details of our policy and response plan.

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| **Our exposures:** | **Very high exposure** risk groups include, among others, health care workers (doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, emergency medical technicians) performing aerosol-generating procedures (e.g., intubation, cough induction procedures, bronchoscopies, some dental procedures and exams, or invasive specimen collection) on known or suspected COVID-19 patients and health care or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected COVID-19 patients. |
| **Our exposures:**  | **High exposure risk** jobs include health care delivery and support staff (e.g., doctors, nurses, and other hospital staff who must enter patients’ rooms) exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients and medical transport workers moving known or suspected COVID-19 patients in enclosed vehicles. |
| **Our exposures:** | **Medium exposure risk** jobs include those that require frequent and/or close contact (i.e., within 6 feet of) with people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2 but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. In areas where the COVID-19 virus has been identified, this may include workers who come in contact with the public, including in schools or retail settings.  |
| **Our exposures:** | **Lower exposure** risk jobs are those that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent closed contact with the general public. |

*OSHA’s Occupational Risk Pyramid for COVID-19*

In addition to consideration of workers’ risks, the plan also takes into account contingencies that may arise during outbreaks, including:

* Increased rates of worker absenteeism
* The need for social distancing, staggered work shifts, downsizing operations, delivering services remotely and other exposure-reducing measures
* Options for conducting essential operations with a reduced workforce, including cross-training workers across different jobs in order to continue operations or deliver surge services
* Interrupted supply chains or delayed deliveries

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

When it comes to providing and maintaining a safe workplace during infectious disease outbreaks, both managers and employees have important roles to play. The following is a breakdown of the responsibilities for [COMPANY NAME] leadership and employees concerning infectious disease prevention, communication and action plans.

## Senior Management

Senior management is responsible for:

* Developing, maintaining, reviewing and updating the plan.
* Implementing, monitoring, and ensuring the plan is followed.
* Communicating with employees and stakeholders throughout the implementation of the plan.

## Managers and Supervisors:

Managers and supervisors will be responsible for:

* Knowing and understanding the details of the action plan.
* Communicating and answering questions from employees.
* Setting a good example by following the guidance in the plan.
* Ensuring the plan is followed.

## Employees:

Employees play a critical role in prevention efforts. To protect everyone employees are responsible for:

* Understanding the signs and symptoms of infectious disease (i.e. COVID-19).
* Staying at home if they are feeling sick—Any employee who is experiencing symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, chills or fatigue) should stay home. Individuals experiencing such symptoms should also be instructed to consult guidance and seek medical care.
* Practicing good hygiene—Employees should clean their hands often, either with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water. Hand sanitizers should contain at least 60%-95% alcohol, and employees should wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds. In addition, employees should avoid touching their face and cough into their arm.
* Practicing social distancing—Social distancing is the practice of deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness.

# **Infectious Disease Taskforce Team**

The [COMPANY NAME] Taskforce team is a cross-functional team that recommends and oversees workplace protocols to control the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. The team will include key members from:

* Senior Management
* Human Resources
* Legal
* Facilities
* Operations
* Key employees
* Other stakeholders

The [COMPANY NAME] Taskforce team responsibilities will include:

* Disease prevention and protocols — recommending and developing protocols to ensure the wellness of all employees and overseeing procedures for isolating employees should they become sick at work.
* Worksite assessments - determine physical modifications to facilities and workplace, as well as worker precautions
* Implementation of Control Strategies – including elimination, substitution, engineering, administration and PPE controls.
* Sanitization and disinfection — manage logistics related to daily and periodic sanitation and disinfection efforts, ensuring that routine cleaning is completed and that the necessary cleaning supplies are readily available.
* Communication — managing pandemic-related communications, working with human resources and internal communication stakeholders to ensure COVID-19 training is completed and that employees and their managers understand their role in preventing the spread of the disease.
	+ Be aware of workers’ concerns about pay, leave, safety, health, and other issues that may arise during infectious disease outbreaks. Provide adequate, usable, and appropriate training, education, and informational material about business-essential job functions and worker health and safety, including proper hygiene practices and the use of any workplace controls (including PPE).
* Sick Leave Policies - ensure that the sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies. Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.
* Temporary or contract workers - talk with companies that provide contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.
* Maintain flexible policies - that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member.

## Controls Strategies for Infectious Disease

The [COMPANY NAME] Taskforce team will consider and select appropriate control measures to prevent and reduce the risk of infectious disease exposures in the workplace as outlined by OSHA. These options include:

1. **Avoidance and elimination** such as avoiding travel to high risk areas and eliminating face-to-face meetings.
2. **Substitution** of less harmful substances or methods such as replacing chlorine bleach cleaner with an EPA-registered disinfectant and teleconferencing rather than in-person meetings.
3. **Engineering controls** such as air filters, increased ventilation and physical barriers
4. **Administrative controls** such as requiring sick workers to stay home, minimizing contact among workers by avoiding face-to-face meetings, discontinuing nonessential travel and creating emergency communication plans
5. **Safe work practices** such as promoting personal hygiene practices (hand washing)
6. **Personal protective equipment** such as gloves, face masks, goggles and respiratory protection, when appropriate

# **Safety Protocols**

To keep employees safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19, [COMPANY NAME] requires the following workplace protective measures:

## Social Distancing Protocols

Employees will be asked to follow social distancing best practices. Specifically, employees will be asked to:

* Keep a 6-foot distance from others at all times. Where a minimum distance cannot be maintained, controls will be in place.
* Avoid tasks that require face-to-face work with others where possible. If this is unavoidable, employees will be provided with face masks, face shields, physical barriers and other workplace controls to ensure their safety.
* Avoid contact with others (e.g., handshakes).
* Avoid touching surfaces that may have been touched by others where possible.
* Avoid gathering when entering and exiting buildings.
* Follow posted signage regarding COVID-19 social distancing practices.
* Disinfect workspace often.
* Avoid touching the face.
* Avoid nonessential gatherings.

## General Safety Policies

* Employees and visitors who exhibit signs or symptoms will be asked to go home and contact their physician.
* Employees should stagger lunches to limit the number of individuals congregating in break areas.
* [COMPANY NAME] will provide access to handwashing stations and alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
* Employees should refrain from sharing equipment. In instances where this is unavoidable [COMPANY NAME] will provide alcohol-based wipes and other cleaning materials that employees can use.
* Employees will be asked to avoid using common areas.

## Visitors

For business-critical visits (e.g., suppliers, vendors, contractors or deliveries), [COMPANY NAME] will take steps to safeguard employees by:

* Requiring visitors to go directly to their assigned work area without interacting with employees.
* Requiring visitors to wear face coverings, and practice social distancing and good hygiene while on-site.
* Where possible, meetings will be conducted virtually or via telephone.
* Supervisors may ask questions of visitors regarding their current health before they enter the workplace. If they answer yes to the following questions, we will ask them to leave:
	+ Have you been in contact with a person who has tested positive or is in the process of being tested for COVID-19?
	+ Have you or anyone you’ve been in contact with traveled outside of the United States recently?
	+ Has a medical professional told you to self-quarantine?
	+ Are you having trouble breathing, or have you had flu-like symptoms within the past 72 hours (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, chills or fatigue)?
	+ Deliveries will be permitted but should be completed with social distancing best practices in mind.

## Personal Protective Equipment

In addition to standard personal protective equipment (PPE) determined through PPE hazard assessments and requirements from local jurisdictions that supersede OSHA, [COMPANY NAME] may provide:

* Impermeable gloves
* Face shields
* Face masks/coverings
* Eye protection or goggles

PPE hazard assessments should be performed for unusual exposures that present new hazards not previously assessed to determine new or additional PPE requirements.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

Surfaces and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day, before and after use, and multiple times throughout the day. Items include:

* Tools and equipment
* Restrooms
* Cafeterias and tableware
* Lockers
* Common areas
* Computer screens and keyboards
* Transport vehicles
* Floors and walls
* Vending machines
* Offices, desks and conference rooms
* Door handles, equipment buttons and other frequently touched surfaces

Cleaning should be completed using CDC-recommended products, including:

* Environmental Protection Agency-registered household disinfectants
* Alcohol solutions with at least 60% alcohol
* Diluted household bleach solutions (if appropriate for the surface)

Hand sanitizer dispensers will be refilled frequently.

When an employee has tested positive for an infectious disease, deep cleaning will be triggered, and [COMPANY NAME] will ensure areas the individual worked are cleaned thoroughly. In regard to deep-cleaning practices:

* [COMPANY NAME] will identify an approved external company to complete a deep cleaning of the facilities. This external company will be equipped with the proper training, PPE, permits and cleaning equipment to complete the task.
* The [COMPANY NAME] Taskforce Team will coordinate and supervise deep-cleaning efforts to ensure:
	+ Authorized individuals are the only ones allowed access to the site during cleaning.
	+ Employees are aware of cleaning practices.
	+ The company contracted to perform cleaning uses the appropriate PPE during the process and disposes of potentially contaminated items properly.

# **Exposure**

[COMPANY NAME] has response plans in place for situations where employees exhibit symptoms of or test positive for infectious disease such as COVID-19.

The employee reports their symptoms to their direct supervisor who will then communicates that an employee is exhibiting symptoms to the relevant parties.

* If symptoms are apparent, the employee may be asked to go home and speak with their health care provider. [COMPANY NAME] will ensure employees are able to get home safely. If, after an evaluation, the employee is not exhibiting symptoms, they may return to work at the discretion of the virus prevention and protocols lead.

## Self-quarantining and Return to Work

Employees who test positive or believe they have been infected will be instructed to follow the advice of a qualified medical professional and self-quarantine. When self-quarantining, employees should:

* Stay away from other people in their home as much as possible, staying in a separate room and using a separate bathroom if available.
* Not allow visitors.
* Wear a face mask if they have to be around people.
* Avoid sharing household items, including drinking cups, eating utensils, towels or bedding.
* Clean high-touch surfaces daily.
* Continue monitoring their symptoms, calling their health care provider if their condition worsens.

When an employee tests positive for an infectious disease such as COVID-19, deep-cleaning procedures will be triggered. Furthermore, employees who have been in close contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be instructed to self-quarantine.

# **OSHA Recordkeeping and Reporting**

[COMPANY NAME] will adhere to OSHA requirements as they relate to recording and reporting certain work-related injuries and illnesses. During certain events i.e. pandemics, OSHA guidelines are subject to change, and should be monitored accordingly by [COMPANY NAME] leadership.

# **Plan Review**

[COMPANY NAME] will review and update the plan at least annually and when changes occur to ensure it is current and effective. Appropriate distribution to [COMPANY NAME] employees is advised as well and/or follow existing employee notification and communication guidelines.

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| **HAYS COMPANIES IS HERE TO HELP.**Reach out to your Hays representative with any questions or visit us at [hayscompanies.com](https://www.hayscompanies.com/contact-us/). |
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