



OREGON FARM BUREAU FEDERATION  
INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS  
FOR COVID-19

May 5, 2020

## INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR MAINTAINING HEALTHY BUSINESS OPERATIONS:

(updated 5/5/2020)

This interim guidance is based upon what is currently known about the COVID-19 virus. The following guidance is intended to assist agricultural businesses in minimizing workplace exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Please note that this guidance is not legal advice nor is it intended to substitute for advice of legal counsel. Please consult legal counsel with any questions about how state or federal directives impact your operation. We will endeavor to update this guidance as new information becomes available, but the situation around the COVID-19 virus is evolving rapidly and we anticipate state and federal guidance to change frequently as well.

This information has been compiled from the following sources: [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [Oregon Health Authority](#), [OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#) and [OAR 437-001-0749 - Temporary rule addressing the COVID-19 emergency in employer-provided housing, labor-intensive agricultural operations, and agricultural transportation](#).

### 1. Actively Encourage Sick Employees to Stay Home and Send Sick Employees Home:

- Employees who are sick, and especially those who have COVID-19 [symptoms](#) (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath), should notify the company immediately pursuant to their attendance policy and stay home. Employees should not return to work until the [criteria to discontinue quarantine](#) are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.
- Employees who are well, but who have a family member with whom the employee resides or a roommate who has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should immediately notify the company according to the company's attendance policy, closely follow [CDC recommended precautions, and employers should encourage or require the employee to stay home](#). Sick employees should follow [CDC-recommended steps](#).
- Employees who appear to have COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors, and sent home. Where appropriate, employers should develop policies and procedures for immediately isolating people who have signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19, and notify employees of these policies.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, employers should inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, but maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state disability rules. Fellow employees should self-monitor for developing COVID-19 symptoms.
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, employers should immediately perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection of the employee's work area, tools and equipment used by the employee, and any communal areas and restrooms following the [CDC Recommendations Cleaning and Disinfection](#).

## 2. Mitigate How Employees Might Be Exposed To COVID-19 At Work:

- Be aware that some employees may be at [higher risk for serious illness](#), such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions.
- In accordance with the Governor's [Executive Order No. 20-12](#), and [OAR 437-001-0749](#) allow employees to telework if possible. Businesses must designate an employee or officer to establish, implement, and enforce [sanitation measures](#) and social distancing policies consistent with the Oregon Health Authority's policies on social distancing. Designate an employee or officer to enforce these social distancing policies [and sanitation measures](#).

***NOTE: OAR 437-001-0749(6) states, "Affected agricultural employers must plan and implement work activities so that workers will not need to be within 6 feet of each other as they perform their duties, during breaks, or during meal periods. In the event that the employer determines and can demonstrate that it is impossible to structure work activities to avoid such contact, contact within 6 feet must be minimized and the employer must implement appropriate additional sanitation and protective measures (including the use of cloth face coverings by the affected employees)."***

- Strategies that farms should use to implement social distancing include:
  - Implementing flexible worksites (e.g., telework)
  - Implementing flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts)
  - Increasing physical space between employees at the worksite
  - Increasing physical space between employees and customers
  - Delivering products through curbside pick-up or delivery
  - Increasing physical space between employees during meals, rest periods, and restroom breaks
  - If breaks are taken in an enclosed space, limit occupancy of the space to no more than 10 individuals at a time or less if needed to maintain proper social distancing
- [Provide one toilet facility and one handwashing facility for each 10 employees or fraction thereof. If the employer can demonstrate that market availability prevents immediate compliance with this provision, the employer must provide as many toilet facilities and handwashing facilities as possible until the ratio has been satisfied. This rule is effective June 1, 2020.](#)
- [Locate toilet and handwashing facilities adjacent to each other and at the entrance or exit to the field or in a completely harvested area, whichever is closer. In any case, such facilities must be no more than a 5-minute or a 1/4-mile \(1,320 feet\) unobstructed walk from each hand laborer's place of work in the field.](#)
- Routinely [clean and disinfect](#) all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace. Give special attention to high-touch surfaces, including, but not limited to, door handles, faucets, toilet handles, light switches, countertops, chairs, tables, equipment, machinery, tools, etc.
- Consider improving the engineering controls using the building ventilation system by increasing ventilation rates and the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing, including by providing employees, customers, and worksite visitors with a place to wash their hands [and notification of the location of each](#)

**handwashing facility.** If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol. Inform each employee of the importance of **washing hands whenever high-contact surfaces have been or will be touched, and after covering a cough or sneeze.**

- Ensure bathrooms, including transportable toilets or temporary restroom facilities, are consistently stocked with water, soap, and disposable drying materials for handwashing. Provide access to tissues, trash bins, and plastic bags for the proper disposal of used tissues and other personal care products. **Ensure that handwashing facilities are cleaned when necessary and that they are sanitized to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 at least three times daily.**
- Encourage employees to wear [simple cloth face coverings](#) as recommended by the CDC to slow the spread of the virus, and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare employees and other medical first responders.
- Provide disposable or single-use cups at drinking stations.
- Do not transport employees who are showing COVID-19 symptoms to the workplace. If you must provide transportation for employees, provide adequate space (**3 ft**) between employees in vehicles and wipe down **all high-contact** surfaces afterward with an approved disinfectant, **or at least twice each day when in continuous use. Seats that do not allow for such separation cannot be used, regardless of the vehicle's normal capacity. The vehicle operator and any passengers must wear cloth facial coverings that cover their nose and mouth.**
- If you must provide transportation for employees away from work who are showing symptoms of COVID-19, transport them separately from healthy employees and remind passengers of the need to "cover their cough." Wipe down **all high-contact** surfaces afterwards with an approved disinfectant.

### **3. Educate Employees About How They Can Reduce the Spread of COVID-19 And What Resources Are Available to Them:**

- Hold a training session for employees to go over US Centers for Disease Control guidelines for how [COVID-19 spreads](#), how employees can [protect themselves](#), and [proper sanitization](#).
- Post instructional [posters and fact sheets](#), in English and Spanish, in communal areas and bathrooms to educate employees about proper hand hygiene and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Connect employees to [employee assistance programs](#) and [community resources](#) as needed.
- Provide all employees with job-specific education and training on preventing transmission of COVID-19, and consider doing refresher training as more information becomes available.
- **Employers that grow or harvest food crops for human consumption must post a notice describing the requirements of OSHA's temporary rules, including their application to COVID-19 risks, and advising where workers may file complaints regarding field sanitation matters. It must be in the language of the majority of the workers.**

- Employers must advise employees of the risks presented by close contact when commuting and encourage them to follow the same rules for social distancing and cleaning and sanitation, as required by employer provided transportation.

For general COVID-19 information please visit:

- [OHA COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19](#)
- [Oregon OSHA Temporary Rules](#)
- [OSHA Temporary Rules FAQ](#)

## INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR FARMEMPLOYEE HOUSING PROVIDERS:

(updated 5/5/2020)

This interim guidance is based upon what is currently known about COVID-19. The following guidance is intended to assist agricultural employers who provide housing to employees in preventing exposure to COVID-19 in agricultural housing units. This information has been compiled from the following sources, but is subject to change as investigations are ongoing, and specific information for agricultural labor housing becomes available. This information is sourced from the [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [Oregon Health Authority](#), and [OAR 437-001-0749](#) - Temporary rule addressing the COVID-19 emergency in employer-provided housing, labor-intensive agricultural operations, and agricultural transportation.

**\* NOTE: All housing, whether already registered as agricultural labor housing for 2020 or not, must comply with the requirements of OSHA's temporary rule. If necessary, Oregon OSHA will consider expedited housing registration for the 2020 season for additional housing required for workers quarantined or isolated as a result of COVID-19 exposure, COVID-19 symptoms, or positive COVID-19 diagnosis.**

1. Operators of housing must identify one or more individuals who will be responsible for identifying appropriate social distancing and sanitation measures and ensuring that such measures are implemented. Appropriate social distancing measures require that workers in housing not be within 6 feet of each other. In the event that it is impossible to avoid contact within 6 feet of each other, such contact must be minimized, and additional sanitation and protective measures must be implemented (including the use of cloth face coverings when appropriate by the affected workers).
2. Hold a training session for employees to go over US Centers for Disease Control guidelines for [reducing transmission of COVID-19](#), and how they can [protect themselves](#), [their family](#), and [their homes](#).
3. Develop or update your emergency action and Hazard Communication Program plan by identifying a list of key contacts at your local and state health departments, as well as a list of healthcare facilities where employees with respiratory illness can seek appropriate care. Make these contacts readily available for employees.
4. Ensure bathrooms and other sinks are consistently stocked with water, soap, and disposable drying materials for handwashing. Provide access to tissues, trash bins, and plastic bags for the proper disposal of used tissues and other personal care products. **The costs of these materials and all cleaning supplies should not be shifted to employees.**
5. Post instructional [posters and fact sheets](#), in English and Spanish, in communal areas and bathrooms to educate employees about proper hand hygiene and symptoms of COVID-19.
6. [Clean and sanitize](#) housing during times of the day that employees are not generally at housing site (during work hours while employees are working). Increase the frequency of cleaning schedules for communal areas. **At least two times a day, sanitize all high-touch surfaces, including, but not limited to, adjustable shower heads, door handles, faucets, toilet handles, light switches, countertops, chairs, tables, remote controls, etc. Sanitize spigots and spigot handles at least two times daily. If housing occupants are assigned this task, it must be treated as a work assignment rather than a voluntary action. Housing operators must provide cleaning materials at no cost, allowing occupants to clean and sanitize their living areas regularly.**

NOTE: The [CDC Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfection](#) were updated on 4/1/2020. Please review for new information cleaning soft surfaces, laundry, timing of disinfection after a suspected/confirmed COVID-19 case, and more.

7. Provide one toilet facility for each 10 occupants or fraction thereof. If the operator can demonstrate that market availability prevents immediate compliance with this provision, the operator must provide as many toilet facilities as possible until the ratio has been satisfied. These rules are effective June 1, 2020. Clean and sanitize common use toilet facilities at least two times daily. If housing occupants are assigned this task, it must be treated as a work assignment rather than a voluntary action.
8. When in use, service portable and chemical toilets at least weekly or often enough to keep them from becoming a health hazard. Clean portable toilets, chemical toilets and privies at least daily. Sanitize such common use facilities at least three times daily. If housing occupants are assigned this task, it must be treated as a work assignment rather than a voluntary action.
9. Fumigate mattresses or pads, used uncovered, or treat with an effective insecticide before each season's occupancy and whenever the pad is assigned to a new user. If you provide covers, clean them before each season's occupancy and whenever the cover is assigned to a new user.
10. Beds must be arranged so that at least one of the following is true:
  - Beds and cots must be spaced at least six (6) feet apart between frames in all directions and arranged so that occupants sleep head to toe; **OR**
  - Beds and cots must be separated by a bed length, floor to near ceiling temporary non-permeable barrier (for example, using plexiglass, heavy plastic, lightweight wood sheeting, etc.) placed perpendicular to wall such that a 28-inch minimum aisle remains available to the occupant of each bed; **OR**
  - An operator may implement other effective engineering and/or administrative controls to modify this requirement with prior approval by Oregon OSHA.
11. Do not allow the use of double bunk beds by unrelated individuals.
12. Instruct employees that if they are sick or have COVID-19 symptoms, they must alert the company immediately. Employers must report cases of COVID-19 immediately, day or night to local public health authorities or the Oregon Health Authority if local health authorities are unavailable.
13. Implement policies and procedures to identify and isolate sick occupants:
  - Suspect COVID-19 cases must be isolated with sleeping, eating, and bathroom accommodations that are separate from others. Sick people should be isolated from others, have adequate hygiene facilities, and be taken care of by only one person in the household. If such isolation is not possible, follow guidance provided by the Oregon Health Authority or the local public health authority to make appropriate arrangements.
  - Confirmed COVID-19 cases must be isolated and only housed with other confirmed cases and must have separate bathroom, cooking and eating facilities from people who have not been diagnosed with COVID-19. Sick people should be isolated from others, have adequate hygiene facilities, and be taken care of by only one person in the household. If such isolation is not possible, follow guidance provided by the Oregon Health Authority or the local public health authority to make appropriate arrangements.

- The operator must ensure that food and water is provided and monitor the safety of occupants in isolation at the operator's facility or ensure that these services are provided if isolated at another facility.

14. Check with local emergency housing providers for temporary housing options for those who might test positive and need to be quarantined where on-site options do not exist.

Oregon OSHA has announced that OSHA will provide interim approvals for new or modified housing based on a review of application materials (supplemented by photographs or other materials that OSHA requests during the review) without the onsite visit that OSHA normally requires. More information can be found [HERE](#) under the Interim Guidance for Oregon OSHA Related to COVID-19 (Agricultural Labor Housing) tab.

For general COVID-19 information please visit:

- [OHA COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19](#)
- [Oregon OSHA COVID 19](#)
- [OHCS COVID-19](#)
- [Oregon OSHA Temporary Rules](#)
- [OSHA Temporary Rules FAQ](#)