

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Worker Protection Information and Employer Technical Resources

Due to the daily updates we are seeing from the most relevant and prominent experts in the healthcare, epidemiology, occupational safety, and disease science organizations across the United States and worldwide, we are providing this memo to raise awareness to several valuable resources concerning COVID-19 for our valued policyholders. Employers are strongly encouraged to regularly monitor these resources (links provided further below) and consider additional information provided in this memo. In addition, employers are encouraged to monitor local and state Health Department websites for information specific to your particular location.

(Excerpts below taken from the from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration webpage)
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

Currently, there is no evidence of widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the United States. This is an ever-changing and evolving situation. Without sustained human-to-human transmission, most American workers and the general public are not at significant risk of infection. However, like all viruses, spread can occur very quickly as has been evidenced throughout many countries.

Exposure may be significantly elevated for those US employees who interact with potentially infected travelers from abroad, including those employees involved in:

- Healthcare
- End of Life Care
- Laboratories
- Airline operations
- Border protection
- Solid waste and wastewater management
- Travel to areas including parts of China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, where the virus is rapidly spreading

While there are no specific federal (OSHA) standards in place addressing coronavirus (COVID-19), the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) **Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD)** standard is aimed at preventing worker illness from infectious diseases that can be transmitted by inhaling air that contains viruses (including COVID-19), bacteria, or other disease-causing organisms. While the Cal/OSHA ATD standard is only mandatory for certain healthcare employers in California, it may provide useful guidance for protecting other workers who may be exposed to COVID-19. When you click onto the link above, it will direct you to several other links that provide additional safeguards for you to consider.

There is much to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other aspects of COVID-19 as the outbreak investigation continues. Infected individuals can spread COVID-19 through their respiratory secretions, especially when they cough or sneeze. **According to the CDC**, spread from person-to-person is most likely among close contacts (about 6 feet). Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. These droplets can land in or near the mouths or noses of people nearby, or possibly inhaled into the lungs. According to the OSHA web-site it's currently unknown whether a person

can contract COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

Utilization of the N95 respirator ([FDA N95 Respirator Information](#)) may be your best protection from the inhalation of COVID-19, short of air supplying respirators. Employees should also double glove ([Infection Control Today - Double Gloving](#)) with disposable gloves whenever handling any potentially contaminated items. In addition, a robust hand washing program should be implemented. The CDC has recommended this practice regardless of what the current science may indicate about the transmission of COVID-19.

The following websites are strongly suggested in order to monitor the developing situation in the United States and abroad to obtain the most current information and recommendations concerning COVID-19:

- [U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).
- [U.S. CDC Travel Health Notices](#).
- [World Health Organization](#).
- [Australian Government Department of Health](#).
- [Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#).
- [Government of Canada Health Department](#).
- [Hong Kong's Center for Health Protection](#)

In addition, reputable resources are provided below for employers to consider in preparing for and managing the COVID-19 virus within their company. Included is information for employers concerning pandemic preparedness plans and guidelines:

- <https://hbr.org/2020/03/8-questions-employers-should-ask-about-coronavirus>
- <https://www.assp.org/news-and-articles/2020/03/02/the-safety-professional-s-role-in-planning-for-a-pandemic>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/planning-preparedness/national-strategy-planning.html>
- https://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html
- <https://www.who.int/influenza/resources/documents/FluCheck6web.pdf>

We hope that this information is valuable. Please contact your designated Arch Risk Control representative if further assistance is required. You can also reach our message center at 1-888-411-2832 or losscontrol@archinsurance.com and we will contact you as soon as possible.

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