

Resuming Construction Operations Employer Concerns

Coronavirus (COVID-19)



Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

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When returning employees back to the jobsite, there may be hesitation or concerns the employees may or may not express about the health and safety on the jobsite. It is imperative that as an employer you are ready to listen and take appropriate steps to reassure the employees that they are returning to a stable, safe and clean workplace. To assist with this reassurance, employers may want to consider the topics below:

We are continuing to monitor the evolving situation and recommend you follow guidelines issued by healthcare and government officials, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (**CDC**) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (**OSHA**). The recommendations below are our interpretation of the latest guidelines.

Provide Reassurance that the Jobsite is Clean and will be Sanitized Regularly

- Post a cleaning and sanitizing schedule for frequented locations such as job trailers, lunchrooms, bathrooms and port-a-johns.
- Post sanitation protocol – how cleaning and sanitizing should be completed – per CDC **guidelines**.
- Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the cleaning and sanitation tasks.

Employee Prescreening

Prior to the start of every shift, employees should verbally assure their supervisor (self-certify) that they:

- Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
 - Employers can choose to take employee temperatures. This can be done with a third party medical group.
- Have not had “close contact” with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - “Close contact” could mean living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, or being within six feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - If they have had “close contact”, the employee should self-quarantine for 14 days after last contact with the infected person.
- Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.



Securing Essential Supplies

When employees return to the jobsite for work, there still may be some remaining supply hoarding concerns. When it comes to your employees and their health and safety at work during this time, it is highly recommended that PPE and other essential items (toilet paper, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, etc.) be put on an inventory list. These items should be under lock and key with only appointed people having access. There should be a sign-in/sign-out log that tracks the person(s) accessing the supplies, when and what items they removed.

Logistics

Returning your employees to work and to jobsites will be a part of the equation you can control. There are some other logistics that will be outside of your power that will need to be considered before bringing back a full field crew. Some items to consider:

- **Supplies** - Jobsite materials may be available when you return to work, but what about in 3-6 months? Ensure that suppliers are committing to timely deliveries of materials as needed and within reason. Remember, many manufacturing plants were also running with limited manpower or had possibly converted their operations to produce other items in support of COVID-19.
- **Subcontractors** - Other trades have also been operating on minimal manpower for multiple reasons (positive COVID-19 employees, no work, social distancing rules, etc.). Ensure that the subs have enough employees to get the task completed before returning to work full force.
- **Multiple Contractors Onsite and in the Same Area** - It is likely that once the 'shelter in place' orders are lifted, there will still be social distancing restrictions in place in the workplace. Be prepared to communicate your company's COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan (ECP), which may include continued social distancing, providing masks for all employees and enforcement of these policies.

Upper Management Communication to Employees

Employers should communicate the importance of priorities, with family being a top priority. Showing compassion and concern for each employee not only at work, but also at home, is vital to building trust and the company culture. Words communicate a message, but actions demonstrate commitment to the message. As employees return to work, consider providing them with a small welcome back package that could include such items as toilet paper, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes or other essential items that were in short supply. Also, consider items that may help lift the mood such as candy or other thoughtful items. Ensure that communication is open, sending a clear and consistent message to all employees.

Jobsite Postings

During the COVID-19 pandemic multiple employment, emergency leave and medical releases have been updated to better protect, prepare and provide information to those that need to know. The Department of Labor published the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and requires it to be posted in all places of employment as of April 1, 2020. This Act further explains the paid sick leave and medical leave related to COVID-19. Click here for the [FFCRA Poster](#). Click here for the updated [HIPPA Bulletin](#). Gallagher has several [COVID-19 resources](#) available also. Be sure to check with state and local policies that may also be in place for COVID-19.

Employee Assistance Program

If your company provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as a benefit, this is a great time to emphasize the program and its features. Employees will be returning to work after facing various challenges from the pandemic. Some may have lost family members and may need grief counseling. Others may need financial guidance from a financial planner. And some employees may be experiencing a form of post-traumatic stress. The preferred method of sharing the EAP information is with on-site representation from the human resources department, or a member of leadership directly involved with the EAP. A detailed review of the program, resources available to employees and methods of contacting the EAP provider(s) is a great start to sharing the EAP message. Employers should be prepared with answers to general questions, and share those with the group. Additionally, being available for private questions from employees after the meeting is helpful to resolve any employee concerns.

In time, the COVID-19 pandemic curve should flatten and America will get back to work. Utilizing this document and other Gallagher National Risk Control resources, your company will be able to ease the minds of your employees. No matter the trade or type of work your employees are in, we are in this together.

For more helpful and up-to-date information regarding COVID-19, please visit our [Pandemic Information Hub](#).

www.ajg.com/pandemic

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