



COVID-19 Resource Guide for Organizations Providing Services in Agricultural Settings

Applicability: This field guide (guide) is intended to summarize COVID-19-related information and provide recommendations and resources for outreach workers who provide services in agricultural settings. It is intended to be used by people who conduct field outreach to agricultural and migrant farm workers during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect themselves and those they work with.

** Notes

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) prepared this guide only for use during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Please note:

- Recommendations regarding all aspects of the pandemic response frequently change, and readers should check for updated information from OHA and other experts. Visit the OHA COVID-19 [website](#).
- Nothing in this guide is intended to supersede any information or recommendations provided by federal, state or local public health authorities.
- Nothing in this guide constitutes medical or legal advice or formal guidance and should not be relied upon as such.

Organizations that conduct agricultural worker outreach should, to the extent possible:

- Provide training and educational materials related to COVID-19 for staff. Training should be conducted by individuals who are familiar with applicable resources developed by [OHA](#) and the [CDC](#).
- Include a “COVID-19 update” as a standing topic on staff meetings and employee huddles as the situation may change rapidly.
- Minimize the number of staff members who have face-to-face interactions with agricultural workers. In case either person later becomes ill, keep a record of staff in-person interactions with people they may encounter during the field visit

like agricultural workers, the employers, labor contractors, etc. clients (name and contact information).

- Allow outreach staff who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 to perform duties that do not require them to interact with agricultural workers in-person. People at higher risk include¹:
 - Individuals age 65 or older; or
 - Individuals with chronic health conditions, including people with:
 - ◆ Diabetes
 - ◆ Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - ◆ Serious heart conditions
 - ◆ Compromised immune systems, including those who have lupus or HIV or take steroids
 - ◆ Severe obesity (body mass index of 40 or higher)
 - ◆ Chronic kidney disease and on dialysis
 - ◆ Liver disease
- Encourage outreach staff to review stress and coping resources for themselves and agricultural workers during this time. Visit the OHA website, Behavioral Health Resources for more information.
- Provide face coverings, masks or face shields for staff and training on their use.
 - CDC has guidance on making and wearing cloth face coverings. Transparent plexiglass face shields that cover the eyes, nose and mouth also probably reduce risk of transmitting COVID-19. They can be worn with masks or cloth face coverings and should be especially considered for people who cannot wear masks or face coverings.
 - Staff should wash their hands before and after putting on or taking off or handling masks, face coverings or shields.
 - If a mask, face covering or shield is intended to be re-used, it should be in a clean, sealable plastic bag.
 - Masks, face coverings or shields should be discarded or if they are able to be washed, washed in warm soapy water at least daily or whenever they become visibly soiled.
- Avoid having staff from separate households ride together in cars, because keeping six (6) feet from each other would be difficult. If it is necessary for people from separate households to share a car ride, to the extent possible people should keep physical distance of six (6) feet, open windows to prevent

¹ This list is from the CDC. Check the CDC [website](#) often because they change as experts learn about COVID-19.

recirculation everyone in the vehicle should wear face coverings, masks or shields to protect one-another.

- Ensure that an employee with COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19 stay at home and refrain from coming to work until at least 10 days since the symptoms started and they have been free of fever or chills, shortness of breath, or cough for 72 hours.
- Ensure that employees who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 self-quarantine and stay home from work for 14 days and should seek medical attention if they develop fever or chills, cough or shortness of breath during this time.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should an organization do if an outreach worker is at a higher risk of severe illness?

- Encourage all employees to assess themselves, and if they fall into one of these groups, have them talk with their medical provider and work supervisor before they do any field visits.
- If an employee is a caregiver for someone in one of these high-risk groups or has a household member who belongs to a high-risk group, they should also talk with their medical provider and work supervisor before doing any field outreach.

If an outreach worker has difficulty breathing while wearing a mask. Can they still do field outreach?

If any staff member that performs field outreach work has difficulty breathing while wearing a mask, they should ask their medical provider if doing field outreach work is appropriate for them. Read OHA's [Mask and Face Covering Guidance for Business, Transit, and the Public](#) and [Oregon General Guidance for Employers on COVID-19](#) to understand who should wear a mask and accommodations for people who cannot wear a mask.

In addition to keeping physical distancing of six (6) feet and frequent hand washing or sanitizing, staff members who are unable to wear a mask should avoid in-person field outreach when COVID-19 is circulating in the community; use a plexiglass face shield; and conduct all in-person outreach out of doors.

If an employee has been exposed to or has symptoms of COVID-19, as an organization what should we do?

- Contact your [Local Public Health Authority](#) for guidance.
- For workplace policy development and resources see the CDC [guidance](#) on return-to-work assessments
- Consult OHA [General Guidance for Employers on COVID 19](#) and FAQ on [“Advice for what to do in the workplace.”](#)

- Know the symptoms of COVID-19 and ask employees to self-monitor. Symptoms include:



- Fever (a temperature with an oral thermometer at 100.4 or higher)

- Chills or sweats



- Flu-like symptoms (tiredness or body aches)

- Shortness of breath



- Cough

- Loss of sense of taste or smell



- Sore throat



- Diarrhea

- Vomiting

- All employees should be without fever or cough for 72 hours without using fever reducing medicines like aspirin or acetaminophen before returning to work or school.
- Employees who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 infection should not return to work until at least 10 days since the symptoms started and they have been free of fever or chills, shortness of breath, or cough for 72 hours.
- Employees who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 should self-quarantine and stay home from work for 14 days and should seek medical attention if they develop fever or chills, cough or shortness of breath during this time.

Should I wear a mask, face covering or shield when visiting agricultural worker housing sites?

It is recommended, unless you have a disability or medical condition that make wearing a mask or face covering inadvisable. The use of masks and face coverings may help prevent or slow the spread of disease. If you want people to recognize your face before entering their space, put your face covering on (over your mouth and nose) before you get within six (6) feet of any other person. Masks or face coverings should not be lowered. They should be taken off or left on. Wash or sanitize your hands after touching your face covering.

How do I explain to clients what I am doing and why?

- You should follow your usual process to identify yourself when you do fieldwork. While at least six (6) feet away, put on your mask – and explain you are wearing a mask to protect them. You may also want to tell agricultural workers or other farm staff that even though you are wearing a mask, face covering or face shield, you are going to stay at least six (6) feet away to protect people.

What should I tell persons living in agricultural worker housing or agricultural worksites about wearing face coverings and masks?

- You may want to refer them to OHA's [Mask and Face Covering Guidance for Business, Transit, and the Public](#), and [Oregon General Guidance for Employers](#)

[on COVID-19](#) and [Interim Guidance for Agricultural Workers and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers](#), explain the information contained in these documents to them, such as:

- Wear masks or cloth face coverings or face shields when they cannot keep a distance of at least six (6) feet from other people.
- Wash cloth face coverings regularly.
- Avoid touching your face or mask, face covering or shield, and wash or sanitize hands after touching the mask, face covering or shield.
- Store masks, face coverings or shields in a sealable bag if possible.
- Dispose of all used tissues, disposable face coverings, etc. or put them in a sealable bag, which can later be put in a trash can.
- Avoid touching another person's mask, face covering or shield, or picking one up.

What can I do when I get home after field outreach work?

When you get home, while wearing mask or face covering, remove clothing in a room that is dedicated for laundry. Wash the clothing in warm soapy water and dry it in the dryer.

What should I do if I think I have been exposed to COVID-19?

- Call your medical provider. Self-monitor for symptoms.
- If recommended by your medical provider, get tested for COVID-19.
- Don't go to work until you have spoken with your medical provider about whether you need to self-quarantine.
- Notify your supervisor and if necessary, talk with your medical provider on when to return to work. Also see above guidance about returning to work after possible exposure.

What should I do if I develop a fever or chills, shortness of breath or new cough?

- Don't go to work.
- Contact your medical provider.
- If recommended by your provider, get tested for COVID-19
- For reference, the CDC has posted guidance about symptoms and care <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>

Where can I find information on COVID-19 developed for people working in agriculture?

The OHA COVID-19 website has a place dedicated to agricultural workers and employers. Also, OHA has developed health guidance for agricultural employers and agricultural workers. The guidance documents can be found in the OHA COVID-19 webpage. Outreach workers and organizations serving agricultural workers should

familiarize themselves with these two resources and include them in their outreach and education plan.

- Worker guidance
<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le2349.pdf>
- Employer guidance
<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le2350.pdf>

Important steps to stop the spread of COVID-19

Hand hygiene

- Hand washing might be the most effective way to prevent transmission of COVID-19. No matter what else you are doing to prevent COVID-19, wash your hands often using soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing. If soap and water are not available, you can use hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol content), When using hand sanitizer, rub your hands together until the sanitizer is fully absorbed and your hands are dry.

Physical distancing

- Along with hand washing, keeping physical distance from other people is an effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19. No matter what else you are doing to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, you should try to stay at least six (6) feet away from others, even if you or the people you are with are wearing masks or face coverings or face shields.

Additional Resources:

- OHA's [Mask and Face Covering Guidance for Business, Transit, and the Public](#)
- [Oregon General Guidance for Employers on COVID-19](#).
- Request educational materials from OHA through the OHA Community Engagement Educational Print Materials Order [Form](#)
- If you have any questions about this guide, please contact Community.covid19@dhsoha.state.or.us

For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide documents in alternate formats such as other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact Mavel Morales at 1-844-882-7889, 711 TTY or OHA.ADAModifications@dhsoha.state.or.us.