



GUIDANCE

ALERT

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Farmworkers and the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Temporary Worker Housing COVID-19 Guidance

PREPARE. EDUCATE. PREVENT. ISOLATE. COMMUNICATE.

NCDOL urges employers and employees to be aware of their role in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Employers have asked for guidance on what to do to respond to the spread of this disease. Employers should already be taking preventative actions now and should be using all resources available to prepare for and respond to the outbreak.

PREPARE - Develop a plan and be prepared

- Develop a plan for how you will care for and isolate sick farmworkers and how you will quarantine (separate) exposed farmworkers from nonexposed farmworkers.
 - o Your plan should include how you will communicate with and provide food, water, transportation, and other supplies to isolated and quarantined farmworkers.
 - o If you do not have adequate space on the farm to isolate sick workers or quarantine exposed workers, contact your local health department for their assistance in determining alternate housing arrangements. Staff at the local health department should also be able to answer any other questions or concerns you have about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
 - o If you have separate housing available that has not been certified, **contact NCDOL at 919-707-7820.**
- Develop a regular cleaning and disinfecting schedule for farmworker housing (including kitchen, dining, and bathroom facilities), transportation vehicles, and other commonly used areas. Determine who will be responsible for cleaning/disinfecting and follow-up to confirm it is completed.
- Provide cleaning/disinfectant supplies, running water, soap, paper towels, tissues, gloves and masks in all housing and work sites. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the use of non-medical, cloth-based face coverings. Surgical masks should be reserved for healthcare workers.
- Create a list of important phone numbers such as the local health department, the closest migrant health clinic, NCDHHS and NCDOL.

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EDUCATE - *Educate yourself, family members and farmworkers about COVID-19*

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within six feet).
 - When an infected person coughs or sneezes.
 - When touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes.
- The most common signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - Fever, cough, and shortness of breath/difficulty breathing.
 - Symptoms may not occur for two to 14 days after initial exposure.
- Isolation time frames per the CDC:
 - Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms who were not tested and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:
 - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
 - At least seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms who were tested and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:
 - Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
 - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
 - Person receives clearance from a medical provider after two consecutive negative COVID-19 swab tests.
 - Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue home isolation when at least seven days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness.

PREVENT - *The best way to prevent COVID-19 is to avoid being exposed*

- Arrange beds in all farmworker housing at least six feet apart, if possible.
- Encourage workers to practice social distancing (stay at least six feet away from other people); avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth; and to stay home when sick.
- Encourage workers to wash their hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Confirm that farmworker housing (including kitchen, dining, and bathroom facilities), transportation vehicles, and other commonly used areas and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Group workers into groups of fewer than 10 people that will share the same bathroom, kitchen, transportation and worksites. Workers should maintain a distance of six feet from other workers. Prevent contact between these groups as much as possible.
- Limit close congregation for social or dining activities.
- Post handouts about coronavirus prevention and symptoms in English and Spanish in multiple locations around the farm (e.g., housing, kitchen facilities, bathrooms, shop, break areas, porta johns, field sanitation units, etc.).

ISOLATE - *Separate sick and exposed farmworkers from others*

- If an individual is COVID-positive or is exhibiting symptoms, they should be separated from the rest of the farmworkers and put in an isolated area away from others. Separate sleeping, bathroom, and kitchen facilities for symptomatic or COVID-positive farmworkers are recommended per NCDHHS.
- If separate housing is not available, contact your local health department or NCDHHS to determine the best way to protect workers and what community resources are available.
- Farmworkers who are sick or showing respiratory symptoms should NOT return to work until they meet the CDC guidelines listed above.

COMMUNICATE - *Communication is the key to success*

- Seek medical advice if you or your farmworkers develop symptoms.
- Talk to your workers daily to determine if anyone is not feeling well, if additional supplies are needed, and to provide updates about COVID-19.
- Contact your local health department, as required, to report any suspected or known cases of communicable disease, such as COVID-19. The health department will guide you on your specific situation, including if, when, and how to test farmworkers.
- Contact NCDOL to report any changes related to migrant farmworker housing.

