



COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Hotels and Lodging

July 2, 2020

covid19.ca.gov



OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact or in a poorly ventilated area with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include hospitals, long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by workers (where respiratory protection is not required) and customers/clients,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training workers on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for the hotels and lodging industry to support a safe, clean environment for workers and customers.

NOTE: Hotel and lodging operators in counties whose health officer has approved further reopening may follow the guidance for Hotels (for tourism and individual travel) on the [COVID-19 County Roadmap website](#).

The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any worker rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include

county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.¹ Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their [Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus webpage](#). CDC has additional guidance [for businesses and employers](#).

Required Use of Face Coverings

On June 18, CDPH issued [Guidance on the Use of Face Coverings](#), which broadly requires the use of face coverings for both members of the public and workers in all public and workplace settings where there is a high risk of exposure.

People in California must wear face coverings when they are engaged in work, whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when:

- Interacting in-person with any member of the public;
- Working in any space visited by members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time;
- Working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others;
- Working in or walking through common areas, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities;
- In any room or enclosed area where other people (except for members of the person's own household or residence) are present when unable to physically distance;
- Driving or operating any public transportation or paratransit vehicle, taxi, or private car service or ride-sharing vehicle when passengers are present. When no passengers are present, face coverings are strongly recommended.

Complete details, including all requirements and exemptions to these rules, can be found in the [guidance](#). Face coverings are strongly encouraged in other circumstances, and employers can implement additional face covering requirements in fulfilling their obligation to provide workers with a safe and healthful workplace. Employers should provide face coverings to workers or reimburse workers for the reasonable cost of obtaining them.

Employers should develop an accommodation policy for any worker who meets one of the exemptions from wearing a face covering. If a worker who would otherwise be required to wear a face covering because of frequent contact with others cannot wear one due to a medical condition, they should be provided with a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape attached to the bottom edge, if feasible, and if the medical condition permits it.

Businesses that are open to the public should be cognizant of the exemptions to

wearing face coverings in the [CDPH Face Covering Guidance](#) and may not exclude any member of the public for not wearing a face covering if that person is complying with the [guidance](#). Businesses will need to develop policies for handling these exemptions among customers, clients, visitors, and workers.



Workplace Specific Plan

- Establish a written, workplace-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every facility, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas and work tasks, and designate a person at each facility to implement the plan.
- Incorporate the [CDPH Face Covering Guidance](#) into the Workplace Specific Plan and include a policy for handling exemptions.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the facility is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among workers.
- Train and communicate with workers and worker representatives on the plan and make the plan available to workers and their representatives.
- Regularly evaluate the workplace for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a workplace has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#).
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected worker and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive worker(s) and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.



Topics for Worker Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).

- The importance of not coming to work:
 - If a worker has symptoms of COVID-19 as [described by the CDC](#), such as a fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, OR
 - If a worker was diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not yet been released from isolation, OR
 - If, within the past 14 days, a worker has had contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is considered potentially infectious (i.e. still on isolation).
- To return to work after a worker receives a COVID-19 diagnosis only if 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, their symptoms have improved, and the worker has had no fevers (without the use of fever reducing medications) for the last 72 hours. A worker without symptoms who was diagnosed with COVID-19 can return to work only if 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive COVID-19 test.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol (preferred) or 70% isopropanol (if the product is inaccessible to unsupervised children) when workers cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per [CDC guidelines](#)).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
 - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
 - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
 - Workers should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.

- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Face coverings must not be shared and should be washed or discarded after each shift.
- Information contained in the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#), which mandates the circumstances in which face coverings must be worn and the exemptions, as well as any policies, work rules, and practices the employer has adopted to ensure the use of face coverings. Training should also include the employer's policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be handled.
- Ensure any independent contractors, temporary or contract workers at the facility are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary and/or contract workers.
- Information on paid leave benefits the worker may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information [on government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including workers' sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and workers' rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#) while that Order is in effect.



Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the establishment. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with workers to the extent possible.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker leaving the home for their shift and follows [CDC guidelines](#), as described in the Topics for Worker Training section above.
- Encourage workers and customers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- Employers must provide and ensure workers use all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves where necessary.

- Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.
- Housekeeping must only service rooms when guests are not present. Housekeepers should be instructed to minimize contact with guests' personal belongings when cleaning. Housekeepers should be instructed to have ventilation systems operating and/or open windows if possible, to increase air circulation.
- Employers should encourage handwashing, with soap and water, and/or using proper hand sanitizer for workers after interactions with guests, cleaning rooms, and opening mail or handling other commonly touched items. Valet service drivers, baggage handlers, and housekeepers should wash their hands regularly during their shift and/or use proper hand sanitizer.
- Guests and visitors should be temperature and/or screened upon arrival and asked to use hand sanitizer and to wear a face covering. Face coverings should be provided to guests who arrive without them, if feasible. Appropriate signage should also be prominently displayed outlining proper face covering usage and current physical distancing practices in use throughout the property.
- Remind guests in advance to bring a face covering and make them available to anyone who arrives without one, if possible.



Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning in high traffic areas such as hotel lobbies, front desk check-in counters, bell desks, break rooms and lunch areas, changing areas, loading docks, kitchens and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevator controls.
- Disinfect commonly used surfaces throughout the day and evening, including door handles, guestroom interior locks, vending and ice machines, light switches, TV remote controls, phones, hairdryers, washer and dryer doors and controls, baggage carts, shuttle door handles, toilets, and handwashing facilities. Disinfect surfaces during daily room cleanings. Clean dirty items before disinfecting.
- Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the worker's job duties.
- Equip workstations, desks, and help counters with proper sanitation

products, including hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes, and provide personal hand sanitizers to all staff directly assisting customers.

- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed.
- When choosing disinfecting chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide workers training on the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, ventilation requirements, and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves and other protective equipment as required by the product instructions. Follow the [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#) recommended by the California Department of Public Health and ensure proper ventilation.
- Where possible, do not clean floors by sweeping or other methods that can disperse pathogens into the air. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter wherever possible.
- To minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water, [take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.
- Avoid sharing phones, tablets, laptops, desks, pens, other work supplies, or offices wherever possible. Never share PPE. Any shared tools and equipment should be sanitized before, during and after each shift or anytime the equipment is transferred to a new employee. This includes phones, radios, computers and other communication devices, payment terminals, kitchen implements, engineering tools, safety buttons, folios, housekeeping carts and cleaning equipment, keys, time clocks, and all other direct contact items.
- Discontinue the use of shared food and beverage equipment in office pantries (including shared coffee brewers). Close manually operated ice machines or use hands free machines.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices, guest rooms, and other spaces.



Additional Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols for Hotel Operations

- All reusable collateral, such as magazines, menus, local attraction details, coupons, etc., should be removed from rooms. Critical information should be provided as single-use collateral and/or electronically posted.
- Dirty linens should be removed and transported from guest rooms in single-use, sealed bags. Removal and cleaning of all towels and linens at the conclusion of each guest stay should include all items, regardless of whether they appear to have been used or not. These items should be bagged in the guest room to eliminate excess contact while being transported. All bed linen and laundry should be washed at a high temperature and cleaned in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).
- Consider leaving rooms vacant for 24 to 72 hours prior to or after cleaning, if feasible.
- In the event of a presumptive case of COVID-19, the guest's room should be removed from service and quarantined. The guest room should not be returned to service until case has been confirmed or cleared. In the event of a positive case, the room should only be returned to service after undergoing an enhanced disinfection protocol in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at key guest and worker entrances and contact areas such as driveways, reception areas, hotel lobbies, restaurant entrances, meeting and convention spaces, elevator landings, pools, salons, and exercise areas.



Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between and among workers, guests, and the public. These can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings or signs to indicate to where workers and/or guests should stand). Any area where guests or workers queue should be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. This includes check-in, check-out, elevator lobbies, coffee shops and dining, and taxi and ridesharing lines.
- Physical distancing protocols should be used in worker break areas, uniform control areas, training classrooms, shared office spaces, the worker services window (via a teller style window), and other high-density areas in order to ensure appropriate distancing between

workers.

- Pre-shift meetings should be conducted virtually or in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing between workers. Larger departments should stagger arrival times to minimize traffic volume in back of house corridors and service elevators.
- Stagger worker breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Consider offering workers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with customers and other workers (e.g., managing inventory rather than working at the concierge desk or managing administrative needs through telework).
- Close breakrooms, use barriers, or increase distance between tables/chairs to separate workers and discourage congregating during breaks. Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade covers and seating that ensures physical distancing.
- Redesign office spaces, cubicles, lobbies, front desk check-in areas, business centers, concierge service areas, and other spaces if possible, to ensure workspaces and guest accommodations allow for at least six feet distancing.
- Discourage workers from congregating in high traffic areas such as bathrooms and hallways and establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic, if possible, to eliminate people from passing by one another.
- Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator Use signage to communicate these requirements.
- Require workers to avoid handshakes and similar greetings that break physical distance.
- Eliminate person-to-person contact for delivery of goods to physical offices. Avoid touching others' pens and clipboards.



Additional Physical Distancing Guidelines for Hotel Operations

- Guests should enter through doors that are either propped open, if possible, or are automated or manually operated by a worker that is frequently handwashing and/or using proper hand sanitizer.
- Implement peak period queueing procedures, including a lobby greeter and having guests queue outside to maintain at least six feet of physical distance between persons.
- Workers should not open the doors of cars or taxis.
- Guest room service, laundry and dry-cleaning services, and amenity deliveries should be made available using contactless pick-up and delivery protocols wherever possible.
- Hotel operations with restaurants should limit food and beverage offerings to take-out and “contactless” room service until dine-in establishments are allowed to resume modified or full operation.
- Hotels with pools should ensure that physical distancing requirements can be enforced, this could include limiting one person per lane in swimming pools.
- Hotels with golf courses should only allow one player per cart, except for immediate family and people who cohabitate, and increase tee time spacing, and should only open once golf courses are allowed to reopen.



Considerations for Hotels When Full Operations Resume

- Hotels operations with dine-in restaurants, bars, fitness centers, spas, salons, large meeting venues, banquet halls, or convention centers should keep those areas closed until each of those types of establishments are allowed to resume modified or full operation.
- When allowed to reopen to modified or full operation, hotels with dine-in restaurants and bars should:
 - Reduce seating capacities or reconfigure seating to allow for a minimum of six feet between each seated group/party of guests.
 - Implement additional and specific cleaning and sanitizing

protocols for food processing and restaurant operations.

- Refer to guidelines for the restaurant and bar industries when they become available on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#).
- When allowed to reopen to modified or full operation, hotels with fitness centers, spas, and salons should refer to the relevant guidelines on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#) when available.
- When larger gatherings are permitted by state/local orders, those hotels with meeting, conference, banquet, or other event accommodations must:
 - Adjust room configurations to allow for physical distancing between guests.
 - Decrease the capacity for conference and meeting rooms in order to maintain at least six feet of physical distance between participants.
 - Suspend self-serve buffet style food service and replace it with alternative service styles.
 - For additional direction on meetings and convention centers, refer to the guidelines on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#) when available.

¹Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. The hotels and lodging industry must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, employers should be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.

