

COVID-19 Checklist for Sugar Cane Farms

Based on CDC recommendations. Check CDC recommendations for details. This is not a complete list, but should be considered a basic outline. This checklist was created by the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section, Office of Public Health, Louisiana Department of Health.

I. Eliminating or reducing risk:

- a. Screen workers for fever and symptoms of illness prior to entry to housing, transportation, or work site.
- b. Monitor workers for fever and symptoms for duration of employment.

II. Managing sick workers:

- a. Employ a system to separate sick workers from other workers (separate or alternative housing).
- b. Provide sick workers with informational resources where medical attention may be accessed.
- c. Employ a system to identify other workers who have been in sustained, close contact with the sick worker.
- d. Clean and disinfect the work area, equipment, common areas used (break areas, bathrooms, vehicles, etc.), and any tools handled by the symptomatic worker.

III. Addressing return to work after worker exposure to COVID-19:

- a. Follow CDC's Critical Infrastructure Guidance for workers/CDC's COVID-19 Critical Infrastructure Sector Response Planning/CDC interim guidance for Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 not in Healthcare Settings/consultation with an occupational health provider and state and local health officials

IV. Isolate people from risk:

- a. Limit close contact with others (maintain a distance of at least 6 feet between people whenever possible) if feasible. (at all times, work and housing, if possible)
- b. Adjust workflow to allow for a 6-foot distance between farmworkers, if feasible.
- c. Install shields or barriers, such as plastic, between farmworkers, when a 6-foot distance between farmworkers is not possible.
- d. Add additional clock in/out stations (touch-free if available) or additional time for clocking in/out to reduce crowding, if feasible.
- e. Remove or rearrange chairs and tables or adding visual cue marks in employee break areas to support social distancing between farmworkers.
- f. Train workers to follow protective measures while on breaks.

V. Control plan-cleaning, disinfection and sanitation:

a. Promote hand hygiene:

- i. Encourage farmworkers to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ii. Farmworkers have reasonable access to permanent and/or temporary hand washing facilities equipped with soap, potable water, and clean, single-use towels.
Note: if hands aren't visibly soiled or dirty, farmworkers can use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, rubbing hands until they are dry.
- iii. Sanitizing stations are in multiple locations on the farm (point of entry or exit, where farmworkers clock in/out, in individual containers made available to workers in field settings)

b. Disinfection and sanitation (adhere to principles of safe storage of chemicals, adequate contact time of chemicals with surfaces, etc.):

- i. Employ protocols for daily cleaning and sanitation of work sites.
- ii. Employ procedures for sanitation or disinfection of high-touch areas such as tools, equipment, and vehicles used by farmworkers
- iii. Conduct targeted and more frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch areas of shared spaces (e.g., time clocks, bathroom fixtures, vending machines, railings, door handles).
 - 1. Break areas between groups
 - 2. Locker facilities at end of each shift
 - 3. Farm vehicles and implements between shifts and workgroups
- iv. Discourage sharing of tools, if not practical, disinfect and sanitize between personnel

VI. Administrative controls:

- a. Group workers together in cohorts to reduce risk. Maintain consistency in groups (Same workers in the same groups each day)
- b. Place workers residing together in the same vehicles for transportation to and from work sites.
- c. Keep workers that live and travel together in the same work groups.
- d. Provide training, in a language workers understand. When providing training, consider providing it outside, in smaller than usual groups with participants 6 feet apart.
 - i. Basic principles of prevention
 - ii. General facts about COVID19 transmission
 - 1. Person to person primary means of transmission, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, recent studies indicate that people who are not showing symptoms can spread the virus.
 - 2. Through touching a surface or object that has the virus on it.
 - iii. Maintaining distance between workers, social distancing

- iv. Avoiding prolonged contact at the job and in residences
- v. Proper hand hygiene
- vi. Use of face covers when social distancing is not possible. Replace if wet, soiled, or visibly contaminated.
- vii. Cough and sneeze etiquette
- viii. Steps to take if the worker gets sick
- e. Place simple language appropriate posters with instructions at the entrance to the workplace, in break areas, employer furnished housing, and other workplace areas with visibility.
 - Reduce crew sizes
 - Implement a schedule with staggered shift changes, meal times and break times.
 - Have farmworkers alternate rows in fields to facilitate a 6-foot distance between each other.
 - Materials (such as harvesting buckets) and produce placed at a central transfer point instead of being transferred directly from one worker to the next.

VII. **PPE:** Generally recommended for workers who may have frequent and close contact with workers who may be infected with COVID-19. This would be the “medium” risk category. Consult CDC Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 (PPE section begins on page 14.) and voluntary use provisions of the OSHA Respiratory Protection standard (29 CFR 1910.134)

- a. Provide appropriate PPE for those personnel screening and monitoring workers
- b. Provide appropriate PPE to cleaning staff
- c. Employ a process to dispose of non-reusable PPE in compliance with OSHA standards to prevent further spread of COVID-19.
- d. Provide training on donning and removing PPE

VIII. **Special provisions related to housing:**

- a. Provide disposable gloves, soap for hand washing, and household cleaners for residents to maintain clean conditions
- b. Develop and implement enhanced sanitation and cleaning plans that address frequency of sanitation and cleaning, and identify a responsible person.
- c. When possible, use disposable dishes, drinking cups, and utensils. (Non-disposable items should not be shared, should be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- d. Employ protocols for daily cleaning and sanitation of living quarters, cooking and eating areas, bathrooms, and laundry facilities
- e. Shared rooms should have adequate air flow. When possible utilize...
 - i. air conditioners (change filters according to manufacturers’ recommendations)
 - ii. If no air conditioning, use air filtration systems and/or keep windows open for air flow
 - iii. Provide supplies for cleaning shared cooking utensils (such as knives, ladles, spatulas) and shared appliances (such as stoves, microwaves, and refrigerators, etc.).

- iv. Maintain access to laundry facilities and post guidelines for doing laundry (e.g., restrict the number of people allowed in laundry rooms at one time to ensure social distancing, avoid shaking dirty laundry).
- v. Provide appropriate storage options for reusable PPE, such as work gloves, coveralls, safety glasses, boots, etc., to prevent cross contamination
- vi. Social distancing and housing:
 - 1. Maintain social distancing at all times (recreating, cooking and sleeping)
 - 2. Add physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens, between bathroom sinks (if multiple sinks)
 - 3. Encourage social distancing in common areas by furniture removal or spacing.
 - 4. Modify bed configurations to maximize social distancing in sleeping quarters (Head to toe sleeping arrangements with 6' distance between beds, adding physical barriers (plastic flexible screens) when distancing is impossible, avoid use of bunk beds)
 - 5. Encourage the conduct of meetings and conversations outdoors to minimize congregating in close quarters.
 - 6. Encourage the wear of face coverings in shared spaces
- vii. Health checks at housing locations
 - 1. Symptom and temperature screening in a manner that maintains social distancing and maintains confidentiality
 - 2. Create an isolation plan for workers with COVID-19. (For H-2A temporary housing considerations, review DOL explanation of alternative housing arrangements in response to COVID-19)
 - a. PPE provided for screeners and people caring for the sick
 - b. Use separate buildings or rooms for the sick
 - c. Provide separate food and bathroom access
 - d. Restrict access to non-essential persons
 - e. Provide medical access/telemedicine for emergent illnesses
 - f. Provide transportation for the sick in a manner that does not expose others
 - g. **Establish local (regional) public health or medical entities for consultation, guidance on treatment, housing methods, etc.**

IX. Special provisions related to transportation (owner-operator, employer, worker, contract provided) :

- a. Ample space provided between riders
- b. Maintain housing cohorts or groups in transportation (and work, if possible)
- c. Encourage use of hand hygiene before entry to vehicle and at arrival at workplace
- d. Follow coughing/sneezing etiquette when in the vehicle
- e. Encourage wear of face coverings in the vehicle
- f. Clean and disinfect vehicles in accordance with CDC guidelines for non-emergency transport vehicles before and after each trip, or daily at minimum