



## COVID-19 HEALTH CARE ADVISORY FOR MIGRANT WORKERS IN DELAWARE

On March 13, 2020, Governor John C. Carney declared a State of Emergency to mobilize statewide efforts to respond to and contain the virus that causes COVID-19 in the State of Delaware. The purpose of this advisory is to comply with this order and to support ***the protection of employers and employees and prevent the spread of illness.***

In accordance with national guidelines, food production, processing and farming are deemed essential businesses in Delaware. We recognize that many of these businesses in Delaware rely on migrant labor and migrant workers. We further recognize and enforce federal regulations for Seasonal and Foreign Labor migrant workers to ensure that employers provide safe housing, transportation, and access to food and supplies during their work commitments.

Employers, farm owners and crew managers who employ and provide housing for migrant workers are expected to implement plans to prevent exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 and care for individuals with COVID-19.

Secretary of Labor Cerron Cade, Secretary of Agriculture Michael T. Scuse, and Dr. Kara Odom Walker, Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services and the Division of Public Health, in consultation with Delaware Migrant Employer Associations are providing the following safety protocols for employers and migrant workers in Delaware:

### SOCIAL DISTANCING AND FACE COVERINGS

Per guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) one of the most effective means of slowing the spread of COVID-19 is by staying at least 6 feet apart and avoiding immediate physical contact. This includes:

- Field work, food production, processing, transportation, cultivation and farming operations, and all other work activities and breaks.
- Transportation of workers between work sites and residences, as well as other transportation provided by the employer to allow workers to obtain necessary supplies and services.
- All reasonable efforts to make sure that beds are separated by at least 6 feet for sleeping arrangements in dormitory or barracks-style housing should be taken, and workers should sleep head-to-toe, as much as possible. All other commercial housing, i.e. apartments, mobile homes, town homes and hotels are to follow general safety precautions provided to the public.
- Reduce meetings and group gathering to essential communication only and limit such meetings to no more than 10 people. (e.g., at meals, during work breaks). During such times, individuals should remain 6 feet apart. During such times, individuals should remain 6 feet apart and wear face coverings.
- Limit personal contact and grouping within the facility and worksites and limit the number of people using common facilities at any one time. Ensure face coverings are worn at all times.
- Where feasible, encourage social distancing while planting, harvesting, and processing, and the ongoing use of face coverings.

- **Camp operators are required to provide sanitized cloth face coverings for workers to be worn in public and the general living areas of the camp per CDC guidance,** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

## **SANITATION**

- High-touch areas within the common area and facilities must be disinfected daily per CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Hand-washing stations must be made available with soap, potable water, and single-use disposable towels or alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with greater than 60 percent ethanol or 70 percent isopropanol must be made available in the following locations: cooking and dining facilities; sleeping facilities; in the field or in other food production, processing, transportation, cultivation, and farming operation centers.
- Employees should wash/sanitize their hands multiple times daily, including before and after work, breaks, eating, and use of toilet facilities.
- Employees should avoid sharing personal items with coworkers (e.g., food, dishes, cups, gloves, and engaging in activities such as playing cards, etc.)
- Employees should sneeze or cough into tissues, their shoulder or elbows. If the employee sneezed or coughed into a tissue, the tissue should immediately be discarded, and the employee should wash their hands immediately.
- Pay particular attention to sanitizing commonly touched surfaces including door handles, bathroom areas, lunchroom tables and chairs, kitchen areas, shared space and facilities, time clock areas, shared computers, tools, and any vehicles or equipment used at the facility (e.g., forklift or golf cart steering wheels) and more.
- Utilize off-hour times to complete an aggressive sanitation of common areas daily.
- Use sanitizer and/or disinfectant spray each day to deep clean: lunchroom areas, meeting rooms, time clock areas, office rooms, shipping facility, and all other common rooms and facilities.
- Ensure that all bathrooms (portable and in place) are adequately stocked and serviced at regular intervals and disinfected at least two times per day.

## **TRANSPORTATION OF EMPLOYEES**

- Bus and vanpool transportation provided by farming and harvesting operations are encouraged to maintain safe distancing in seating configurations, as much as possible, that matches the social distancing guidance.
- Be considerate of social distancing requirements when transporting employees, making multiple trips as necessary and regularly disinfect worker transportation vehicles.
- Assigned seating will help to determine exposure circles should an employee become ill.
- Workers are required to use face coverings during transport, per CDC and/DPH guidance.
- Follow federal and state guidelines when transporting H-2A employees.
- Encourage worker-directed car-pooling efforts to incorporate protective health guidance, when appropriate; encourage carpools to include only individuals who reside together.

## **SUSPECTED CASES OF COVID-19 AND PREVENTION - SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR TESTING PROTOCOLS**

- Screen all employees upon arrival to the worksite per the Delaware Essential Services Screening Recommendations for COVID-19 Pandemic, <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/177/2020/05/5.7-Essential-Services-Screening-Policy.pdf>. (Please see attached).

- Workers with any of the following symptoms, must not report or be allowed to work: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste. Other symptoms such as headache or digestive symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain or lack of appetite) have been identified as potential symptoms related to COVID-19 and may prompt further screening, action or investigation.
- Employees who are sick and need essential supplies, should ask someone else to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy to get what they need.
- Employees who believe they have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or have symptoms of illness, should be sure to distance themselves from others, particularly vulnerable populations, including: older adults and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions – including serious heart conditions, chronic lung conditions, including moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity and those who are immunocompromised, including through cancer treatment.
- Anyone with immediate family members that are ill should be required to stay home for 10 days.
- Employees who develop symptoms of COVID-19 while at work should be sent home immediately to self-isolate and to seek medical diagnosis.
- Workers exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should be provided a separate, isolated living space, unless the symptomatic worker resides in a one-family housing unit or in a family living unit that is part of a multi-family unit. If a camp operator is unable to effectively isolate workers within their current living space, workers with COVID-19 symptoms will be isolated in a separate room or building from other workers.
- The employee will immediately be assigned to a separate toilet room, if reasonably possible, or a separate toilet if a separate toilet room is not available. Nothing about this advisory shall be construed to prevent symptomatic workers from using separate toilet accommodations if available in their assigned one-family housing.
- Employers shall ensure that workers exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 are to be transported separately from workers not exhibiting symptoms.
- If alternative housing is necessary for any employee (living onsite or offsite), the camp operator shall seek assistance from the Delaware State Monitor Advocate and or other migrant serving agencies within the state.
- Food and water shall be provided to workers under isolation in order to minimize the need to leave isolation.
- If a camp operator is made aware that a worker has a confirmed case of COVID-19, the camp operator must consult with the Delaware Division of Public Health at: 1-888-295-5156.

## COMMUNICATIONS

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, they should notify their employer so actions can be taken to protect other employees, customers, and ensure transparent communication both internally and externally.

- The employer should collect the employee's work location, work hours, general and specific work duties, if the employee has traveled to multiple worksites recently with timing, and the last day the employee was at work. Identify whom has had contact with the employee.
- The Division of Public Health will contact the employee to begin case investigation and contact tracing. The above information should be provided to the Division of Public Health when the employer is contacted.
- The employee should follow the direction and guidance of the Delaware Division of Public Health regarding specific isolation and quarantine requirements. Guidance is posted on the State of Delaware Coronavirus website for those who have tested positive at <https://de.gov/coronavirus>.
- If the employee has sought medical diagnosis and treatment, the employee should follow guidance provided by their health care provider. If the employee has not sought medical diagnosis and treatment,

encourage them to do so. They must be sent home for 10 days of isolation if they have tested positive for COVID-19.

- Do not disclose the employee name unless asked to by the Division of Public Health.
- Any materials should be available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.

## **GENERAL WELLNESS FACTS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS**

Be responsive to the personal needs of each employee. The CDC and DPH have specifically indicated populations at risk to be:

- Individuals over the age of 65, those with underlying medical conditions – including serious heart conditions, chronic lung conditions, including moderate to severe asthma, severe obesity and those who are immunocompromised, including through cancer treatment, residential care patients, and all those who care for these individuals to be uniquely at risk.
- Take note which employees may be impacted and consider whether there are alternative work options or if their current job can be modified to ensure precautions are in place.
- Identify key processes and products that may be impacted due to COVID-19 pandemic protocols.

## **AFTER WORK HOURS**

All employers and migrant workers are required to follow Governor Carney's Executive Order regarding COVID-19 Stay at Home Orders and other safety precautions in its entirety. More information may be found at: <https://de.gov/coronavirus>.

## **LIMIT NON-ESSENTIAL VISITS AND TRAVEL**

- To limit exposure of employees, emphasize online ordering for any direct to consumer sales with outside pick-up or delivery options.
- Laundry and other personal services are to be performed on-site whenever possible.
- Limit visitors to essential persons only (medical, sanitation, food services, and work deliveries) and all visitors should be approved before arriving. Employees are to use social distancing when interacting with any of those authorized visitors.

## **POSTINGS**

The Departments shall make all Public Health Notices applicable to migrants as referenced in this Advisory available for posting in English and in the language of the camp occupants if other than English. The camps shall display the CDC hand hygiene signs in English and in the main languages of the camp occupants in the housing facilities.

## **REFERENCES**

CDC's "Wash Your Hands" posters can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

The COVID-19 Health Care Advisory for Migrant Workers in Delaware was created with the assistance of the Delaware Migrant Employer Associations, the Delaware Farm Bureau, the Mar-Del Watermelon Association, and the Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association of Delaware.

Updates will be provided as new information is received. Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the following:

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

Dawn Pickett, State Monitor Advocate (302)-747-3161

Camille Nieves, Foreign Labor Coordinator (302)-593-0656

Sherese Brewington-Carr, M.H.S., Senior Administrator (302)-593-1323

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Kenny Bounds, Deputy Secretary (302)-698-4500

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

Division of Public Health (302)-744-4736; [HSPContact@Delaware.gov](mailto:HSPContact@Delaware.gov)

**FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION OF DELAWARE**

Dave Marvel, President, Migrant Worker Employer Representative/Liaison, (302)-381-4811