

# The Coronavirus

## What Members are Doing...Some Tips

### Communication

- Changed your outgoing message or main office voicemail to let them know your status (i.e.: if you are open, taking orders and shipping on schedule, but may have limited phone support at times, etc.).
- Set up a phone tree so you can communicate to all employees promptly.
- If you have a TV system in your breakroom, post reminders about social distancing, washing hands, and any other policies, etc. that you've communicated to your personnel.
- Send tips to our customers about remaining positive, gardening outdoors, best way to social distance yourself, etc. See the Benefit of Plants graphics by the National Garden Bureau that can be used in social media on the "Benefit of Plants" section of the AmericanHort Coronavirus Resource Center.
- Create a video from your business owner to employees in English; then if needed and feasible translate the information in Spanish or any other language you may need to remind employees:
  - symptoms of COVID-19
  - what to do when you have symptoms, etc.
  - staying home if symptomatic, sick, have traveled outside US
  - what pre-existing conditions may make a person more susceptible to the virus
  - Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) that is effective April 1
- See additional communication tips in the "Guidelines for Communicating with employees, customers and clients" section of the AmericanHort Coronavirus Resource Center.
- Post the Department of Labor poster on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) that is effective April 1. It is available in Spanish and on the AmericanHort Coronavirus Resource Center.

### Sanitizing and Hygiene practices

- Sanitize surfaces that people touch several times per day.
- In the breakrooms, set up a place for employees to stow their personal belongings, like shipping carts, or boxes, then you can sanitize the tables, chairs, microwaves, etc. with a bleach solution.
- Everyone must continue to practice handwashing with greater hygiene.

- Put up CDC posters in restrooms, handwashing areas, break rooms, and everywhere that makes sense to stress proper handwashing.
- Prop open doors so that no one must touch a doorknob.
- Disinfect surfaces daily in offices, shipping, and sales offices.
- Increasing bathroom and major area cleanings per week.
- Clean lunchrooms daily between shifts and after.
- Allow for mobile phone clock in from a payroll app and setting up attendants at the time clock to punch in workers to limit the surfaces being touched.

### **Social Distance While Working**

- Practicing social distancing can be difficult in the production lines and break room areas. If you must work near another person, wear a face mask.
- All should practice good social distancing. 6' or more even in meetings. Outside meetings are encouraged. If raining, use covered shed.
- Be proactive and preventive in your scheduling if you can help provide distance between employees.

### **Employee Housing**

- Consider prohibiting visitor to your employees living in your housing units
- Consider limiting employees in housing units to remain in their own house, and not go between houses
- To limit potential exposure to the virus, post No trespassing signs to discourage visitors from going into housing areas or other areas of your property that you don't want people to visit
- Supply ample hand soap and disinfectant supplies to the houses with instructions on how/when to use

### **Outside of the work environment**

- Ask employees to take greater care of where they go and be wary of large crowds.
- Avoid mass transit and airports if possible.

### **Transportation**

- If you provide transportation from your housing to work site, consider making more trips with fewer people in vehicles

## Monitoring Illness

- Urging employees to stay home when they are sick, some people have tried to come to work sick and have been sent home. Some people are scared to go out of their homes as well which has increased absenteeism.
- Taking temperatures is a sensitive task given health privacy, discriminatory regulations and other considerations. Carefully consider a protocol for monitoring temperatures. Having employees take their temperature before coming to work may be one option to consider.

Here is a suggested resource for important considerations about temperature protocols.

<https://www.littler.com/publication-press/publication/coronavirus-covid-19-employer-faqs>

- Implement a COVID-19 questionnaire for all visitors, applicants, etc. If they have an affirmative answer to the question, ask them to reschedule their visit in 14 days.
- If you have a confirmed COVID 19 case amongst your H2A employees, have a dedicated place to house those people, treating it like a sick ward. Separate it from our other housing.

## Business Closure

- Upon state issuance of an executive order for closure of all non-essential businesses, consider issuing a letter to essential workforce to use while traveling to/from work.

Here is a recent article in The Columbus Dispatch about defining essential businesses. First and foremost, people's health is paramount.

<https://www.dispatch.com/news/20200326/whatsquos-essential-business-in-coronavirus-pandemic-turns-out-thatsquos-complicated>

## Emergency Response Planning

- Revise your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to include a section of Health Emergencies

## Family First Coronavirus Response Act

- If you do not know this information, find out who has children under 18 at home and may be subject to the FFCRA provisions.
- Post the Department of Labor poster on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) that is effective April 1. It is available in Spanish and on the AmericanHort Coronavirus Resource Center.

# Landscaper Best Management Practices

Landscape Contractor - If you choose to continue to provide services, please follow these BMP's (Best Management Practices) along with any other procedures you have put in place:

- Contact and get permission from clients to be serviced- preferably in a documented format such as email or other time/date stamped electronic communication.
- Implement daily all-hands communications within company to inform, educate and reinforce SOPs, BMPs and possible next steps.
- Relax attendance policies to allow any employee who is uncomfortable working to stay home and use PTO or apply for UC.
- Train crew personnel to be able to respond to questions from the public in a professional manner.
- Enforce cleaning and sanitation protocols for all common spaces including trucks, equipment, and the breakroom, locker room and restroom.
- Stagger crew start times to minimize congregation at office/shop locations.
- Limit crews to 1 person per truck and have all other crew personnel drive directly to jobsite.
- Reduce crew size to compartmentalize the workforce into smaller isolatable segments.
- Assign one truck to one crew and do not rotate.
- Minimize use of shared equipment and tools.
- Wear gloves as much as possible removing only to eat, drink, or touch your face
- If you must work near another person for a short period of time (i.e. lifting a tree ball into a hole) wear a face mask.
- Be prepared to shutdown at any moment.

Also reference: <https://extension.psu.edu/coronavirus-best-management-practices-for-the-green-industry>

*Note: These are not all-inclusive measures but are suggested tips and practices to help you prevent the spread of the coronavirus amongst your workforce and provides some tips for dealing with certain aspects of this disease. This is information based on what we have received from various business in our industry. You should seek legal counsel on matters of employment law.*

