

# Food Processing and Manufacturing COVID-19 Best Practices Checklist

The checklist below includes best practices for COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies for food processing and manufacturing plants. This information is based on recommendations from MDH, MDA, MNOSHA and CDC. For links to additional guidance, please visit [Food Safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/foodsafety/emergency/covid.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/foodsafety/emergency/covid.html).

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## Employee and visitor screening

Comprehensive employee and visitor screening is **vital** to limiting the introduction and further spread of COVID-19 in food processing plants.

- A single point of entry
- Verbal screening of all employees and visitors entering the facility with questions covering common COVID-19 symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat and muscle aches
- Daily temperature screening of all employees and visitors prior to entering the facility
- Individuals who answer yes to any screening question or has a temperature greater than 99.5 F are further screened in a private location by staff with medical training
- Secondary screening assessment is methodical, using a form covering illness and exposure history, testing recommendations, and outcome
- Primary and secondary screeners use adequate PPE, and as applicable, maintain social distancing
- A COVID-19 testing strategy is in place, developed in coordination with local public health officials, local medical clinic(s), the plant and MDH

Comments:

## Distancing and Barriers

- Physical and operational changes have been made to allow for physical distancing of 6 feet in all directions between employees throughout the facility, including management office areas
- Where workers wait or congregate, such as to be screened, to punch in, or to perform hand hygiene, 6 feet marks on the wall or floor indicate where to stand
- Start times, break times, and lunch times have been staggered
- Unidirectional flow of personnel has been adopted throughout plant where feasible
- Unnecessary doors or turnstiles have been removed or propped open
- Barriers or partitions have been installed between employees in work areas where 6 feet distancing is not possible, and masks +/- face shields are in used in these areas
- Social distancing has been assured in all wellness areas, and barriers have been installed on break and lunchroom tables
- Additional employee space has been designated for breaks, lunch, lockers, or prayer
- Walk-up windows have been created and protected with Plexiglas barriers for employees needing assistance from human resources, for laboratory coats and other PPE, and other employee needs
- Designated staff monitor employee compliance with distancing
- Transportation, if provided, has been adjusted to increase distancing among riders
- Carpooling
  - Workers encouraged to minimize carpooling to work, when possible
  - The number of people per vehicle is limited, as able
  - Masking recommended for carpoolers
- Cohorting of work teams has been implemented where possible to decrease the number of potential exposures for each person and to simplify identifying possible exposures if a case presents
- If housing is provided, ill persons are separated from well persons

Comments:

## Cleaning and disinfection

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of common contact areas has been implemented throughout the plant. There is a checklist in place to ensure consistency, including high-touch areas such as stair rails, doorknobs, microwave handles, computers, and tools
- Staffing is adequate for frequent cleaning and disinfection of break areas, lunchrooms, bathrooms, and other common areas throughout the facility
- Work stations of ill employees are cleaned and disinfected before reassigning
- Label directions are followed for all cleaning and disinfection products and contact times are observed
- No-touch hand sanitizer dispensers are available throughout facility, particularly at entrance, exits, and transition areas
- Hand sinks are well-stocked with soap and paper towels in no-touch dispensers
- Cleaning of employee break and lunch tables between use is ensured through an indicator system such as a laminated card flipped to red when employee finishes eating lunch to inform cleaning staff that table is in need of cleaning; once cleaned, flips to green side indicating table ready for use
- Adequate ventilation has been ensured. Wherever possible, room air should be exhausted and clean air delivered; if re-circulation is required, this should be done using appropriate filtering (HEPA) or sterilization measures (e.g., UV)

Comments:

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## Personal protective equipment (PPE) and facial coverings

- All employees and essential visitors are required to wear face masks routinely in the facility
- Face shields are used with face masks when supervisors/employees must communicate or work closely together
- Appropriate PPE and PPE training are provided by employer

## FOOD PROCESSING AND MANUFACTURING COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST

- Checklist/instructions posted in multiple languages for putting on and taking off PPE
- Mask usage during carpooling or other transport is encouraged

Comments:

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### Communication

- Information in multiple languages on basic protective measures against COVID-19 are posted

Examples:

- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Handwashing procedures, including after PPE removal
- Staying home when sick and avoiding contact with people who are sick
- Following guidance on self-isolation and self-quarantine
- Social distancing at work and when away from work

Comments:

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### Workforce policies

- Flexible workplace and sick leave policies have been instituted and communicated to all workers
- A no-penalty approach for those taking sick leave has been instituted
- Workers are incentivized properly

## FOOD PROCESSING AND MANUFACTURING COVID-19 BEST PRACTICES CHECKLIST

- Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are in place for actions to be taken if an employee tests positive for COVID-19
  - Plant follow-up for identifying workplace contacts, and excluding them per state guidance
  - Notifying local and state authorities of COVID-positive employees
- Workers are allowed to return to work per state guidance
- A team has been assembled including representatives from the plant, local public health, and the local medical clinic. The team creates a plan for testing symptomatic employees that includes having a release form in place at the test sampling site to ensure that the plant receives results and can perform workplace contact follow-up in real time.
- Plant works with local public health, which can provide housing and needed services for COVID-positive employees or workplace contacts who cannot safely self-isolate or self-quarantine at home.

Comments:



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Contact [health.communications@state.mn.us](mailto:health.communications@state.mn.us) to request an alternate format.

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