



PEF OSH Fact Sheet Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



Information for Workers with Field Assignments

Many PEF members conduct field visits as a part of their jobs. In these instances, there is an increased risk of coming in contact with individual(s) who have symptoms of COVID-19 or is COVID-19 positive.

Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.16 requiring that as of 4/15/20 all essential employees that have contact with the public be provided by their employer (and required to wear) face coverings when in direct contact with customers or members of the public.

PEF strongly encourages members to reschedule visits with known or suspected COVID-19 individuals and will vigorously defend all members who are disciplined for doing so.

The following recommendations are provided to assist PEF members in eliminating or reducing potential exposure to COVID-19.

1. When possible, conduct interviews/check-in via telephone.
2. Be sure to have your employer-provided face cover before going into the field.
3. For inevitable field visits, prior to going to the location, screen the individual(s) with the following questions (Note: the individual(s) should also provide answers to these questions for anyone living in the home or will otherwise be present during the visit):
 - a. Have they returned from international travel within the last 14 days?
 - b. Do they have signs or symptoms of a respiratory illness?
 - Cough
 - Fever
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Sore throat
 - c. Have they had contact with someone with or under investigation for COVID-19 or sick with a respiratory illness?
 - d. Is the location in an area where community-based spread of COVID-19 is occurring?

If the individual answers yes to any of the questions, inform your supervisor and reschedule the visit. **Immediately contact your PEF Field Representative if your supervisor refuses to reschedule the visit.**

4. Upon arrival, practice social distancing by maintaining 6ft separation from the individual(s), whenever possible.
5. If the individual or anyone present at the location exhibits signs or symptoms of COVID-19, leave the premises, contact your supervisor and reschedule the visit.
6. After leaving the site, immediately wash hands with soap and water (for 20 seconds) or use alcohol based hand-sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol).
7. **DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE OR FOOD BEFORE PERFORMING HAND HYGIENE.**

Field visits via vehicle

Recent research indicates that SARS-CoV2, the virus that causes COVID-19, can live on hard surfaces for up to 3 days. Use a disinfectant wipe on commonly touched areas of your vehicle (steering wheel, control knobs, handles, gear shift), between field visits. The vehicle should be thoroughly sanitized at the end of the work day.

Field visits via public transit

The MTA has increased the frequency of cleaning for buses, subways, and railroad Stations. The stations and high touch areas such as turnstiles, handrails, and ticket machines are disinfected twice a day. Trains, cars, and buses are sanitized everyday and the entire active service fleet covered every 72 hours.

Recommended public transit precautions include:

1. Carry travel size disinfectant wipes and wipe down surfaces when possible.
2. Carry travel size hand sanitizer and use it after touching surfaces.
3. If you do touch an item, do not touch your face or food items until you have a chance to wash your hands or hand sanitize.
4. When possible, ride in the least populated subway cars or buses and stand or sit in a lower populated space and move away from people who may be sick.

When you arrive home

- Remove work clothes in an isolated location (garage, laundry room, bathroom, etc.) and place in bag.
- Remove shoes and clean with disinfecting wipes, top and bottom.
- Wash according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Wash or safely discard clothes bag.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces where dirty clothing, linens, and towels were stored prior to washing.
- Wash hands after handling dirty clothes, shoes, clothes bag and cleaning and disinfecting.
- Shower before interacting with your family.

If you have questions on the Coronavirus please reach out to your agency's PEF H&S Chair, your PEF Field Representative or the PEF Health & Safety Department at 800-342-4306 ext. 254 or HealthAndSafety@pef.org

Resources:

PEF

<https://www.pef.org/media-center/covid-19/>

CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

NYS DOH

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

OSHA

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

AFL-CIO

<https://aflcio.org/covid-19>

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

<https://www.new.mta.info/precautions-against-coronavirus>

**Funded in part by a NYS Department of Labor Hazard Abatement Board
OSH Training and Education Grant**

Produced by the New York State Public Employees Federation

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