



## Lower Risk Level Information

Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Program

§16VAC25-220, Infectious Disease Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus That Causes COVID-19

VOSH Outreach, Education and Training

*Under provision §80.F TRAINING - Employers with hazards or job tasks classified at "lower" risk shall provide oral or written information to employees exposed to such hazards or engaged in such job tasks on the hazards and characteristics of SARS-COV-2 and the symptoms of COVID-19 and measures to minimize exposure.*

### **The Characteristics and methods of transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus**

Coronaviruses are named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. SARS-CoV-2" is a betacoronavirus, like MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV. The coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 causes Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. IT IS spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person (inside 6 feet), by way of airborne transmission of respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.

### **The signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 disease**

COVID-19 can affect each person differently, with symptoms ranging from mild to severe. COVID-19 symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Employers and employees need to be able to recognize the most common COVID-19 symptoms. Stay home if you are sick or experiencing any of these symptoms.

**Signs** of COVID-19 include trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.

**Symptoms** include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

### **COVID-19 can be deadly**

People of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19: chronic kidney disease; COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease); immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant; obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher); serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies; sickle cell disease; type 2 diabetes mellitus.

### **The ability of pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 persons to transmit the SARS-CoV-2 virus**

Some infected people may not exhibit signs or symptoms of COVID-19. There is evidence that pre-symptomatic (SARS-CoV-2 detected before symptom onset) and asymptomatic people (SARS-CoV-2 detected but symptoms never develop) can unknowingly spread COVID 19 to others.

### **Worksite safe and healthy work practices and control measures**

Encourage employee self-reporting for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

## Lower Hazard Risk Level Training

Do not permit employees or other persons known or suspected to be infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus to report to or remain at the work site or engage in work at a customer or client location until cleared for return to work.

Avoid physical contact with others (maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet from employees, customers and other individuals). Utilize face coverings or appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (surgical/medical masks or N95 respirators as indicated by hazard assessment) whenever 6 feet distancing cannot be achieved and/or maintained.

Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, if soap and water are not immediately available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and rub hands until they are completely dry

Ensure that frequently touched work tools, equipment, vehicles, and contracted equipment is routinely cleaned and disinfected. Cleaning can be achieved utilizing soap and water. Disinfecting can be achieved utilizing bleach intended for disinfection and has a sodium hypochlorite concentration of 5%–6% or a disinfectant listed on the EPA "N" list.

For cleaning guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

For disinfection guidelines: Utilize the EPA "N" list for products that meet EPA's criteria (or equivalent) for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>

Ensure appropriate respiratory etiquette, cover coughs and sneezes.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth (face in general) with unwashed hands.

Where feasible, ensure proper ventilation and/or increase ventilation rates in shared spaces

Where feasible install physical barriers, clear plastic (Plexiglas). Display signage on the worksite detailing hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, and PPE requirements on your worksite aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19 at your worksite.

### **The Anti-discrimination provisions of this standard in §90**

No person shall discharge or in any way discriminate against an employee because the employee has:

- exercised rights under the safety and health provisions of this standard Title 40.1 of the Code of Virginia, and implementing regulations under 16VAC25-60-110 for themselves or others.
- voluntarily provided and wears their own personal protective equipment, provided that the PPE does not create a greater hazard to the employee, or create a serious hazard for other employees.
- raised a reasonable concern about infection control related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus and COVID-19 disease to the employer, other employees, a government agency, or to the public such as through print, online, social or any other media.

### **Employees' right to refuse unsafe work**

See §16VAC25-60-110 for requirements concerning discharge or discipline of an employee who has refused to complete an assigned task because of a reasonable fear of injury or death.