



## **Guidance for Michigan Agri-Businesses to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19**

*April 14, 2020* – During the past several weeks, the Michigan Agri-Business Association has heard from many of our members who have taken decisive steps to safeguard the health and safety of their employees and customers. This is critical, because keeping people safe and preventing the spread of the Coronavirus will help us get through this situation more quickly.

State leaders have emphasized that businesses remaining open need to take every precaution to guard against the spread of the virus.

Governor Whitmer’s [Executive Order issued April 9](#) (the updated “Stay Home” order) says businesses that continue in-person work must adhere to sound social distancing practices and measures, which include but are not limited to:

- Developing a COVID-19 preparedness and response plan, consistent with recommendations in OSHA’s [Guidance](#) on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19, and making the plan available at company headquarters or the worksite. *(For those with existing pandemic response plans, those are a good place to start. MABA has assembled a list of CDC and OSHA-recommended items below that could help you lay out a plan.)*
- Restricting the number of workers present on premises.
- Promoting remote work to the fullest extent possible.
- Keeping workers and patrons who are on premises at least six feet from one another to the maximum extent possible.
- Increasing standards of facility cleaning and disinfection.
- Preventing workers from entering the premises if they display respiratory symptoms or have had contact with a person with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.
- Any other applicable social distancing practices and mitigation measures recommended by the CDC. (See below.)

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the impact in their workplace. This is going to depend on the type of business you lead, the number of locations and employees you have, the type of services you provide, etc.

In addition to the steps outlined above from the Governor’s Executive Order, here are some areas you may wish to think about, document and communicate to employees. These are largely derived from guidance issues by the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and [OSHA](#):

- Ensuring employees are educated about the basic best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Straightforward guidelines are [here](#) and [here](#).
- Providing remote (“curbside” or virtual) services.

- Requiring regular hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs. Workers should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.
- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces.
- Identifying a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the workplace.
- Determining how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from school.
- Performing enhanced environmental cleaning and disinfection of facilities.
- Implementing protocols to screen employees and visitors prior to the entrance to company facilities.
- Directing critical deliveries to facilities to designated delivery areas.
- Promoting remote work wherever possible and restricting the number of workers present on-site.
- Discouraging workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.

**Employees (non-healthcare) who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 should not return to work until:**

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since symptoms have resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications, and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, **and**
- at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, or since the first positive COVID-19 test, if tested.

**Finally, we encourage you to think about communication!** Be sure to communicate the measures you are taking to your employees, if you have not done so, and update them whenever you can. Keep in mind that many people are under stress right now, both from the uncertainty of the situation and for more acute reasons – such as acquaintances they may know who are sick, or family members working in first responder and high-risk roles. Communicating proactively and offering to answer questions is one way to help everyone through this situation.

MABA is always available to help you to the best of our ability. We also welcome hearing from you about the measures you have put in place to safeguard employee health and safety. This helps us communicate about the industry's leadership on this critical issue.

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