



# Pandemic: COVID-19 Essential Maintenance/ Utilities Guidance

## Work Guidance Document

This document outlines methods to be used by essential maintenance and utilities personnel working around others during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### APPLICABILITY

This document can be used by UT Austin Facilities Services, Project Management and Construction Services, and Utilities and Energy Management personnel when working on campus during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. This document does not apply to healthcare providers or custodial personnel working in healthcare facilities.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Department Supervisors

- Implement the guidance outlined in this document within departmental/institute operations.
- Use appropriate judgement concerning the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) when work activities and location prevent compliance with social distancing requirements.
- Ensure employees are not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat) prior to each shift. Instruct employees that when feeling unwell they must not report to work and they will be advised to call their personal healthcare provider for guidance. Inform employee to call the healthcare provider first to prevent spreading possible infection to clinic waiting rooms. If thermometers become available, employees will be directed to take their temperature, and if it exceeds 99.6oF, they will be sent home and advised to seek medical guidance from their personal healthcare provider before returning to work.
- Communicate to all employees methods for limiting transmission found in "Healthyhorns" communications on the University Health Services (UHS) website.
- Allow employees to exceed the minimum PPE guidance found in this document.

#### Employees

- Implement and follow minimum working protection found this document.
- **Self-monitor for signs and symptoms of illness including COVID-19. Utilize the UHS website for specific COVID-19 information.** Employees are encouraged to take their temperature at home. If the temperature exceeds 99.6oF, the employee must stay home and seek medical guidance. Call or e-mail your supervisor.
- **Immediately report when sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to supervisor.**
- Stop work if social distancing cannot be maintained and unsafe conditions need to be corrected. If unsafe conditions cannot be corrected, contact supervisor.

## Environmental Health & Safety (EHS)

- Provide information and technical assistance regarding safe work practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Below are the work practices that must be followed at all times to comply with social distancing practices:
  - » Maintain at least six feet between yourself and coworkers.
  - » If possible, do not use other workers' phones, desks, computers, or offices. If use is needed, follow cleaning instructions provided separately for shared workspace.
  - » No employees shall ride together to and/or from work locations in carts (unless they are open-air) or vehicles (unless the windows are down) in order to maintain social distancing requirements.
  - » Frequently wash hands for at least 20 seconds, or, if a sink is not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% to 95% alcohol. Take this step:
    - After removing PPE.
    - Before eating or drinking.
    - Before touching eyes, nose, or mouth.
    - After touching common surfaces.
  - » Practice respiratory etiquette: sneeze or cough into your bent elbow or tissue. Immediately dispose of tissue and wash hands or utilize hand sanitizer.
  - » Clean shared tools and equipment before and after each use.
    - Disinfect with a diluted bleach solution, alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol, or EPA-registered household disinfectant.
      - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
      - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
        - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) household bleach per gallon of water, or
        - 4 teaspoons household bleach per quart of water.
- When employees must work within six feet of each other, pre-task planning is required. If a task requires employees to work closely for a prolonged period of time and activity is strenuous, it will likely produce more than typical respiratory droplets. Then consideration by the supervisor for additional PPE is warranted. (See PPE section below.)
  - » Situations may arise where a brief and momentary encounter occurs between employees conducting work (e.g., handing someone a required tool on a ladder). Pre-task planning must include methods for maintaining social distancing when unplanned situations occur that challenge social distancing requirements. This must include a stop work process for employees.
  - » Employees must be instructed that an appropriate transfer of materials between employees (wearing gloves) is for one employee to place an item down at a distance of greater than six feet for the other employee to retrieve, all while maintaining six-foot social distancing between each.
  - » When all potential solutions for maintaining social distancing are exhausted, employees are limited to these conditions: (1) must be reported to supervisor; (2) must be done by using the maximum distance to achieve the reason for encroaching on social distancing requirements (e.g., longest stretched arm to another person); (3) avoiding face to face contact where breathing zones become common; and (4) time frame is limited to seconds, not minutes.

- » Work outside. If not possible, consider the following controls:
  - Install high-efficiency particulate air filters in the area when feasible.
  - Increase ventilation rates in the work environment when feasible (e.g., adjust AHUs, introduce fans).
  - Implement the use of PPE when required by pre-task planning.
- » Report any contact with foreign bodily fluids or PPE failures to supervisor immediately. Supervisor will note this via e-mail to management.
- » When social distancing is not maintained:
  - Keep a log of all persons assigned to this type of work/activity.
  - Install physical barriers such as poly sheeting between employees when feasible.
- When performing work activities, employees must stop work if unexpected or unplanned conditions arise that jeopardize compliance with social distancing requirements or requirements established during pre-task planning.

### **PPE** (to be determined by supervisor based on work activity and location)

- If social distancing is maintained, then additional PPE is not required.
- Each department is responsible for designating appropriate supervisor(s) to make PPE determinations.
- Clothing protection: Work uniforms or overalls that have been tested and passed the requirements of ASTM F1670 and ASTM F1671. Employees must not wear uniforms home.
- Gloves: Nitrile (double glove).
- Respirator (use requirements provided below):
  - Types of acceptable respirators include: N-95, R/P95, N/R/P99, or N/R/P100 filtering face-piece respirator; an air-purifying (e.g., half-face or full-face) respirator with appropriate filters or cartridges; powered air purifying respirator (PAPR) with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter; or supplied air respirator (SAR).
- Employees must be clean shaven.
- Employees must follow the Respiratory Protection Program, which includes:
  - Medical evaluation.
  - Fit testing for the respirator used.
  - Required training.
- Eye protection: Goggles
- Face shield

### **OTHER REQUIRED SUPPLIES:**

- Log for people working together and body temperatures of workers
- Bleach/alcohol wipes or cleaner
- Hand washing area and hand sanitizer