

# Sustaining Workplace Operations

## Department of Public Works Annex

COVID-19

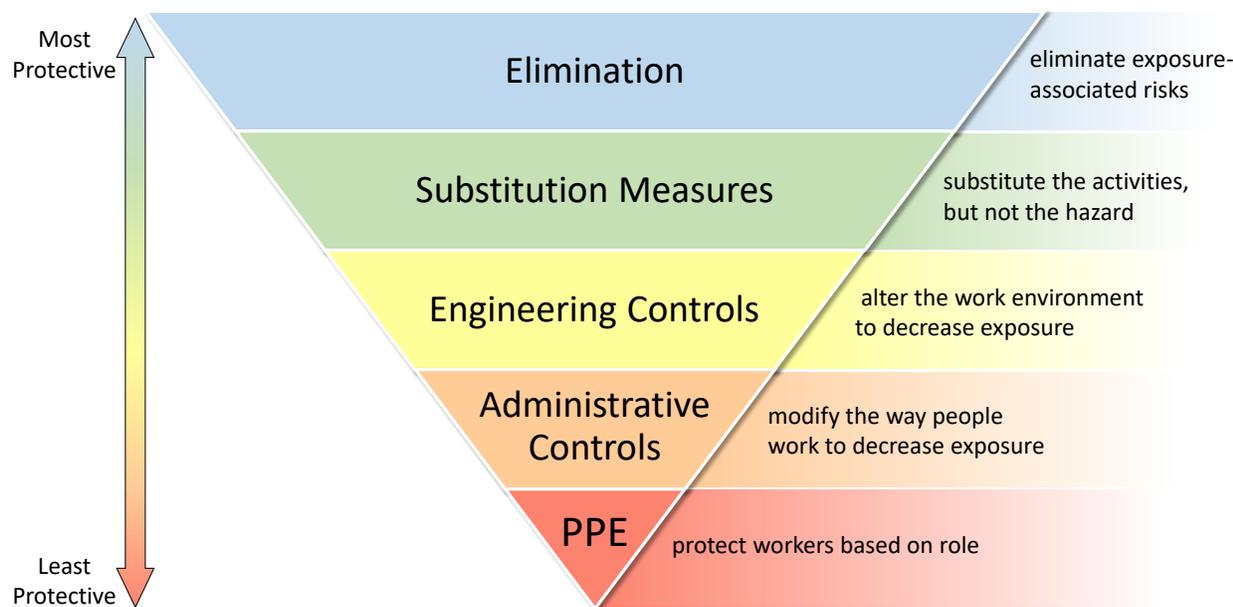
This document customizes the COVID-19 hierarchy of controls presented in the Sustaining Workplace Operations for Department of Public Works (DPW) operations. These controls may need to be further customized to suit the specific locations where they are employed. If the facility contains more than one type of work environment, see the appropriate annex(es).

Refer to the Building Readiness Guidance Annex for procedures to ensure all building systems are ready for re-occupancy.

Refer to the Administrative Areas Annex for office spaces and for general information on control measures such as alternate schedules, personal hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection of surfaces.

Refer to the Army Public Health Center (APHC) Technical Information Paper (TIP) on heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) for further information on adjusting building HVAC systems in relation to COVID-19. The APHC website has other COVID-related guidance that can be used for many DPW operations.

Figure 1. **COVID-19 Hierarchy of Controls for Workplace Operations**



*Adapted from NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls*

Minimizing the risks to the mission and ensuring the health, safety, and protection of the Army workforce and partners are priorities as the Army returns to full operations. The reopening of Installations should be conducted in a thorough and thoughtful manner, accounting for several factors before employees are allowed to return. Additionally, consideration for the comfort of employees as they return to work is essential, as many may express concerns for their safety and well-being.



**For current COVID-19 information:**

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/covid19>

<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

**The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7:**

Call 1-800-874-2273 option #1

or visit <https://www.health.mil/I-Am-A/Media/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance>

**For more information, contact your installation's Department of Public Health**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Army Public Health**

**The Army COVID-19 Information Hotline:**

1-800-984-8523

Overseas DSN 312-421-370

Stateside DSN 421-3700

Leadership should work with Contracting Officers and Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) to ensure contractor employees who provide DPW services adhere to the workplace access restrictions. Contractor employees should discuss any implementation questions or concerns with their contract team lead and their employer.

An assessment checklist template is provided in Appendix 1, “Draft Checklist for DPW Operations.”

## **Elimination:**

Elimination of disease transmission risk will require the development and broad distribution of an effective vaccine. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be nearly impossible to eliminate exposure risk while performing most required DPW functions.

## **Substitution:**

Substitution traditionally replaces the hazard with a less hazardous item or substance. In regards to the current COVID-19 pandemic, substitution is the ability to substitute the activities, but not the hazard. An example of substitution is only having essential personnel on-site to perform required missions, while keeping the rest of the workforce in telework status.

## **Engineering Controls:**

For detailed COVID-19 guidance on HVAC systems and indoor environmental quality issues, see the Sustaining Operations Building Readiness Annex and the Measures to Modify Building HVAC for Health and Comfort during the COVID-19 Pandemic TIP.

For guidance on administrative areas, see the Sustaining Operations Administrative Annex.

Assess high-touch surfaces for possible modifications to lessen the potential for disease transmission (addition of foot stops for doors). Identified modifications should be made before personnel return.

Additional engineering controls that should be utilized within DPW spaces:

- Consider physical barriers at reception desks and employee workspaces, if proper social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Personal cooling fans should be removed from the workplace to reduce the potential spread of airborne or aerosolized viruses. If fans are removed, employers should remain aware of, and take steps to prevent, heat hazards. If fans, such as pedestal fans or hard-mounted fans, are used in the facility, take steps to minimize air from fans blowing from one worker directly to another.

## **Administrative Controls: Communication with DPW Staff**

- Anticipate a hesitant and potentially uncomfortable workforce. Prior to reopening, consider implementing flexible work schedules, staggering work shifts/hours, and work-from-home options.
- Communicate with employees regarding measures utilized to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., disinfection routine and health and safety measures in place), ensuring employee concerns are heard, understood, and addressed.
- Establish formal and informal routes of communication for employees to express concerns, ask questions, submit comments, and provide feedback. Platforms for communication can include emails, texts, automated phone calls, websites, and signage.
- Communicate that leadership may limit office hours and close-off or prohibit public access if needed. Installation support services offices that are not able to eliminate public access, should consider a communication strategy to limit access and inform installation personnel of reduced operating hours.
- Consider special circumstances that could prevent or impact personnel from returning to the workplace (e.g., school and childcare closures, employee's need to care for ill family members, COVID-19 risk status of employee's household members, availability of public transportation, vanpool, or carpool). Consider allowing supervisors the flexibility to address the needs of individuals on a case-by-case basis.

## Administrative Controls Specific for DPW-Owned Spaces: Social Distancing

- Explore alternate work schedules, telework, staggering work shift/hours, performing work when facilities are unoccupied or lightly used.
- Limit numbers of employees performing tasks within one area to the minimum numbers of employees required.
- Use fixed teams to reduce numbers of contacts.
- Actively discourage use of DPW conference rooms. As an alternative, use virtual meeting tools, including phone and virtual teleconference, in lieu of in-person meetings, whenever possible. If in-person meetings must be held, practice social distancing measures according to public health guidelines.
- Regulate the use of DPW common areas with clear signage (e.g., maximum occupancy) and social distancing measures according to public health guidelines.
- Complete a task-based review/mapping of the DPW areas to determine best strategies for maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet between persons.
- Separate individual workstations to maintain proper social distancing between employees.
- Employees should wear face coverings whenever social distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings should not be required for employees who work alone in a separate, single occupancy space or when doing so would pose a safety or security risk. Face coverings are not to be used in place of other required respiratory protection.
- Do not share pens, clipboards, or other tools. If tools are shared, ensure they are cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Clean all shared equipment (e.g., stationary power tools) before and after each use.
- Modify break times and areas to allow for social distancing.
- Remove chairs as needed to maintain social distancing.
- If possible, set up outdoor break areas with weather protection and seating spaced to maintain social distancing.
- Limit the number of people riding in government-owned vehicles.
- Eliminate non-essential visits. Essential visits should be by pre-arrangement only and should take place in a dedicated, isolated space if available.
- Inform all essential visitors in advance to wear face coverings, to abide by social distancing requirements when on-site, and to refrain from shaking hands.
- Maintain a daily visitor log. Record the date, time, and contact information for every visitor, as well as the person(s) or location(s) being visited.

## Additional Cleaning and Disinfection Measures

Employees should receive, at minimum, awareness training on cleaning and disinfection products used in the workplace in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration Hazard Communication Standards. For employees who will use cleaners and disinfectants, training should also include proper use, personal protective equipment (PPE) if required, proper disposal, and all precautionary measures.

- Ensure disinfection protocols follow product instructions for application and contact time.
- Provide hand sanitizer in government-owned vehicles for employee use.
- Develop a post-use disinfection protocol for government-owned vehicles.
- Eliminate sharing of tools or equipment where possible. Develop a disinfection protocol for equipment or tools that must be shared.
- Clean and disinfect tools, including any electronic devices, after each service visit.
- Consult with manufacturers of electronic equipment for proper disinfection procedures.
- Stop employees from unnecessary travel between shops, floors, and buildings to reduce the possibility of cross-contamination.

## General Hygiene

- Train employees on proper workplace hygiene practices including:
  - » Washing hands upon arrival to work, as well as after touching any common contact surface, one's face or face cover, after coughing or sneezing, after using the restroom, before eating, and when leaving work.
  - » Washing hands by scrubbing using soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
  - » Proper respiratory etiquette, to include covering one's nose, mouth, and face cover when sneezing or coughing.
- Encourage staff to wash uniforms/clothing daily.

## Face Covers

- Face covers are not PPE.
- Do not place face coverings on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the covering without assistance.
- Clean hands with soap and water or a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol before and after putting on the face covering.
- If the face cover is properly worn, the nose, mouth, and chin are covered. Ensure the areas around the nose, sides, and chin are tight, but do not restrict the ability to breathe.
- Avoid touching the face covering. Remove by grasping the elastic ear bands or by untying. Do not touch the front of the covering.
- Launder face covers daily with warm water and regular detergent.
- Personnel who are unable to wear face coverings should contact local occupational health officials for further guidance.

## Administrative Controls Specific for DPW On-Site Work: Communication with Occupants

- Prior to an on-site visit, provide the building coordinator with the actions being taken by DPW to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Allow additional lead time for the building coordinator to disseminate these actions to the building occupants and to prepare any necessary additional precautions.
- Perform as much of the pre-work consultation as possible before arriving to the site (e.g., have the customer send pictures or more detailed information).
- Arrange with the building coordinator, if possible, to have occupants located elsewhere while DPW work is executed. If relocation is not possible, occupants should wear face covers or maintain appropriate social distance.
- Conduct any additional on-site communication outdoors whenever possible while maintaining social distancing.
- Request, upon arrival and departure, that the occupant open the door and step back 6 feet from the door before the service provider enters or exits the residence.
- Implement procedures to avoid customer contact with the service provider (e.g., if a signature is required from the occupant, have the occupant use their own pen).

## General Procedures for DPW Staff During On-Site Visits

- Wear face coverings and task-specific PPE.
- Minimize contact with common high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, faucet handles, light switches) and perform hand hygiene as needed.
- Use additional disposable barriers where appropriate and feasible (e.g., plastic sheeting for covering the occupant's floor or table in the work area).
- Carry out all trash and waste using a plastic sealable bag.

## Cleaning and Disinfection during On-Site Visits

- Establish a cleaning and disinfection standard operating procedure (SOP) for on-site visits.
- Provide employees with cleaning agents and disinfectants that are compatible with surfaces contacted during the on-site visits. Consult the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) List N for disinfectants approved for use against COVID-19.
- Prior to disinfection, thoroughly clean surfaces touched.
- Ensure cleaning and disinfection SOP follows product instructions for application and contact time of disinfectants.
- If vacuuming is required, use a HEPA vacuum cleaner.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for DPW Staff:

- Ensure employees are trained on proper use and limitations of PPE.
- Continue to supply employees with task-specific PPE.
- Conduct training for appropriate donning and doffing, as well as disposal procedures for PPE.
- Employers should consider providing infographic sheets to employees as a visual reminder of appropriate donning and doffing techniques for PPE.

## References and Resources:

American Industrial Hygiene Association, Back to Work Safely: <https://www.backtoworksafely.org/>

APHC TIP 98-113-0420 – “Measures to Modify Building HVAC for Health and Comfort during the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

APHC Website: <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/pages/default.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2003. Guidelines for environmental infection control in health-care facilities. Recommendations of CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). Late updated 2019

CDC. 2020. Cleaning and disinfecting your facility. Retrieved 17 April 2020 from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

State of California. 2020. COVID-19 Industry Guidance – Manufacturing. Retrieved 10 June 2020 from: <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-manufacturing.pdf>

## Appendix 1: Draft Checklist

### COVID-19 Department of Public Works Operations Checklist

Date:

Building:

Building POC:

Assessor Name:

This is a draft checklist to be modified by the assessors to ensure that locally determined COVID-19 mitigation measures have been considered and implemented

<b>ENGINEERING CONTROLS</b>	Yes/No/NA
Physical barriers where needed (e.g., reception desk)	
Partitions between desks and work stations	
Check HVAC for buildings and shops	

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS</b>	
<b>General Guidance</b>	Yes/No/NA
Adjust schedules and shifts for reduced occupancy	
Make modifications to desks or work stations for social distancing	
Close or alter use of common areas (e.g., conference rooms, break areas)	

<b>Communication Guidance</b>	Yes/No/NA
Develop communication programs specific for each service (e.g., on-site, shops, administrative areas)	
Ensure staff have been prepared to communicate with clients	
Post guidance throughout DPW buildings	
Use a variety of platforms to communicate COVID-19 mitigation measures (e.g., social media, email correspondence, mailings)	
Develop training for employees on COVID-19 related topics, as needed	
Communicate facility-wide changes (e.g., work lines, procedures, work shifts, breaks, restrooms, change rooms, entrances, clocking in and out, movement through the facility)	

<b>Social Distancing Requirements</b>	Yes/No/NA
Explain where and when face coverings are required	
Detail how buildings will operate under a reduced-capacity model to ensure social distancing	
Note how the flow of people into and around buildings will change	
Utilize one-way passageways	

Dedicate entrances and exits	
Detail maximum kitchen occupancy	
Note breakroom use and occupancy	
Describe conference/huddle room use and occupancy	

<b>Personal Hygiene</b>	Yes/No/NA
Enforce handwashing and/or hand sanitizing:	
– At facility entrances	
– After restroom use	
– Upon facility departure	
Provide 60% alcohol hand sanitizer throughout the facility	
Review proper cough and sneeze etiquette, to include covering the nose, mouth, and face	
Avail adequate supplies of handwashing soap, towels, and 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer	

<b>Other Building Changes</b>	Yes/No/NA
Reconfigure areas to meet social distancing requirements	
Remove chairs to allow for proper social distancing	
Restrict visitors and change policies to reflect changes	
Change shipping and receiving policies and procedures	
Restrict in-person meetings	
Discourage lingering in common spaces	
Restrict elevator occupancy and post signage in and around elevators	

<b>CLEANING &amp; DISINFECTION CHECKLIST</b>	
<b>Availability of Cleaning and Disinfecting Supplies:</b>	Yes/No/NA
Disposable gloves	
Paper towels	
Cleaning solution	
Disinfectant (EPA N list as per CDC guidance)	

<b>Common Areas</b>	Yes/No/NA
Clean and disinfect high-touch areas* in these common spaces:	
Lobbies	
Breakrooms	
Kitchens	
Vending areas	
Elevators	
Stairways/Stairwells	
Exterior doors	
Restrooms	
*High-touch areas include door handles, drawer handles, faucets, light switches, buttons, appliance handles, etc.	

<b>Work Stations</b>	Yes/No/NA
Clean and disinfect work stations and the below equipment at least once a day/once per shift:	
Keyboards	
Control panels	
Switches	
Hand tools	
Seats	

<b>Restrooms/Showers/Locker Rooms</b>	Yes/No/NA
Operate restrooms, locker rooms, and showers according to the Installation's HPCON level	
Ensure signage and materials are available regarding proper hand washing	
Ensure signage is available noting guidance to close toilet lids prior to flushing, as applicable	
Open/close doors without touching handles	

<b>Custodial Services</b>	Yes/No/NA
Review and revise building custodial services as needed	

<b>On-Site Services Checklist</b>	
<b>Availability of Cleaning &amp; and Disinfecting Supplies:</b>	Yes/No/NA
Disposable gloves	
Paper towels (for site and vehicle)	
Cleaning solution (for site and vehicle)	
Disinfectant (EPA N list as per CDC guidance) (for site and vehicle)	
Garbage bags	
Task-specific PPE	
Client hand-outs explaining COVID-19 policies	
Hand sanitizer	