

# Managing COVID-19 in the Workplace

Last Updated: March 11, 2020



## What is the Coronavirus?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain not been previously identified in humans.

## What are Symptoms?

Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

## How is it spread?

- **The virus is spread mainly from person-to-person contact** between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- **Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.** These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or inhaled into the lungs.
- **Spread from contact with infected surfaces or objects** that have the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes (this is not the main way the virus spreads).

## What Should You Do if You Are Sick with Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Call ahead to a healthcare professional if:

- **You develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness**, such as cough or difficulty breathing.
- **Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.**
- **You live in, or have recently traveled to, an area with ongoing spread.**
- **Your healthcare professional will work with your state's public health department and the CDC** to determine if you should to be tested for COVID-19.

## Prevent Infection Spread:

- If you have early symptoms of respiratory illness or flu-like symptoms, **please stay home until you are free of a fever of 100.4°F or greater and other symptoms have subsided.**
- If you become sick during the day, **please notify your supervisor and go home.**
- **Always cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.** If no tissue is available, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder.
- **Wash or sanitize your hands with alcohol-based sanitizers or soap and water, frequently.**
- **Use a tissue when touching door handles** and other surfaces in common areas.
- **Avoid touching your face and rubbing your eyes.**
- **Limit or discontinue handshakes during this period** and use alternative greetings.

## High-Touch" Cleaning Recommendations to Prevent Infection Spread:

- **Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day.** High touch surfaces include: counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables.
- Also, **clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.**
- **Use a household cleaning spray or wipe**, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product.

## Additional Safety Resources

For questions, please contact AGC of California's Safety & Health Council liaison, Kate Mergen  
mergenk@agc-ca.org | 714-497-6163

Please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for more information about the flu and coronavirus.