

## **COVID-19 CONTRACTOR GUIDANCE FOR CONSTRUCTION JOBSITES**

In response to the public health emergency for the COVID-19, Governor Andrew Cuomo has declared a State disaster emergency and temporarily suspended or modified laws that would prevent, hinder, or delay action necessary to cope with the disaster or emergency. The Governor has also issued directives to allow for the expansion of certain services including those relating to emergency procurement, and to facilitate the continued work of essential businesses subject to compliance with mandatory directives for safety best practices and social distancing. The purpose of this guidance is to set forth the recommended best practices and social distancing requirements for contractors performing work at State University of New York construction sites in the context of the COVID-19 health crisis.

### **Contractor Responsibilities**

Under your contract with the Campus,

- Contractors and their subcontractors are required at all times to guard the safety and health of all persons on and in the vicinity of the work site
- Contractors and their subcontractors are required to comply with all applicable rules, regulations, codes, and bulletins of the New York State Department of Labor and the standards imposed under the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, as amended (“OSHA”)
- Contractors and their subcontractors are also required to comply with all contract safety requirements
- Contractors and their subcontractors must comply with all City or State of New York safety requirements for projects within the City or State of New York constructed in accordance with the applicable building code, and contractors are required to provide written safety plans for the site showing how all safety requirements of applicable law will be implemented for the duration of the contract.

Contractors and their subcontractors must also adhere to the following practices to help prevent exposure and spread of COVID-19. The following recommendations are based on what is currently known about COVID-19. Contractors and their subcontractors are advised to stay current and immediately implement the most up-to-date practices to protect the safety and health of your employees, clients, and the general public.

General Responsibilities:

- Contractors and their subcontractors should educate their employees on the symptoms of COVID-19, which include cough, fever, trouble breathing, and pneumonia. Contractors and their subcontractors must instruct any employee who feels they may have any of the above symptoms to refrain from reporting to the jobsite and immediately contact their

health care provider and the local health department in the county in which they reside. Contact information for local health departments can be found at [www.health.ny.gov](http://www.health.ny.gov).

- If the employee begins to exhibit these symptoms while in the workplace, steps should be taken to remove the individual from the workplace. Using safe social distancing practices, provide the employee with a surgical mask and instruct them to put it on, self-transport themselves home, and to contact their health care provider and inform the local health department. The Contractor must notify the contracting agency/authority.
- Personnel should be advised to self-quarantine in accordance with the requirements of the New York State and local health department. Contracting agencies/authorities reserve the right to require any employee of the Contractor, and their subcontractors exhibiting symptoms, to be removed from the jobsite
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19 infection, contractors and their subcontractors should inform fellow employees, who have been in contact with this employee, of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace while maintaining confidentiality as required by applicable New York State and federal law. The fellow employees should then self-monitor for symptoms (i.e., cough, fever, trouble breathing, and pneumonia) and self-quarantine in accordance with the requirements of the New York State and local health department
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, Contractors and their subcontractors should direct the employee to self-quarantine **and** remain quarantined for 14 days, following the guidance of New York State and local health department
  - Contractors and their subcontractors may permit such employee to return to the jobsite when this employee produces a negative COVID-19 test or receives medical clearance to return to work
- If an employee tests negative for COVID-19, contractors and their subcontractors may direct the employee to return to work after recovery from their illness. Any direct contacts on pre-cautionary quarantine may return to the jobsite and resume their work activities.

#### Social Distancing:

- Do not host large group meetings or congregate in large groups. When meetings are necessary, maintain a distance of 6-feet between people.
- Perform any tool box or other training maintaining the distance of 6-feet between people.
- Perform meetings online or via conference call whenever possible
- Only essential personnel should be permitted on the jobsite
- Discourage handshaking and other contact greetings

#### General Jobsite Practices

- Procedures and supplies should be in place to encourage proper hand and respiratory hygiene.

- Hand hygiene:

Signage with handwashing procedures should be posted in prominent locations promoting hand hygiene

- Regular handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
  - Before and after eating
  - After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing
  - After using the restroom
  - Before handling food
  - After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated
  - After using shared equipment and supplies; and also
  - Whenever a contractor or subcontractor believes it is necessary
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Respiratory Hygiene:
  - Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of elbow
  - Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use
  - Where possible, have disposable masks available to cover an employee's mouth and nose if they develop symptoms on the job to protect others from exposure.
- Practice routine environmental cleaning and disinfecting of all frequently touched surfaces on the jobsite. This includes work stations, project trailers and offices, portable toilets, countertops, handles, doorknobs, gang boxes, tools and equipment. See OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19. [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)
- Appropriate cleaning agents and directions should be utilized to perform all cleaning. Ensure all workers are trained on the hazards of cleaning chemicals used in the workplace and comply with all OSHA requirements regarding same in accordance with the Hazard Communication (Global Harmonization) Standard. Information about <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- Do not use a common water bottle
- If using a common water cooler clean dispenser knob after use
- Do not share tools
- Utilize personal protection equipment (PPE) for the job being performed
- Sanitize reusable PPE per manufacturer's recommendation prior to each use
- Do not share PPE
- Ensure used PPE and other trash is disposed of properly
- Utilize disposable gloves where appropriate and instruct workers to wash hands after removing gloves
- Disinfect reusable supplies and equipment
- Don't stack trades, if possible

- Stagger work schedules to minimize the number of people on a job site at any one time.
- Keep one contractor or subcontractor in an area at a time. Indicate an area is occupied with workers with a sign or flag indicating which contractor or subcontractor is in the area at that time. Remove the sign or flag after completion of work in that area to let others know they may then enter into that area to perform their work. The next contractor or subcontractor will then post their sign or flag to notify others that the area is occupied.
- Minimize the number of workers in an area as much as possible by using indicators of an occupied area (signs or flags) scheduling work activities to stagger those required to be in any one time to a minimal number of workers.
- Minimize entryways into a work area so that employees will be able to observe flagging practices described above. Do not reduce the number of emergency exits.
- Avoid cleaning techniques, such as pressurized air or water sprays that may result in generation of bioaerosols

The Campus may request an updated written safety plan for the site to address practices to help prevent exposure and spread of COVID-19 at the jobsite pursuant to New York State, OSHA recommendations and Centers for Disease Control requirements, which include:

- Assessment of potential worker exposure hazards, taking into account the specific recommendations and controls for the four levels of worker exposure risk identified in OSHA's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 (i.e., very high, high, medium, and lower)
- Evaluation of exposure to risk;
- Selecting, implementing, and ensuring the use of controls (i.e., social distancing appropriate personal protective equipment, hygiene, and cleaning supplies);
- Minimizing the number of workers in an area as much as possible by using indicators of an occupied area (signs or flags) and scheduling work activities to stagger those required to be in any one area to a minimal number of workers.
- Minimize entryways into a work area so that employees will be able to observe flagging practices described above. Do not reduce number of emergency exits; and
- Additional criteria consistent with health and safety practices at the work site.

Project Closure:

- Where work is suspended on a project, contractors are directed to follow any additional project shut-down protocols as provided by the campus.

For additional resources:

OSHA COVID-19 Resources

OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

DOL COVID-19 Resources

Interim Guidance for Business and Employers

Centers for Disease Control -- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>