

Alaska Division of Forestry Area COVID-19 Mitigation Plan and Standard Operating Procedures Southwest Area Forestry



May 11, 2020, Version 1

Southwest Area Forestry
COVID-19 Mitigation Plan and Standard Operating Procedures

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Introduction

This plan is specific to one of the State of Alaska's Division of Forestry's Areas. This is a tiered plan in line with: 1) Wildland Fire Response Plan COVID-19 Pandemic maintained by the Alaska Wildland Coordinating Group; 2) Alaska Division of Forestry COVID-19 Handbook; and 3) the Area Plan. The tiered directives assume a standard that the highest level of instruction or mandate prevails.

This is a dynamic plan developed to assist employees and supervisors to navigate the rapidly changing COVID-19 environment. This manual is subject to change when new guidance is released from the Fire Management Officer, AK Division of Forestry, AK Department of Health and Social Services, Center of Disease Control, National Interagency Wildland Fire Coordinating Group, or other Public Health Authority.

To slow the spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the State of Alaska issued several health mandates/alerts under the authority of the Public Health Disaster Emergency Declaration signed by Governor Mike Dunleavy.

[HEALTH MANDATE 11](#): Social Distancing. All persons will remain at their place of residence and practice social distancing except for those engaged in essential services. Maintain six feet spacing or greater from any individuals with whom you do not reside. Any individual who exhibits symptom of illness must not leave their home. Individuals shall cease participation in public or private gatherings that include non-household members. Employers will take reasonable precautions to ensure the health of their employees.

[HEALTH MANDATE 12](#): Intrastate Travel. All in-state travel between communities is prohibited unless travel is in support of essential infrastructure or is necessary for critical personal needs.

[HEALTH ALERT 10: Face Coverings](#)

- Wear a cloth face covering in public and where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Employees will have PPE in their possession and readily available at all time, including a Fluid Barrier Kit, rubber gloves, hand sanitizer, and face mask.
- Employees are required to wash their hands often, including when entering offices/facilities and after visiting public places.

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Medical and Mental Health Services for Employees*

Public Resources

- Careline Crisis Intervention 877-266-HELP, or text “4 help” to 839863, www.carelinealaska.com
- State of Alaska COVID information line – dial 2-1-1 or 800-478-2221, email Alaska211@ak.org

ASEA Health Benefits Trust (GGU)

- Teladoc 800-TELADOC, www.teladoc.com
- Employee Assistance Program, Lifeworks at 877-234-5151, www.lifeworks.com

Alaska Care (SSU)

- Teladoc.com/Aetna, 855-835-2362
- Employee Assistance Program, Aetna 855-417-2493

Local Clinics and Health Care Facilities

- Limited Employee testing is available for first Responders at the McGrath Medical Clinic.
- The McGrath Clinic requires a phone screening interview prior to administering any Covid-19 testing. 907-524-3299
- Non-Symptomatic Individuals will not be provided a test.
-

*See DOF Handbook for additional Employee Wellness Resources.

Employee Screening

All personnel are strongly recommended to undergo a screening process daily to check their health on a routine basis, both objectively and subjectively. This applies to all Employees on DOF premises including vendors that can access facilities and have contact with our staff.

The goal is a culture where a “Health and Safety Minute” is a routine part of every day. Your “minute” can include safety stand downs on a rotating basis, giving personnel time intervals to make an individual health report and decontaminate all work equipment and supplies. At a minimum, personnel should perform their health survey at the start of their shift. The results should be captured, and abnormal findings reported, anyone who develops symptoms during their shift should report these to their supervisor immediately.

Suggested items to include:

- Date/Time
- Temperature - Recorded fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Symptoms such as: fatigue, felt feverish, chills, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, runny nose, headache, diminished sense of taste or smell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, conjunctivitis.

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Please follow the process below without exception as you report for work:

1. Individuals that are sick should stay home. Please call your supervisor to keep them informed and to discuss sick leave options. When you are better, call your supervisor before returning to work.
2. For all buildings, every door is an exit, but there is only one dedicated entrance.
 - a. Each door should be signed with instructions on how to proceed into the facility.
3. Section leads will be responsible for ensuring that screening areas are properly marked and readily available for work area/building.
4. At the beginning of each work day, employees entering the work site are strongly recommended to complete a screening and self-check at the designated location to determine if “sick” or “not sick.” They must notify their section lead verifying that they have completed a self-check. The Supervisory staff should:
 - a. Designate an entry point and screening location for incoming employees to enter the work area.
 - b. Establish a process wherein employees reporting for work enter and are screened one at a time in a controlled fashion.
 - c. The Section Lead or their designee is responsible for ensuring that employees arriving at work follow current out-of-state travel guidelines (See State of Alaska Mandates) and the screening symptom criteria listed below.
<https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-mandates/>
 - d. Complete log for each employee that is kept confidential.
 - e. Temperature screening/Other Symptoms screening:
 - i. To be performed with an oral thermometer or infrared thermometer that is designated solely for that task. The thermometer should be decontaminated after each use.
 - ii. Fever is defined as 38 °C / 100.4 °F (or higher).

General Base Wide Operations

- Wash hands immediately upon entering buildings on the compound. Hand sanitizer will be provided in buildings without running water.
- Avoid close proximity PT, PT outside if possible.
- Make all efforts to conserve PPE (gloves, etc.) and cleaning supplies (paper towels, wipes, etc.).
Example: Use rags and/or bleach solution instead if possible.
- Clean all surfaces after you use them & periodically throughout the shift.
- Wash all handles and common surfaces at the beginning and end of shift and periodically throughout the day (vehicles, doorknobs, copiers, radios, drawer, and cabinet handles, etc.)
- Personal Storage spaces will be kept clean and doors closed.
- Wash Nomex clothing after contact or suspected contact with potential contamination sources. Contain and launder the clothing separately from other items.
- The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

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Daily Briefing

- Daily briefings will be held at 1000hrs and will be conducted using the Microsoft Teams platform or phone/radio conferencing. Shop leads will ensure all available personal are in attendance using cell phones, I-Pads, office computers or handheld radios.

Dining Facility

- The McGrath dining facility will follow the most current Alaska Governor's Mandates addressing restaurants and communal dining.
- The Facility will be open to dining hall and maintenance employees only.
- Dining Hall Staff will continue to implement existing sanitary food handling protocols with the addition of a cloth face mask.
- All meals will be served on a "to go" basis and an advanced notice procedure will be implemented for employees to request their meals.
- Meals will be served at designated times and delivered to predetermined drop-off/pick-up points located outside of the Dining Facility.
- The Dining Facility will be locked and secured outside of regular duty hours.

Warehouse and Warehouse Office

- The Warehouse and Warehouse Office will be open to Warehouse Employees and Maintenance Department Employees only.
- Warehouse supply orders will be requested using a paperless format whenever possible.
- Orders will be filled by Warehouse Employees only and delivered to predesignated drop off points for pick up.
- Returned gear and equipment will be labeled with the accounting code(s), inventoried and placed in the designated warehouse receiving area located outside of the Warehouse. (Hot Zone) Warehouse items will be left untouched for 72 hours and sanitized/decontaminated prior to being returned to service or re-stocked in the Warehouse.
- Warehouse employees will utilize required COVID-19 PPE when handling all returned items or any warehouse item that are suspected or confirmed to be contaminated.

Fixed Wing Ramp

- Virtual briefings will be utilized whenever practical.
- Air Crews are permitted to stand by in their assigned quarters and will report directly to their aircraft with minimal person-to-person contact.
- Access to Aircraft will be restricted to essential personnel only. Non-essential personnel will not be transported using assigned aircraft unless authorized by the Area Fire Management Officer (FMO)
- Minimize the use of shared aviation equipment and clean before and after use.
- Avoid large group gatherings of agency employees, incident personnel and aircrew personnel.
- Consider waivers for existing Aircraft Span-of-Control Management ratios.
- Utilize and provide pre-approvals for incident personnel extensions to 21 days.
- Consider allowing Vendors to stage at their home bases with an approved delayed response time.
- Consider hiring aircraft on a "Less than 24" contract and having them complete mission objectives using a Point-to-Point strategy to bypass any additional human contact.

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- All assigned Aircraft will be decontaminated after each flight according to Established Vendor Protocols.
- All assigned Aircraft will be decontaminated after any maintenance.
- Incoming Smokejumpers assigned to McGrath will self-isolate as a group and remain within the confines of the DNR compound, the Fixed Wing Ramp and the “Smokejumper Shack” located on the Ramp.
- In the event that an aircrew member or passenger display identified COVID-19 symptoms, the aircraft will be placed out of service until properly decontaminated and will not be returned to service until approved by the appropriate maintenance inspector.
- All Fixed wing Vendors will abide by specific COVID-19 protocols established by the CDC, FAA and their individual companies.

Helibase

- Virtual briefings will be utilized whenever practical.
- Air Crews are permitted to stand by in their assigned quarters and will report directly to their helicopter with minimal person-to-person contact.
- Helibase/Helicopter Managers will seek opportunities to provide unscheduled days off as opportunities present themselves in order to reduce flight crew rotations.
- Access to Aircraft will be restricted to essential personnel only. Non-essential personnel will not be transported using assigned helicopters unless authorized by the Area Fire Management Officer (FMO)
- Minimize the use of shared aviation equipment and clean before and after use.
- Avoid large group gatherings of agency employees, incident personnel and aircrew personnel.
- Consider waivers for existing Aircraft Span-of-Control Management ratios.
- Utilize and provide pre-approvals for incident personnel extensions to 21 days.
- Clean and decontaminate each helicopter between flights according to Vendor protocols and FAA direction.
- Substitute internal cargo operations for external cargo operations where appropriate, efficient and safe.
- All assigned Aircraft will be decontaminated after any maintenance.
- In the event that an aircrew member or passenger display identified COVID-19 symptoms, the aircraft will be placed out of service until properly decontaminated and will not be returned to service until approved by the appropriate maintenance inspector.

(Please see attached Vendor protocols from Pathfinder Helicopters for specific direction.)

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Best Practices for Use of InfraRed (IR) Thermometers

Safety Precautions:

- Use only in ambient temperature range from 50° F and 104° F.
- Do not touch glass covering the IR lens with your fingers.
- Clean glass with cotton swab and 70 proof isopropyl alcohol.
- Do not use device outside or expose to sunlight.
- Only use alkaline batteries.
- Avoid impacts to device such as dropping or hitting.
- Ensure setting is in “Body Mode.”
- Take measurement immediately upon activation.
- Use on forehead over the right temporal region at 2 inches.
- Squeeze trigger once and temperature will be displayed in one second.
- Clear hair from forehead and wipe away perspiration from forehead.
- Avoid any airflow (heaters, air conditioning).
- Allow one minute between measurements.
- Device needs to acclimate for 15 to 20 minutes prior to use if used outside ambient temperature range.
- Females can have a higher temp based on menstrual cycle or pregnancy of +0.9 F°.

Oral/IR Thermometer Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance

- ****Clean and Disinfect After Each Use****
 - Cleaning and Disinfecting if Oral Thermometer with Probe
 - Wipe the thermometer and probe with a Department-approved disinfectant, or with a cloth dampened with a 1:10 sodium hypochlorite (bleach) solution or 70% or greater isopropyl alcohol solution as the active disinfection ingredient.
 - **Caution:** DO NOT immerse or soak the thermometer or probe in any type of fluid. **Caution:** DO NOT use steam or heat on the thermometer or probe.
 - Remove the probe well from the unit. Unplug the latching probe connector to prevent the device from consuming battery power while you are cleaning the probe well.
 - Clean the inner surface of the probe well by swabbing the surface
 - Clean the probe well's outer surface by swabbing or wiping the surface with one of the solutions mentioned above.
 - **Caution:** DO NOT use hard or sharp objects to clean the probe well. This could damage the probe well and cause the unit to not function properly.
 - **Caution:** DO NOT use steam or heat on the probe well.
 - Thoroughly dry all surfaces before re-assembling the instrument.
 - Re-connect the latching probe connector to the thermometer. Ensure that the connector snaps into place.
 - Re-install the probe well in the thermometer and snap the probe well into place.
 - Insert the probe into the probe well.

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- 5. If an employee has one or more of the following symptoms, have them immediately leave the location and return to their vehicle to wait for additional instruction from their Supervisor:**
 - a. A recorded fever of 38°C / 100.4°F (or greater), or they have experienced symptoms in the past 24 hours that could represent fever, such as unexplained chills.
 - b. A condition causing an employee to have episodes of sneezing, or nose blowing not controlled by simple over the counter medication or patient's own prescription.
 - c. Sore throat associated with fever.
 - d. An uncontrolled cough such that the employee is likely to cough when among colleagues or a cough lasting more than two weeks and not under the care of a health care provider.
 - e. New onset or ongoing common cold or influenza-like illness (such as fever and cough, or shortness of breath).
 - f. Any diarrhea associated with an acute illness.
 - g. Body aches and pains of a presumed infectious cause.

- 6. If an employee is "sick" and/or becomes symptomatic during the workday:**
 - a. They need to immediately notify their Supervisor and go to their personal vehicle to wait for additional instruction. (If employee does not have their personal vehicle at work, they should wait in a designated location, isolated from encountering others)
 - b. The supervisor (Section Lead or designee) for affected personnel will be notified and will contact the FMO or available leadership staff.
 - c. The employee should anticipate being sent for testing and then go home to self-isolate until further notice.

- 7. By reporting for duty and completing the screening, each employee affirms to the on-duty Supervisor (Section Lead or Designee) that they do not have any of the symptoms listed above.**

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Employee Testing

- If an employee is sick and it is determined that they need to be tested for COVID-19, please have the employee work with their supervisor prior to calling for testing.

Supervisors: Determining Risk for Exposure

In the setting of COVID-19, employee screening provides a critical role in determining the risk of exposure for all personnel in the workplace.

There are two key categories for screening all personnel:

- **Travel history:** Where has the employee or their crew/team members travelled? Is it a “high-risk” area in or outside the State of Alaska? Have they travelled in the last 14 days? Has the area been designated by DHSS as a known COVID-19 “hotspot” location? Has the employee been in close contact with someone with Covid-19? (within 6 feet for 10+ minutes)
- **Sick Employee:** Does the employee have any respiratory symptoms—i.e., shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing? Does the employee have a fever, cough or cold symptoms? Does the employee have diarrhea, loss of appetite, or abnormal sense of taste/smell? Has the employee developed sudden onset on conjunctivitis with other potential Covid-19 signs and symptoms? See Appendix A for checklist.

Employee Testing for COVID-19

- Area Offices should seek out their local resources (Health Care, Clinic, etc.) and determine which provider is most suitable for their needs. Services may vary; for example, some may require a physician’s referral, while others offer a simple triage or questioning process to access their testing services.
- First Responders are given priority access to testing. Some testing providers may provide an alternative test series for first responders who do not have signs and symptoms or known exposure. The intent is to narrow down the quarantine window for employees who have travelled from 14 days to a shorter period of approximately 3-6 days.
- Other items of consideration to ask a provider are: How many people can they test at one time, what is the process for registration, and what is the billing process?
- Once you have identified and established a viable resource for testing your employees, please provide that information to the Statewide Safety Officer, Tom Greiling in order to develop a list for statewide access to these resources
- ***Before contact with any potentially sick employee, Supervisors should wear at a minimum a face mask, preferably an N-95 standard.***

Negative Screening/Testing:

If employee screens **negative** for exposure or symptoms, plan for employee to safely go home and self-isolate until return to work criteria are met.

Positive Screening/Testing:

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- Assure the employee that their privacy and personal health information is kept confidential.
- If employee screens **positive** for exposure or symptoms, you will need to notify appropriate personnel and follow local protocol for self-isolation.
- Advise supervisor to determine the potential for exposure of co-workers.
- If the employee is symptomatic and in the workplace, provide the employee with a mask and ask them to promptly leave the workplace and to seek medical care. See Appendix A, COVID-19 Exposure Precautions for Transport of Employees.
- Contact local testing site and, if needed, transport employee for testing. If the employee can drive themselves, they may do so, but regularly follow up with them.
- If delay in transport or care occurs and patient shows urgent signs/symptoms, contact 911 and transport patient immediately.
- If the employee reveals that they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are asymptomatic, provide the employee with a mask and ask them to promptly leave the workplace and contact supervisor for further guidance.
- Inform other co-workers of the potential exposure without revealing the identity of the employee.
- Advise employees to monitor their health for the next 14 days and stay home if they develop symptoms.

High risk Considerations:

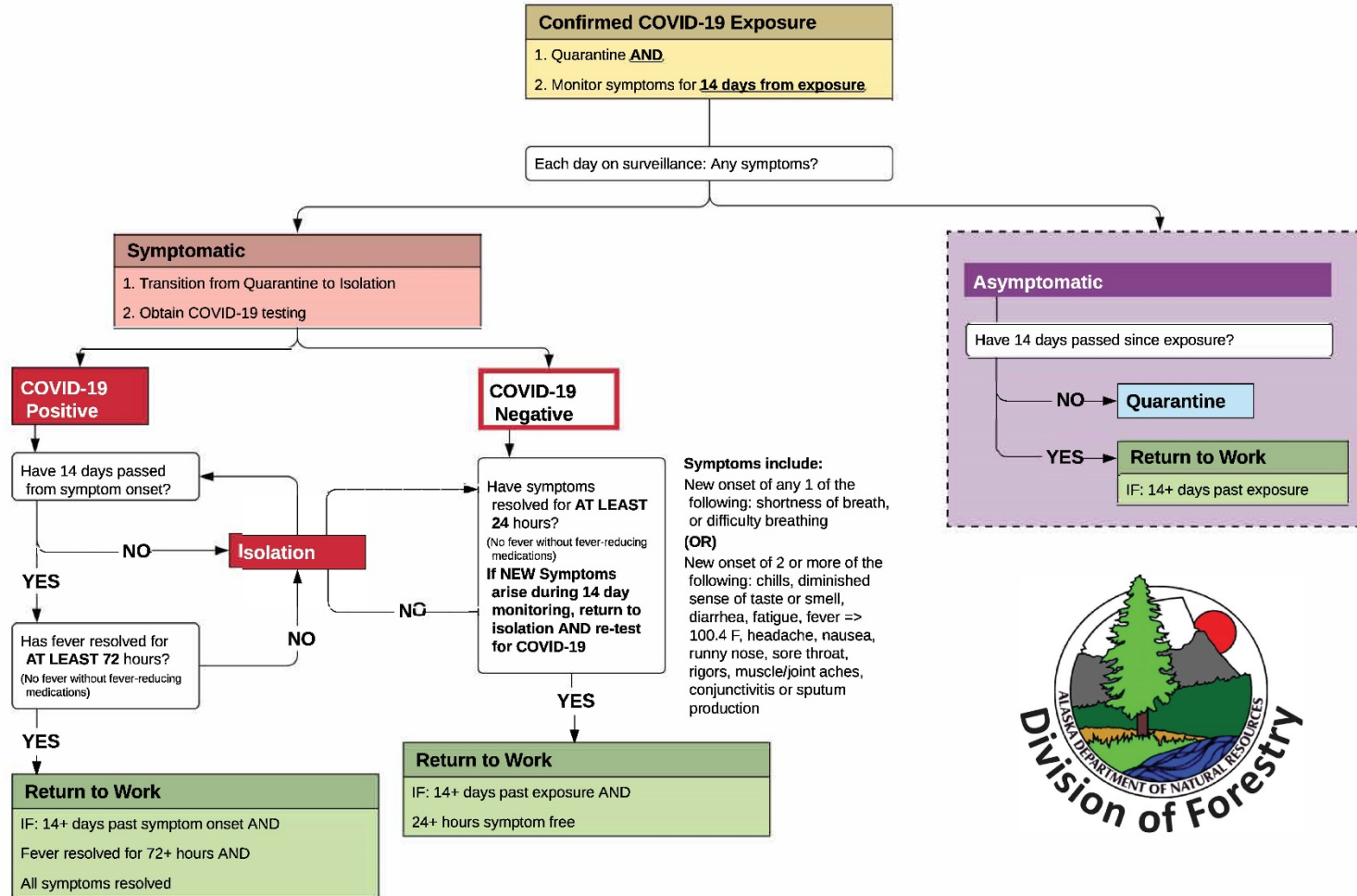
DOF recommends that people at higher risk of severe illness work remotely if possible and practice social distancing in large groups of people as much as possible. People at higher risk include those:

- over 60 years of age,
- with underlying health conditions (heart disease, lung disease or diabetes),
- with weakened immune systems, or
- who are pregnant.

PPE protections are recommended, including cloth face coverings. If you are concerned about access to or type of PPE that is being recommended for your work, talk to your supervisor.

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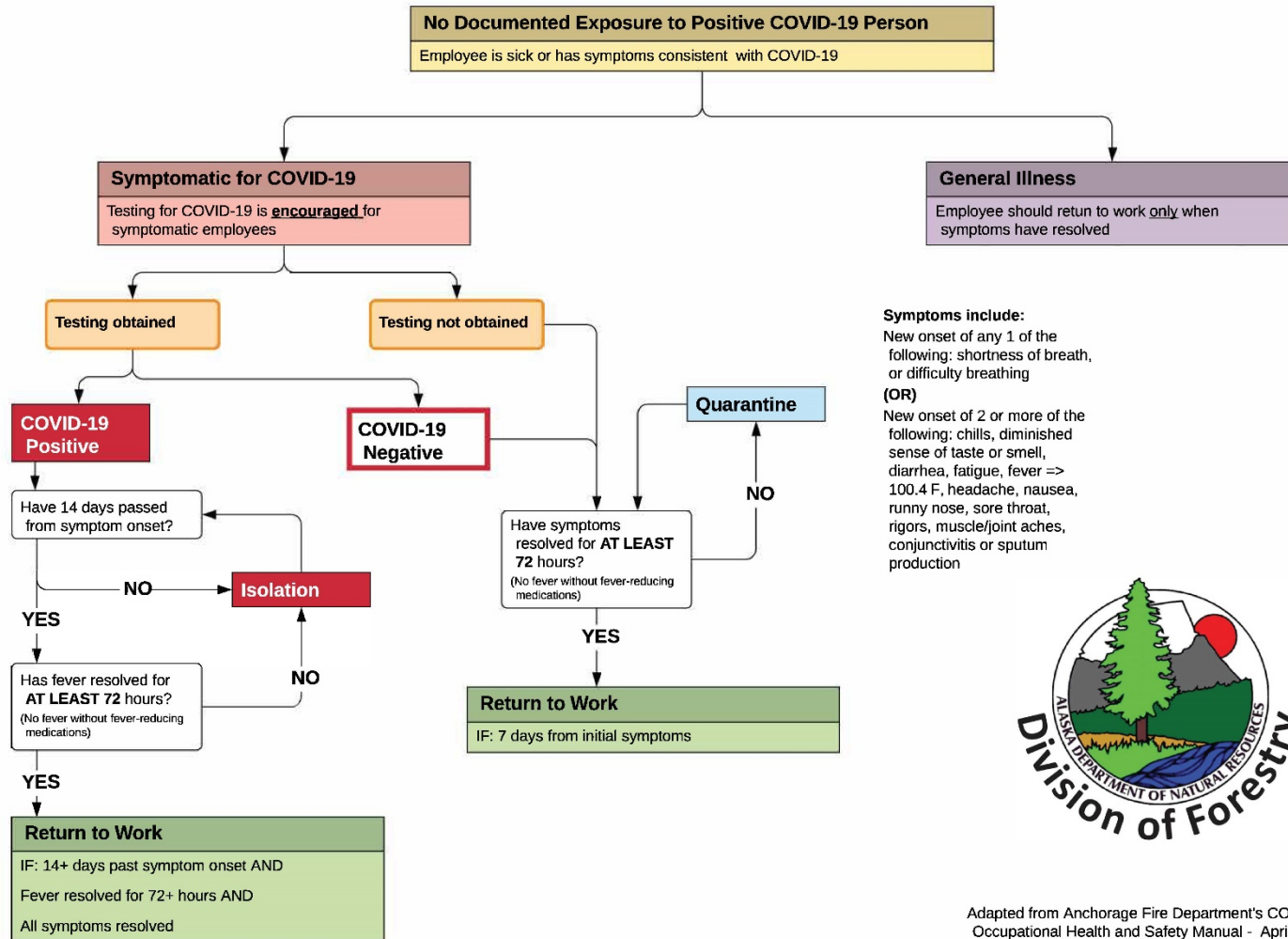
Returning to Work after Confirmed Exposure and Quarantine



Adapted from Anchorage Fire Department's COVID-19 Occupational Health and Safety Manual - April 15, 2020

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Returning to Work - Symptomatic Employees with No Documented Exposure



Adapted from Anchorage Fire Department's COVID-19 Occupational Health and Safety Manual - April 15, 2020

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Cleaning and Sanitation

High traffic areas/surfaces in workspaces, assigned equipment (offices, vehicles), and restrooms will be cleaned (soap) and then sanitized (1:32 bleach solution) twice a day. Toilets, sinks, showers, and portable wash stations will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. Computer workstations and desk phones will be sanitized after each use. Warehouse or store-bought items should be cleaned and sanitized before use.

Guidelines for using 1:32 bleach solution for sanitizing:

- Secondary containers need to be clearly marked. MSDS sheets must be readily available.
- 1:32 bleach solution = 1/3 cup per gallon, or 4 teaspoons per quart, or 0.5 oz. per 32 oz. Solutions should be mixed in small quantities daily.
- Never mix chemicals. For instance, bleach and ammonia can cause serious injury.
- Wear PPE and follow manufacturer's instructions.

Personal items (dishes, bath towels, food, shoes, clothing, personal gear) are not to be left unattended in high traffic areas (bathrooms, kitchen, shared offices). Personal items will be kept clean and put away in lockers or desks when not in use. Communal food practices or sharing of food (potlucks, candy bowls, pizza, etc.) is to be discontinued.

Facilities Access

Access to the fire management facilities is limited to on-duty personnel and others conducting essential business. Unauthorized or unessential personnel are not allowed into the buildings. Off-duty employees are not allowed on-station without approval from their supervisor, duty officer, or FMO.

On-duty employees will utilize phone calls, emails, and teleconferencing as preferred methods of communicating and conducting business. Employees will minimize time spent in other's workspaces. Access to the showers and kitchen in the operations building is through the front door only. The weight room will be used by no more than two people at a time and equipment will be sanitized after each use. Employees will have access to the facilities one hour before and after their scheduled shift.

Incident Management

- Employees will conduct a self-check prior to mobilization, and will not mobilize if symptomatic.
- Units will be self-sufficient for the duration of travel to and from incidents and will have enough supplies of food, drinking water, and cleaning supplies.
- Maintain appropriate social distancing at check-in, briefings, in supply lines, in sleep areas, and at eating facilities. Avoid sharing tools, water, radio, etc.
- Limit mop-up and employee exposure to smoke.
- Conduct an after-action review (AAR) after each incident.

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Operations

Daily Staffing

To the greatest extent possible, crews/modules will remain the same for 7-14 days. Backfilling of crewmembers is discouraged. The number of occupants and time spent traveling in vehicles and aircraft will be kept to the minimum necessary to safely complete assigned tasks. If a crewmember (flight crew, module) shows symptoms of COVID-19, place the vehicle or aircraft out-of-service until properly sanitized.

Time spent on-station will be kept to a minimum. Resources should depart the station immediately after receiving daily assignments and return no sooner than one hour prior to the end of the shift.

Daily staffing sheets will be posted on front and back door of Ops. First-out resources (engine, helitack) will remain on base. Supplemental IA resources (2nd out resources) will be assigned off-station duties (fuels projects, staging) to the greatest extent possible. The daily Operations briefing will be broadcast over mobile radios and online platform (MS Teams, Zoom, etc.).

Additional staffing considerations:

- Utilize cooperator/contract engines and restricted helicopters for additional IA support.
- Provide portable toilets, wash stations, and temporary shelters to provide additional space for employees to meet self-distancing guidelines.
- Set up staging areas at secure locations around the response area. EQPM, STAM, BCMG to assist with tracking vehicles, night security, and expanded facilities (dispatch, parking, equipment inspections).

Engine Operations

- Extended patrols in the Southwest Area to keep engine crews in the field.
- All engines will be provided with a hand sprayer to disinfect before and after work shifts.
- Reduce the number of occupants in vehicles/aircraft and time spent traveling. A face mask will be worn when more than one occupant is in the cab of the engine.
- Taking engines home at night will be considered if necessary.
- Engines will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. This includes the fuel card, keys, hand tools, personal gear, and all compartments.
- Line gear and personal gear will be stored in assigned engines for the duration of the 14-day staffing assignment. They will not be moved in and out of offices daily.
- All engines will be outfitted with a 48 oz. multipurpose hand sprayer to disinfect before and after use.

Helitack Operations

Reduce the number of occupants in the aircraft and time spent traveling. Minimize transporting non-essential personnel. A face mask will be worn when social distancing guidelines are difficult to maintain. Use of shared equipment (flight helmets) will be minimized.

Helitack personnel will disinfect tools and equipment at the beginning and at the end of shift. The contractor will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the aircraft after each mission.

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Additional staffing considerations:

- Allow the pilot and mechanic to isolate themselves in quarters during periods of extended staffing.
- Allow flight crews to overnight at same location.

Agency Crews

- Schedule squads on a stagger schedule.
- Crew Superintendent will develop alternatives for assigning additional vehicles to increase separation of personnel (16 passenger van for 5-6 personnel).
- Set up work camps at project work sites that can house the crew for 14-day assignments in remote areas. Crew will come prepared to operate for the duration of 14-21 days without support from home unit.
- Crew will be encouraged to bring lunch and dinner from home and avoid making unnecessary trips to the store.

Type 2 Crews

- Pre-employment screening: have you traveled? Do you have symptoms? Have you been self-isolating? Have you been in contact with an infected person?
- Utilize Type 2 modules with 7-8 crewmembers. Assign 1-crew cab pickup and a 16-passenger van.
- At a minimum, one IA Technician will be assigned per module/squad, and at least one IA Technician as CRWB or squad boss.

Project Work

- Prescribed fire projects are cancelled for the season as directed by the Chief of Fire and Aviation.
- Various on-base and timber resources projects are available.

Dispatch

Daily Staffing

Dispatchers will work from home for as long as possible. When working from home is no longer a safe firefighting option, dispatchers will work a rotating schedule in the office to provide 7-day coverage and cover the hours between 0800 and 1630 (or later due to extended staffing). When fire activity begins, all dispatchers will be in the office if safe social distancing allows. Desks will be moved to allow for 6 feet spacing or partitions will be placed if desks cannot be moved.

If detailers are needed for high fire activity, a preference will be given to dispatchers already in Southwest then within the state of Alaska. If detailers are needed to be brought up from the L48 they will be placed at a station furthest away from other workers as a quarantine situation.

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COOP Plan

If Dispatch is compromised, IA would be moved to another office that is not affected. If both are compromised, IA would be done from a neighboring center or on a limited basis from home via handhelds.

In the event we need to evacuate an office due to COVID-19, the Southwest Area will implement the following guidelines.

With minimal activity and ordering:

- Employees with telework agreements will be asked to work from home if they have internet capability. If not, they will be assigned work that does not require internet.
- Employees will be assigned a dispatch function or other work as appropriate.
- Personnel may be required to physically be in the office for incident support as determined by the Lead or designee.
- All doors to the main dispatch building will remain closed and locked and access will be only granted to those who are mission critical as determined by the Lead or designee.

During typical fire season with incident activity (a determination by management):

- Southwest Area will staff as appropriate to meet incident needs and work with the area FMOs in determining essential personnel.
- All doors will remain closed and locked and access will be only granted to those who are mission critical.

In the event of a Dispatch employee testing positive for COVID-19 the following will be implemented:

- Employees in the building that was infected will be instructed to telework while the office is sanitized.
- During this time, if incident activity warrants staffing, the FMO will determine the appropriate minimal staff size needed to accomplish our mission.
- No access to Dispatch will be granted to anyone other than Dispatch Staff.
- All Employees within Dispatch will monitor health and relay and symptoms to the Lead.

In the event the Area needs to be shut down due to COVID-19 the following will be implemented:

- Employees will telework from home if activity allows.
- If during typical fire season and incident activity, the Lead will work to find space in other offices per our COOP. If both are affected, IA will be done from home or a neighboring Dispatch will be asked to cover radio traffic.
- This may also involve procurement (rental) of computers, phone lines, etc. commensurate with incident activity and staffing needed.

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Administration

Daily Staffing

- If the Area Office is compromised all essential admin functions will be done at a neighboring center or done by teleworking.
- If detailers are needed for high fire activity, a preference will be given to EFF already in area, then within the state of Alaska. If detailers are needed to be brought up from the L48, they will be placed at a station furthest away from other workers and the station will be sanitized twice daily.
- The general public will only be allowed in the front lobby of the DNR building. Whatever section the public has business with will be notified and they will conduct all business in the front lobby.
- To ensure social distancing is maintained within the admin office, workstations may be rearranged in anticipation of bringing on EFF.
- All workstations, phones, copiers and front counter will be disinfected at least twice a day when the office is staffed

Regular employees

- Submit all travel documents, receipts and timesheets to include signed CTRs if applicable to [Tina Clifford, tina.clifford@alaska.gov](mailto:tina.clifford@alaska.gov)
- Receipts for purchases related to COVID-19 should have "COVID-19" and appropriate code (preparedness or fire number) written on the receipt.

EFF Crew / Squad

- 2020 EFF hiring packets will be posted on Mat-Su Area shared drive.
- Single resource EFF will be provided a 2020 EFF hiring packet and the direct supervisor will make copies of I-9 required documents and will email a complete hiring packet with Resource Order to [Tina Clifford, tina.clifford@alaska.gov](mailto:tina.clifford@alaska.gov).
- Hiring of EFF crews / squads will be done in groups no larger than 10 people to include the admin and the Crew Boss/Squad Boss
- Crew bosses will distribute all hiring packets and obtain copies of all required I-9 documents. Once the hiring packets are complete the crew boss will return the packets to the admin that is present.
- The hiring packets will be audited, any corrections will be requested through the CB / SB.
- Written instructions on the CTR and OF-288 submission processes will be given to all single resource EFF and the CB/SB.
- Crew Time Reports and OF-288s:
 - IA EFF will submit signed CTR daily.
 - Crew Boss or Squad Boss will be responsible for their crew or squad's CTR submissions.
 - The Area Office will generate OF-288s at the end of each pay period or upon Demob.
 - Finance will email OF-288 to direct supervisors or leads. It is the responsibility of supervisor to obtain the employee's signature and submit signed OF-288 through our submissions email before payroll deadline.

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- The CB / SB will be provided OF-288s for the crew / squad. Each employee will sign and return their OF-288 to the CB /SB.
- The CB / SB will submit the signed OF-288s through email or OF-288 packets will be returned to Area Office.
- Copies of submitted OF-288s will be available to each EFF upon demob
- Detailers will still check-in at Southwest Admin office upon arrival. They will be given a copy of the Southwest Area Forestry COVID 19 Mitigation Procedures. Leads need to ensure that each detailer have been apprised of all State of Alaska health mandates concerning Covid 19.

Training

New Employees

New Employees will be required to complete the Work Capacity Test (WCT) and submit a **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)** and **Informed Consent**. Sharing of packs will be avoided. Participants will be encouraged to use their own pack.

Basic Fire Fighter Training will utilize online self-study NWCG and FEMA courses. Students will receive daily contact and mentorship from the course coordinator/lead instructor. Fire Shelter training should be conducted using standard fire shelters that no longer meet service parameters or a practice fire shelter as a one-person, one-time use. Field exercises and all other course activities will adhere to Health Mandates.

Returning Firefighters

Work Capacity Tests are suspended for 2020. Upon submission of a **Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)**, the fitness level (light, moderate, arduous) attained in 2019 will be input for 2020. Employees will be credited for the Fireline Safety Refresher upon submission of the (FAS) **RT-130 WFSTAR self-study worksheet**. Cooperators and EFF will submit an **EFF Application, IQS Information sheet, and Health screen Questionnaire, and RT-130 WFSTAR self-study worksheet** prior to being issued a red card.

Course Delivery

- Online Self-study - OSHA (Safety Hub), CEVO, A-110, IS-100, IS-700, and Basic Firefighter training.
- Online delivery - S-131, S-270, FI-110
- Field delivery of S-212 and S-212 as needed.

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References

State of Alaska

[COVID-19 Home Page](#)

[COVID-19 Health Mandates](#)

[COVID-19 Resources for State of Alaska Employees](#)

[Alaska Coronavirus Response Hub \(maps and stats\)](#)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

[Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#)

[Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#)

[What to Do If You Are Sick](#)

[Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Setting](#)

[Print Resources: fact sheets](#)

National Wildland Fire Coordination Group

[Best Practices for Aviation Operations](#)

[Infectious Disease Guidance for Wildland Fire Incidents](#)

[Standards for Aviation Operations in Response to the Coronavirus Disease](#)

Definitions

Close Contact: The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).

Exposure: Employee close contact with patients, co-workers, family members and others who are symptomatic of illness and/or suspected of, tested and pending results, or laboratory confirmed with COVID-19 infection. Levels of risk exposure are categorized as High, Medium, Low and No Identifiable Risk with employee use of PPE or lack of.

Isolation: Off work employee who is symptomatic or is laboratory-tested positive COVID-19 and under Public Health Order to be isolated from others. Location may be at home or an AFD-designated site.

Quarantine: Off work employee who is asymptomatic and under AFD work restrictions or Public Health Order to self-monitor and follow social distancing while on work restriction. Location may be at home or an AFD-designated site.

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Recommended: Advised or suggested course of action.

Required: Deemed essential and/or instructed or expected course of action by an official authority. (Such as a Director, Commissioner, Governor, or President)

Self-Isolation: Employee has symptoms and is voluntarily isolated from others.

Self-Monitor: Employee monitors them self for symptoms; including taking a temperature twice a day, using social distancing, and other infection preventative and control measures.

Work Restriction: Employee not at work, quarantined, and must self-monitor for symptoms. Length of work restriction determined by CDC, DHSS, AHD, or AFD guidance.

Essential Governmental Functions - includes all services needed to ensure the continuing operation of government agencies including to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Critical Infrastructure - includes businesses providing any services or performing any work necessary to the operations and maintenance of public works, such as the Port of Alaska, public works construction, airport operations, water, sewer, gas, electrical, oil production, mining, logging, roads and highways, public transportation, and solid waste collection and removal.”

Quarantine - Quarantines are for people or groups who do not have symptoms but were exposed to the sickness. A quarantine keeps them away from others, so they do not unknowingly infect anyone.

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Appendix A

COVID-19 Exposure Precautions for Transport of Employees

Types of transportation:

- Incident Medevac
- Post-treatment transportation (Tested Negative for Covid-19) from hospital to mob center/airport/home/duty station
- Confirmed COVID-19 exposure/positive Covid-19 test results

Incident Medevac

Transportation for Urgent or Non-Urgent Medevacs from incidents will follow the standard process for declaring an emergency, reporting via the Medical Incident Report on the appropriate command channel. All patients will be assessed and treated on the incident as if they are a potential risk for Covid-19 Exposure, which will allow for the highest risk mitigation strategy. We don't have the ability to test employees for Covid-19 on the incident, so they will not be confirmed positive or negative in the field. Lack of testing must NOT delay treatment or transport for any patient. Appropriate safety and screening measures will be employed by all medical personnel on the incident to provide the highest level of protection to everyone involved. Suggested recommendations to follow to create a low-risk environment for potential exposure of others involved in Medevac:

- Keep at least six feet from the patient unless you are directly involved with patient care.
- Everyone that cannot keep a six-foot distance or will be in close quarters with the patient should wear a cloth or surgical face mask.
- The patient should also be wearing a face mask if possible.
- N95 masks are reserved for trained medical personnel only.
- Do not touch outside of mask or face as they are "dirty."
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitizer immediately following the transport.
- With proper PPE in place and effective risk mitigation, the risk for exposure remains low.

Post-treatment transportation (tested negative for Covid-19) from hospital to mob center/airport/hotel/duty station:

When employees must be transported from an incident to a health care facility, and/or to a mob center/airport/hotel/duty station after treatment, they will be within 6 feet of the pilot or driver of a vehicle or aircraft. Absent symptoms of COVID-19, established PPE (face masks, eye protection and gloves) should be worn by pilots and drivers as feasible, according to CDC requirements and DOF policy. The patient should be wearing a cloth/surgical face mask if possible during the entire transport. The transportation process should be as follows:

- Wear appropriate PPE (face masks, gloves and eye protection).
- Do not touch outside of mask/goggles as they are "dirty."

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- Have patient sit in rear of vehicle if possible, with cross ventilation. Do not re-circulate air.
- Advise patient to perform hand hygiene, patient dons a clean face mask.
- Notify receiving health care facility/quarantine location point of contact.
- Clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces door, seatbelt, etc. after patient exits the vehicle.
- Remove gloves, perform hand hygiene. Put on new PPE if patient needs a return ride.
- Following patient transport: Perform disinfection of all transport vehicle surfaces and remove any contaminated waste and dispose of appropriately. Note: PPE should be worn during the disinfection process.

COVID-19 exposure: If an employee on an incident has one or more of the following symptoms described in the DOF COVID-19 Handbook in the Employee Screening Section 4, they should be isolated from the rest of the employees, and contact tracing should be initiated.

Arrangements will be sought for an air ambulance or ground ambulance to transport symptomatic employees. If possible, this transport will be call-when-needed aircraft, separate from the usual incident Medevac aircraft and vehicles.

If alternative transport can not be obtained for symptomatic employees, Medevac aircraft and vehicles may be used, and the same PPE procedures should be followed as in the previous section, and decontamination should follow contractual obligations for each vehicle or aircraft.

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Appendix B

EMPLOYEE/VISITOR/CONTRACTOR COVID-19 SCREENING TOOL

1. Have you.....	
Yes / No	a. Traveled from or through, locations identified by the CDC as increasing epidemiologic risk for COVID-19 within the last 14 days? https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html
Yes / No	b. Had close contact with anyone diagnosed with the COVID-19 illness within the last 14 days?
2. Do you currently have a	
Yes / No	a. fever (>100.4F) or chills
Yes / No	b. cough or shortness of breath
Yes / No	c. Any two of the following: body aches, fatigue, headache, runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, rash or any abnormal changes/ loss of taste or smell.
3. Perform a temperature check _____°F Method: oral / forehead (temporal) / tympanic (ear)	
*Staff see instruction sheet for screening form.	

*** Employees to complete spreadsheet with information daily.**

Purpose of Visit (Circle one):

Visitor/ Contractor

Social (visiting an employee) – Employee name and number _____

Other - _____

Visitor/Contractor Name (Last, First): _____

Date: _____

Department: _____

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Employee/Visitor/CONTRACTOR COVID-19 SCREENING TOOL

Instructions for staff:

The designated entry to DOF facilities will have an employee available that will provide the COVID-19 Screening Tool to all persons entering the area (employees, visitors, contractors, etc.), ask each person to complete questions and the temperature check.

Negative Screening: If answers to all the questions are No, and there are no obvious signs of respiratory infection, e.g. frequent coughing, and temperature is < 100.4°F, follow usual procedures.

Positive Screening: If answers to any of the questions are YES, or if the person has a temperature $\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ (oral), or if the person has obvious signs of a respiratory illness, ask them to wait in a separate area (6 feet from others or outside), and contact the FMO or other Leadership, for further direction.

For regular employees who reports for duty daily - avoid filling out the same form daily and adding to the paperwork burden, instead each area can create their own excel spread sheet with employee names, daily screening results and temp (kept confidentially and not on display). The above screening tool can then be used as a Dry Erase Board for Employees to fill out.