

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

EMPLOYEE AT A USDA FACILITY WHO TESTS POSITIVE¹ FOR COVID-19

Page | 1

The USDA facility should use the following guidance to manage response.

1. **EXPECT NOTICE** - If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, it is expected that either a local health department or the employee will notify USDA: that notice will likely be given to the employee's supervisor.
2. **FOLLOW HEALTH INSTRUCTIONS** - The facility should consult with and follow community-based recommendations relating to the facility's response. Any employee confirmed to test positive for 2019-nCoV (symptomatic or asymptomatic) must comply with health authorities' instructions.
3. **PROTECT PERSONNEL INFORMATION** - USDA managing personnel *should not release personal information about employee's identity or health status*. Anyone who has access to an employee's medical information must ensure they comply with confidentiality and privacy obligations. Employees may voluntarily disclose their status.
4. **GIVE NOTICE TO FACILITY'S LOCAL PANDEMIC COORDINATOR** - Based on USDA's Incident Command structure and the Pandemic Plan, the supervisor or leader who is given notice of the employee's status should contact the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator to provide the employee's name, work location at the facility and contact information, including a phone number.
5. **RESPOND AT THE FACILITY** - The local Pandemic Coordinator should inform the senior-most leader at the facility, including agency for which the employee works and the employee's location. Together they should use the facility's Pandemic Plan and this guidance to coordinate response and address the employee's contact and movements at the facility and take necessary steps to mitigate spread of the illness, including:
 - a. **LABOR OBLIGATIONS** - Determine the agencies' responsibilities under collective bargaining agreements.
 - b. **INTERVIEW** - To the extent needed to address the employee's contact and movements at the USDA facility, the local Pandemic Coordinator (or their designee) should quickly coordinate telephone or electronic outreach to the employee to collect work-related information. *The approved script for this interview is included as ATTACHMENT A.*

¹ Similar procedures should be followed if an employee is at USDA with symptoms of (coughing or shortness of breath with fever of 100.4 F or higher) and potential exposure to COVID-19 due to travel to impacted areas or contact with someone with the illness. Such an employee should be sent home and encouraged to contact their local health department for further instructions.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- c. **LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS** - Contact local officials and follow the recommendations of the state/local/tribal health department.
- d. **CONSIDER INCIDENT COMMAND** - Based on the facility's Occupant Emergency Plan, consult with the agency's Designated Official to determine whether concerns warrant activating Incident Command to manage the facility response.
- e. **RETRACE MOVEMENTS** - To the extent possible, determine the areas within the USDA facility the employee accessed.
 - i. To the extent possible, *restrict access to potentially impacted area(s)* until the impacted areas are properly assessed and appropriate cleaning is conducted.
 - ii. To the extent possible, *provide alternate entry and exit routes for other employees in or near impacted areas* to avoid potentially impacted areas or allow for alternate work locations until the areas are properly assessed and appropriate cleaning is conducted.

Page | 2

INFORM MISSION AREA/AGENCY PANDEMIC COORDINATOR – The local Pandemic Coordinator should promptly inform the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the facility situations and response. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator should then inform the USDA Pandemic Coordinator at homelandsecurity@usda.gov.

- f. **INFORM IMPACTED PERSONNEL** – While protecting the employee's identity and health status, inform employees who are potentially impacted by the movements of the infected employee of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. The confidentiality of the infected employee must be kept as required by applicable law. Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should be directed to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
6. **PROPERLY CLEAN** - Use a qualified cleaning crew to properly clean the impacted areas and common areas the employee may have visited using CDC recommended [guidance](#).
7. **REQUEST CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL STATUS²** - *Before any alteration of operational status (e.g., closure, limiting operations, COVID-19 related or influenced teleworking for three or more people, etc.) at a USDA facility, the facility must submit a request using the following process. All requests are considered pending until reviewed and determined.*
- a. The facility's local Pandemic Coordinator submits the request to their Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator.
 - b. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator must promptly submit the request to the USDA Pandemic Coordinator at homelandsecurity@usda.gov.
 - c. The request should include the following information:
 - i. Mission and Agency seeking Request
 - ii. Facility Name and Address subject to Request
 - iii. Name, Title, Email, and Phone Number of facility Senior Leader seeking Request

² This process will not affect telework arrangements that were established as a result of reasonable accommodations.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- iv. Number of Employees in the facility
 - v. Whether any of the employees at the facility have tested positive for COVID-19
 - vi. Whether any of the employees at the facility have been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
 - vii. Whether other offices (federal or private) are co-located at the facility and is that property controlled by USDA
 - viii. If applicable, the number of employees for which telework is requested
 - ix. If applicable, the timeframe proposed for operational changes or telework
 - x. Proposed actions for ensuring continuity of operations and customer services
 - xi. Hyperlink to or additional information from the facility's local public health department including specific guidance to the community
 - xii. Any other information relevant to making the determination (e.g., number of coronavirus cases in your area, local health declarations, Mission/Agency level recommendations, etc.)
- d. The Office of the Secretary will make a determination regarding the request *promptly upon* receipt by the USDA Pandemic Coordinator.
 - e. The USDA Pandemic Coordinator will promptly notify the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the determination. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator will promptly give notice of the determination to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and senior most official.
8. **REQUEST FOR DEVIATION FROM GUIDANCE** - Requests for changes to or deviation from this guidance should be submitted to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and will be treated as a REQUEST TO CHANGE TO OPERATIONAL STATUS.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

VISITOR TO A USDA FACILITY WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Page | 4

The USDA facility should use the following guidance to manage response.

1. **EXPECT NOTICE** - If a visitor tests positive for COVID-19, it is expected that either a local health department or the visitor will notify USDA: that notice will likely be given to the visitor's point of contact.
2. **FOLLOW HEALTH INSTRUCTIONS** - The facility should consult with and follow community-based recommendations relating to the facility's response.
3. **GIVE NOTICE TO [FACILITY'S LOCAL PANDEMIC COORDINATOR](#)** - Based on USDA's Incident Command structure and the Pandemic Plan, the point of contact who is given notice of the visitor's status should contact the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator to provide the visitor's name, location visited at the facility and contact information, including a phone number.
4. **RESPOND AT THE FACILITY** - The local Pandemic Coordinator should inform the senior-most leader at the facility and together they should use the facility's Pandemic Plan and this guidance to coordinate response and address the visitor's contact and movements at the facility and take necessary steps to mitigate spread of the illness, including:
 - a. **INTERVIEW** - To address the visitor's contact and movements at the USDA facility, the Pandemic Coordinator (or their designee) should quickly coordinate telephone or electronic outreach to the visitor, or if not possible, to the point of contact and or meeting attendees to collect information. *The approved [script for this interview is included as ATTACHMENT A.](#)*
 - b. **LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS** - Contact local officials and follow the recommendations of the state/local/tribal health department.
 - c. **CONSIDER INCIDENT COMMAND** - Based on the facility's Occupant Emergency Plan, consult with the agency's Designated Official to determine whether concerns warrant activating Incident Command to manage the facility response.
 - d. **RETRACE MOVEMENTS** - To the extent possible, determine the areas within the USDA facility the visitor accessed.
 - i. To the extent possible, *restrict access to potentially impacted area(s)* until the impacted areas are properly assessed and appropriate cleaning is conducted.
 - ii. To the extent possible, *provide alternate entry and exit routes for employees in or near impacted areas* to avoid potentially impacted areas or allow for alternate work locations until the areas are properly assessed and appropriate cleaning is conducted.
 - g. **INFORM [MISSION AREA/AGENCY PANDEMIC COORDINATOR](#)** – The local Pandemic Coordinator should promptly inform the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- facility situations and response. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator should then inform the USDA Pandemic Coordinator at homelandsecurity@usda.gov.
- h. **INFORM IMPACTED PERSONNEL** - Inform employees who are potentially impacted by the movements of the infected visitor of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. During this process, the confidentiality of the infected visitor must be kept as required applicable law. Employees exposed to a visitor with confirmed COVID-19 should be directed to CDC guidance for [how to conduct a risk assessment](#) of their potential exposure.
 - e. **PROPERLY CLEAN** - Use a qualified cleaning crew to properly clean and decontaminate the impacted areas and common areas the visitor may have visited using [CDC recommended guidance](#).
5. **REQUEST CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL STATUS³** - *Before any alteration of operational status (e.g., closure, limiting operations, COVID-19 related or influenced teleworking for three or more people, etc.) at a USDA facility, the facility must submit a request using the following process. All requests are considered pending until reviewed and determined.*
- a. The facility's local [Pandemic Coordinator](#) submits the request to their [Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator](#).
 - b. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator must promptly submit the request to the USDA Pandemic Coordinator at homelandsecurity@usda.gov.
 - c. The request should include the following information:
 - i. Mission and Agency seeking Request
 - ii. Facility Name and Address subject to Request
 - iii. Name, Title, Email, and Phone Number of facility Senior Leader seeking Request
 - iv. Number of Employees in the facility
 - v. Whether any of the employees at the facility have tested positive for COVID-19
 - vi. Whether any of the employees at the facility have been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
 - xiii. Whether other offices (federal or private) are co-located at the facility and is that property controlled by USDA
 - vii. If applicable, the number of employees for which telework is requested
 - viii. If applicable, the timeframe proposed for operational changes or telework
 - ix. Proposed actions for ensuring continuity of operations and customer services
 - x. Hyperlink to or additional information from the facility's local public health department including specific guidance to the community
 - xi. Any other information relevant to making the determination (e.g., number of coronavirus cases in your area, local health declarations, Mission/Agency level recommendations, etc.)

³ This process will not affect telework arrangements that were established as a result of reasonable accommodations.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- d. The Office of the Secretary will make a determination regarding the request *promptly upon* receipt by the USDA Pandemic Coordinator.
 - e. The USDA Pandemic Coordinator will promptly notify the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the determination. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator will promptly give notice of the determination to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and senior most official.
6. **REQUEST FOR DEVIATION FROM GUIDANCE** - Requests for changes to or deviation from this guidance should be submitted to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and will be treated as a REQUEST TO CHANGE TO OPERATIONAL STATUS.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

GOVERNMENT DECLARED OUTBREAK⁴ OF COVID-19 IN THE US OR NEAR A USDA FACILITY

Page | 7

The USDA facility should use the following guidance to manage response.

1. **EXPECT NOTICE** - If the nation, a state or a community issues a COVID-19 related public health declaration, guidance or restrictions, it is expected that employees will find out either from the local health department or local media
2. **GIVE NOTICE TO LEADERS** - Based on USDA's Incident Command structure and Pandemic Plan, the supervisor or leader who is given notice of the community status should contact the facility's local [Pandemic Coordinator](#).
3. **RESPOND AT THE FACILITY** - The local Pandemic Coordinator should inform the senior-most leader at the facility and together they should use the facility's Pandemic Plan and this guidance to coordinate response and take necessary steps to mitigate spread of the illness, including:
 - a. **LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS** – Contact local health officials and follow the recommendations⁵ of the state/local/tribal health department.
 - b. **CONSIDER INCIDENT COMMAND** – Based on the facility's Occupant Emergency Plan, consult with the agency's Designated Official to determine whether conditions warrant activating Incident Command to manage the facility response.
 - c. **INFORM [MISSION AREA/AGENCY PANDEMIC COORDINATOR](#)** – The local Pandemic Coordinator should promptly inform the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the facility situations and response. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator should then inform the USDA Pandemic Coordinator.
 - d. **WHEN FACILITY IS OPEN**
 - i. Instruct sick individuals to stay home regardless of illness. The interactions with symptomatic individuals that increases the risk level for contracting COVID-19 among those sick with other illnesses.
 - ii. Practice social distancing (i.e., six feet distance between individuals) to the extent practicable.

⁴ Government acknowledged local or regional community spread of COVID-19 or widely-acknowledged demonstration of efficient and sustained human-to human transmission of the virus within a geographic area.

⁵ This may include legally enforceable directives issued under the authority of a relevant federal, state, or local entity that, when applied to a person or group, may place restrictions on the activities undertaken by that person or group, potentially including movement restrictions or a requirement for monitoring by a public health authority, for the purposes of protecting the public's health. Federal, state, or local public health orders may be issued to enforce isolation, quarantine or conditional release.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- iii. Instruct the use of audio and video teleconferencing capabilities, where possible.
 - iv. Implement rigorous cleaning procedures at all locations where groups of people congregate.
 - v. Depending on the severity of the outbreak, the facility should consider closing all facility food service.
 - vi. Though COVID-19 is transmissible on some surfaces, there is typically no need to perform special cleaning. However, if further cleaning is determined to warranted, agencies should clean those areas using [CDC recommended guidance](#).
- f. **VISITOR CONSIDERATIONS**
- i. Limit visitors to essential, time-sensitive visits only and require all visitors to be escorted at all times and limit visitor access to non-essential areas of the USDA.
 - ii. Do not allow public or visitor use of food service that is maintained or controlled by USDA.
 - iii. Prior to arrival at a USDA facility, all visitors will be screened based on health concerns or recent travel. *Missions, agencies and offices must use for visitor screening process included as ATTACHMENT B.*
5. **REQUEST CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL STATUS⁶** - *Before any alteration of operational status (e.g., closure, limiting operations, COVID-19 related or influenced teleworking for three or more people, etc.) at a USDA facility, the facility must submit a request using the following process. All requests are considered pending until reviewed and determined.*
- a. The facility's local [Pandemic Coordinator](#) submits the request to their [Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator](#).
 - b. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator must promptly submit the request to the USDA Pandemic Coordinator at homelandsecurity@usda.gov.
 - c. The request should include the following information:
 - xiv. Mission and Agency seeking Request
 - xv. Facility Name and Address subject to Request
 - xvi. Name, Title, Email, and Phone Number of facility Senior Leader seeking Request
 - xvii. Number of Employees in the facility
 - xviii. Whether any of the employees at the facility have tested positive for COVID-19
 - xix. Whether any of the employees at the facility have been directly exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19
 - xx. Whether other offices (federal or private) are co-located at the facility and is that property controlled by USDA
 - xxi. If applicable, the number of employees for which telework is requested
 - xxii. If applicable, the timeframe proposed for operational changes or telework
 - xxiii. Proposed actions for ensuring continuity of operations and customer services

⁶ This process will not affect telework arrangements that were established as a result of reasonable accommodations.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

- xxiv. Hyperlink to or additional information from the facility's local public health department including specific guidance to the community
 - xxv. Any other information relevant to making the determination (e.g., number of coronavirus cases in your area, local health declarations, Mission/Agency level recommendations, etc.)
 - d. The Office of the Secretary will make a determination regarding the request *promptly upon* receipt by the USDA Pandemic Coordinator.
 - e. The USDA Pandemic Coordinator will promptly notify the Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator of the determination. The Mission/Agency Pandemic Coordinator will promptly give notice of the determination to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and senior most official.
7. **REQUEST FOR DEVIATION FROM GUIDANCE** - Requests for changes to or deviation from this guidance should be submitted to the facility's local Pandemic Coordinator and will be treated as a REQUEST TO CHANGE TO OPERATIONAL STATUS.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

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ATTACHMENT A

INTERVIEW OF AN EMPLOYEE OR VISITOR AT USDA WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

The designated interviewer should directly contact the interviewee preferably by phone and ask the following questions:

Page | 10

1. *Who is your immediate supervisor, and have you notified them of your illness?*
2. *What approximate date did you start feeling ill?*
3. *Have you been tested for COVID-19?*
 - a. *If so, what were the results?*
 - b. *If yes, what date did you test positive or were diagnosed with Coronavirus?*
4. *Have you contacted your local health department for instructions on quarantine or testing for Coronavirus?*
5. *Have you been advised by medical officials to self-isolate or be under quarantine? If so, when and for how long?*
6. *Have you been in contact with someone possibly with the coronavirus or in a region where the virus is located?*
7. *Where is your office located or where was you meeting or visit?*
8. *Besides your office or that location, is there any other location at USDA you spent a considerable amount of time?*
9. *Who, if anyone, did you have close contact with at work or at this facility?*
10. *How do you arrive to work or to this facility (drive, metro, bus, other)?*
11. *Which door do you use when entering and departing your building?*
12. *Which bathrooms do you typically use in your building or which bathrooms did you use in this building while you were on site (if any)?*
13. *If in the National Capital Region, do you purchase food and/or eat in the USDA cafeterias, snack shops, vending machines, or in the South Building sub-basement? If yes, in which establishment or provide a location?*
14. *Who is your point of contact in event of emergency?*
15. *Is there anything else we should be made aware of?*

All information should be recorded in a secure system and any not secured written records must be destroyed to protect the interviewee's privacy.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

Effective as of 3/10/2020 10:11 AM or until further notice.

ATTACHMENT B

Government Declared Outbreak⁷ of COVID-19 in the US or Near a USDA Facility **VISITOR SCREENING AT AN OPEN USDA FACILITY**

Page | 11

All Non-USDA employees, *including other federal* employees, will be considered visitors for the purposes of this guidance. All visitors seeking entry to a USDA facility must comply with the following security screening guidance.

1. **RECONSIDER VISITORS** - Employees should reconsider in-person meetings and avoid bringing visitors to USDA facilities, including postponing in-person meetings or using virtual meeting capabilities such as teleconferencing, video, and webinars to the greatest extent possible.
2. **ESCORT REQUIRED** - All visitors must be escorted by USDA personnel at all times during their visit and should only be allowed access to locations directly relating to the reason for the visit.
3. **NO FOOD SERVICE ACCESS** - Do not allow public or visitor use of food service that is maintained or controlled by USDA.
4. **VISITORS SUBMITTED TO SECURITY** - Missions, agencies and offices must submit to onsite security the 1) name, 2) USDA point of contact and 3) estimated arrival or appointment time for all visitors **at least 24 hours in advance of the visit**. *Only visitors confirmed as scheduled under this process will be allowed to enter the facility.*
 - a. At the Headquarters complex, visitors' names should be submitted to securityservicehelp@usda.gov with "VISITOR SUBMISSION" noted in the subject line.
 - b. If a USDA facility does not have onsite security, the USDA point of contact for the visit should follow the guidance below in SECURITY SCREENING.
5. **VALID ID REQUIRED** - Visitors over the age of 18 must provide valid, government issued identification to be verified for entry to a facility.
6. **SECURITY SCREENING** - If the visitor is verified and scheduled, the Security Officers (for 3b above, the USDA point of contact) will ask the visitor the following questions:
 - a. *Have you, someone living in your household, someone with you have been in close or frequent contact with, or someone you are caring for been diagnosed with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) or had any contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?*
 - b. *In the last 14 days, have you or someone living in your household, or someone with you have been in close or frequent contact with, or someone you are caring for returned from, or made a travel connection through a [CDC Level 3 or Level 2](#) country or [State Department Level 3 or Level 4](#) country?*

⁷ Demonstration of efficient and sustained human-to human transmission of the virus or a government acknowledged local or regional community spread of COVID-19.

USDA COVID-19 PLAYBOOK

Supplement to Pandemic Plans, Occupant Emergency Plans & Continuity of Operations Plans

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c. *Do you currently have, or have you had within the last 24 hours, any cold or flu symptoms with a fever greater than 100.4 or acute respiratory distress (e.g., shortness of breath and coughing)?*

- **If the visitor answers “Yes” to any of these questions, the visitor will be denied entry to the USDA facility.** The Security Officer will contact the USDA point of contact to notify them of the visitor’s status.
- If the visitor answers “No” to all questions, the visitor will be allowed to enter the facility under normal procedures.