Brieser CONSTRUCTION

Section 49
Safety Health and Environmental Manual

2025

Pandemic and Public Health Emergency

BRIESER CONSTRUCTION GENERAL CONTRACTORS		Developed:	3/15/2021
		Revised:	
CORPORATE SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL MANUAL		Revision:	01
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PURPOSE

The purpose for this procedure is to identify organizational responsibilities needed to manage in the event of a pandemic or other public health emergency. This plan will be implemented by the Company President and includes various steps to be taken depending on the severity of the Pandemic. It will follow OSHA and CDC guidelines. This plan will be reviewed at least annually along with current CDC guidance and prevention techniques.

ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office Manager shall maintain a list of outside emergency services such as ambulance, hospital, doctors, fire department, police and other emergency services that may be necessary to call for assistance during a pandemic or other public health emergency. This list shall be specific for each job site. If a pandemic or public health emergency arises, the company President will initiate this plan and take the appropriate steps to protect our employees, customers, and business functions. The HR Manager will monitor Federal and Local sources to keep the Company President informed about the pandemic or public health emergency. The goal of this plan is to give specific guidance for reduced exposure and spread of the virus or health emergency and to minimize business interruption. The Company President is in control of this plan and its implementation and execution.

PREVENTION

For most employers, protecting their employees will depend on emphasizing proper hygiene (disinfecting hands and surfaces) and practicing social distancing. Social distancing means reducing the frequency, proximity, and duration of contact between people (both employees and customers) to reduce the chances of spreading pandemic influenzas from person-to-person. All employers should Implement good hygiene and infection control practices.

Occupational safety and health professionals use a framework called the *"Hierarchy of controls"* to select ways of dealing with workplace hazards. The hierarchy of controls prioritizes intervention strategies based on the premise that the best way to control a hazard is to systematically remove it from the workplace, rather than relying on employees to reduce their exposure. In the setting of a pandemic, this hierarchy should be used in concert with current public health recommendations. The types of measures that may be used to protect yourself, your employees, and your customers (listed from most effective to least effective) are engineering controls, administrative controls, work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

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Brieser Construction will use a combination of control methods. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of control measure when considering the ease of implementation, effectiveness, and cost. For example, hygiene and social distancing can be implemented relatively easily and with little expense, but this control method requires employees to modify and maintain their behavior which may be difficult to sustain. On the other hand, installing clear plastic barriers or a drive through window will be more expensive and take more time to implement, although in the long run may be more effective at preventing transmission during a pandemic. Brieser Construction will evaluate our workplace to develop a plan for protecting our employees that may combine both immediate actions as well as longer term solutions.

WORK PRACTICE AND ENGINEERING CONTROLS

Historically, infection control professionals have relied on personal protective equipment (for example, surgical masks and gloves) to serve as a physical barrier to prevent the transmission of an infectious disease from one person to another. This reflects the fact that close interactions with infectious patients is an unavoidable part of many healthcare occupations. The principles of industrial hygiene demonstrate that work practice controls and engineering controls can also serve as barriers to transmission and are less reliant on employee behavior to provide protection. Work practice controls are procedures for safe and proper work that are used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard. When defining safe work practice controls, it is a good idea to ask your employees for their suggestions, since they have firsthand experience with the tasks. These controls should be understood and followed by managers, supervisors, and employees. When work practice controls are insufficient to protect employees, some employers may also need engineering controls.

Engineering controls involve making changes to the work environment to reduce work-related hazards. These types of controls are preferred over all others because they make permanent changes that reduce exposure to hazards and do not rely on employee or customer behavior. By reducing a hazard in the workplace, engineering controls can be the most cost-effective solutions for employers to implement.

During a pandemic, engineering controls may be effective in reducing exposure to some sources of pandemic influenza and not others. For example, installing sneeze guards between customers and employees would provide a barrier to transmission. The use of barrier protections, such as sneeze guards, is common practice for both infection control and industrial hygiene. However, while the installation of sneeze guards may reduce or prevent transmission between customers and employees, transmission may still occur between coworkers. Therefore, administrative controls and public health measures should be implemented along with engineering controls.

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Examples of work practice controls implemented by Brieser Construction include:
- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectants, and disposable towels for employees to clean their work surfaces.

- Brieser Construction will encourage employees to obtain a seasonal influenza vaccine (this helps to prevent illness from seasonal influenza strains that may continue to circulate).
- Brieser Construction will provide employees with up-to-date education and training on the Pandemic, protective behaviors, and instruction on proper behaviors (for example, cough etiquette and care of personal protective equipment).
- We will develop policies to minimize contacts between employees and between employees and clients or customers.

More information about protecting yourself, your coworkers and employees, and your family can be found at OSHA.gov and the CDC.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

Administrative controls include controlling employees' exposure by scheduling their work tasks in ways that minimize their exposure levels.
Examples of administrative controls include:
- Brieser Construction encourages ill employees to stay at home without fear of any reprisals, the discontinuation of unessential travel to locations with high illness transmission rates and consider practices to minimize face-to-face contact between employees such as e-mail, websites, and teleconferences.
- Where possible, we encourage flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting or flexible work hours to reduce the number of employees who must be at work at one time or in one specific location.
- Consider home delivery of goods and services to reduce the number of clients or customers who must visit the workplace.

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MANDATORY WORK PRACTICE CONTROLS

- Limit face to face meetings/attendance - adhere to "social distancing" guidelines (>6 ft separation between participants) or virtual meetings.
- Additional cleaning by employees and cleaning services

PERSONAL BEHAVIORS/ACTIONS (AT WORK & HOME)

- Monitor your temperature daily. If you develop symptoms, notify your supervisor immediately.
- Frequently wash hands. For remote locations, hand sanitizer will be provided.
- Minimize touching your face.
- Be deliberate about practicing social distancing with limited direct contact, which means maintaining >6ft separation, minimize shaking hands, etc. Direct contact is considered being within 6ft of another person for an extended period (> 15 minutes).
- Remote working - when / if appropriate to extend broad guidance for non-essential personnel to work from home.
- Limit in person communication. Use email, Skype, and conference calling when possible.
- Clean and sanitize all surfaces in the work area wherever possible.
- Follow recommendations of customer sites. Limit site visits. Use email or phone for communication.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

While administrative controls, engineering controls and proper work practices are considered more effective in minimizing exposure to the virus, the use of PPE may also be indicated during certain exposures. If used correctly, PPE can help prevent some exposures; however, they should not take the place of other prevention interventions, such as engineering controls, cough etiquette, and hand hygiene.

Follow this link to see Healthy Habits to Protect Against FLU
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm

Examples of personal protective equipment are gloves, goggles, face shields, surgical masks, and respirators (for example, N-95). It is important that personal protective equipment be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the employee.
- Properly fitted and some must be periodically refitted (e.g., respirators)
- Conscientiously and properly worn.
- Regularly maintained and replaced, as necessary
- Properly removed and disposed of to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.

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ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19 AND OTHER PANDEMICS

Implement Basic Infection Prevention Measures

For most employers, protecting workers will depend on emphasizing basic infection prevention measures. As appropriate, all employers should implement good hygiene and infection control practices, including:

- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing. This includes providing workers, customers, and worksite visitors with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.

Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19

- Provide customers and the public with tissues and trash receptacles.
- Brieser will explore whether they can establish policies and practices, such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts), to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others if state and local health authorities recommend the use of social distancing strategies.
- Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment. When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should consult information on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectant labels with claims against emerging viral pathogens. Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are expected to be effective against SARS-CoV-2 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, PPE).
- Develop Policies and Procedures for prompt identification and isolation of sick people, if appropriate.
- Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a critical step in protecting workers, customers, visitors, and others at a worksite.
- Employers should inform and encourage employees to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 if they suspect possible exposure.
- Employers should develop policies and procedures for employees to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

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Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 continued

- Where appropriate, employers should develop policies and procedures for immediately isolating people who have signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19, and train workers to implement them. Move potentially infectious people to a location away from workers, customers, and other visitors. Although most worksites do not have specific isolation rooms, designated areas with closable doors may serve as isolation rooms until potentially sick people can be removed from the worksite.

- Take steps to limit spread of the respiratory secretions of a person who may have COVID-19. Provide a face mask, if feasible and available, and ask the person to wear it, if tolerated. Note: A face mask (also called a surgical mask, procedure mask, or other similar terms) on a patient or other sick person should not be confused with PPE for a worker; the mask acts to contain potentially infectious respiratory secretions at the source (i.e., the person's nose and mouth).

- If possible, isolate people suspected of having COVID-19 separately from those with confirmed cases of the virus to prevent further transmission—particularly in worksites where medical screening, triage, or healthcare activities occur, using either permanent (e.g., wall/different room) or temporary barrier (e.g., plastic sheeting).

- Restrict the number of personnel entering isolation areas.

- Protect workers in close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) a sick person or who have prolonged/repeated contact with such persons by using additional engineering and administrative controls, safe work practices, and PPE.

Workers whose activities involve close or prolonged/ repeated contact with sick people are addressed further in later sections covering workplaces classified at medium and extremely high or high exposure risk.

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Develop, Implement, and Communicate about Workplace Flexibilities and Protections

- Actively encourage sick employees to stay home.

- Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.

- Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies.

- Do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

- Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member. Employers should be aware that more employees may need to stay at home to care for sick children or other sick family members than is usual.

- Recognize that workers with ill family members may need to stay home to care for them. See CDC's Interim Guidance for Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Homes and Residential Communities:

  Follow this link to see how to best Prevent the Spread of COVID-19
    o https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/easy-to-read/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html

- Be aware of workers' concerns about pay, leave, safety, health, and other issues that may arise during infectious disease outbreaks. Provide adequate, usable, and appropriate training, education, and informational material about business-essential job functions and worker health and safety, including proper hygiene practices and the use of any workplace controls (including PPE). Informed workers who feel safe at work are less likely to be unnecessarily absent.

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Score: _____ **%**

Employees Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Company: _____ **Instructor:** _____

Answer the following questions "True" or "False" by circling the appropriate letter.

T   **F**   1. According to the hierarchy of controls wearing PPE is the best way to protect yourself from any and all health emergencies.

T   **F**   2. During a pandemic, engineering controls may be effective in reducing exposure to some sources of pandemic influenza and not others.

T   **F**   3. Brieser Construction will always provide resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene.

T   **F**   4. Brieser Construction encourages all sick or ill employees to come into their assigned work site, so you do not lose hours.

T   **F**   5. Brieser Construction will take the extra steps to make sure all office and job sites are furnished with the appropriate PPE and health / hygiene products to keep the site safe and clean.

T   **F**   6. Hand washing and sanitizing is only required twice a work shift.

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Answers

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