

COVID-19 / Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplac

# Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace

OSHA will update this guidance over time to reflect developments in science, best practices, and standards.

Guidance posted **January 29, 2021**; Updated **June 10, 2021**

Summary of changes **August 13, 2021**

- Update to reflect the July 27, 2021 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) mask and testing recommendations for fully vaccinated people
- Reorganize Appendix recommendations for Manufacturing, Meat and Poultry Processing, Seafood Processing, and Agricultural Processing Industries
- Add links to guidance with the most up-to-date content

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## Purpose

**This guidance is designed to help employers protect workers who are unvaccinated (including people who are in the text box below), including if they are immunocompromised, and also implement new guidance involving substantial or high community transmission.**

This guidance contains recommendations as well as descriptions of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) **mandatory OSHA standards**. The recommendations are advisory and are intended to assist employers in providing a safe and healthful workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause serious harm or death.

OSHA emphasizes that vaccination is the most effective way to protect against severe illness or death from COVID-19. However, it may take time for workers to get vaccinated and recover from any side effects. Employers should provide vaccinations for unvaccinated workers in the workplace. Finally, OSHA suggests that employers consider a mandatory vaccination program – in addition to mask wearing and physical distancing – if they remain unvaccinated for several weeks or more after they have completed their final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) in the United States.

## Executive Summary

This guidance is intended to help employers and workers not covered by the OSHA's COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) to protect workers from COVID-19 in the workplace.

## COVID-19 exposure risks to workers who are unvaccinated or otherwise at risk even if they are fully vaccinated (e.g. "At-Risk" Workers)?

This guidance is also intended to help employers and workers who are located in areas of substantial or high community transmission to prevent exposure and infection regardless of vaccination status. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People state that infections in fully vaccinated people (breakthrough infections) have been reported, even with the Delta variant. Moreover, when these infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be asymptomatic, a critical tool for bringing the pandemic under control.

However, preliminary evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people who do become infected with the Delta variant tend to be asymptomatic.

This evidence has led CDC to update recommendations for fully vaccinated people to reduce their risk of becoming infected and spreading the virus to others, including by:

- wearing a mask<sup>1</sup> in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission;
- choosing to wear a mask regardless of level of transmission, particularly if individuals are at risk or have someone who is not fully vaccinated; and
- getting tested 3-5 days following a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and wearing a mask until a negative test result.<sup>2</sup>

In this guidance, OSHA adopts analogous recommendations.

CDC has also updated its guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools to recommend universal indoor mask wearing regardless of vaccination status.<sup>3</sup> CDC's Face Mask Order requiring masks on public transportation conveyances was announced that it will be amending its Face Masks Order to not require people to wear a mask in outdoor areas of transportation hubs, and that it will exercise its enforcement discretion in the meantime.

### Who Are "At-Risk Workers"?

Some conditions, such as a prior transplant, as well as prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune-weakening medications, can result in a weakened immune response to vaccination. To understand more about these conditions, see the CDC's page describing Vaccines for People with Certain Medical Conditions. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), workers with certain medical conditions are entitled to accommodations that protect them from the risk of contracting COVID-19 if, for example, they cannot be protected by wearing face coverings. Employers should consider taking steps to protect these at-risk workers as they would unvaccinated workers.

### COVID-19 and Prevention

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes **COVID-19**, is highly infectious and is spread by aerosol transmission of particles produced when an infected person exhales, talks, vocalizes, sneezes, or coughs. It can also be spread by people who have no symptoms. Particles containing the virus can travel more than 6 feet, especially in indoor settings. It can be spread by individuals who do not know they are infected.

Vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the United States are highly effective at protecting against COVID-19. OSHA encourages employers to take steps to make it easier for workers to get vaccinated and encourage workers to get vaccinated. CDC recognizes that even some fully vaccinated people who are largely protected against severe illness and death can still get sick. Therefore, this guidance mirrors CDC's in recommending masking and testing even for fully vaccinated people in certain settings.

OSHA also continues to recommend implementing multiple layers of controls (e.g. mask wearing, distancing, and i help protect unvaccinated and other at-risk workers include removing from the workplace all infected people, all pe not fully vaccinated who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 and have not tested negative for CC days after the contact (in which case they may return 7 days after contact). Fully vaccinated people who have had exposure and be required to wear face coverings for 14 days after their contact unless they test negative for COVID and other at-risk workers include maintaining ventilation systems, implementing physical distancing, and properly u (PPE) and respiratory protection such as N95 respirators when appropriate), and proper cleaning. Fully vaccinated required to wear face coverings inside (or other appropriate PPE and respiratory protection) as well. Employees ma hardship, if they are unable to comply with safety requirements due to a disability. For more information, see the Ec Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws.

Finally, OSHA provides employers with specific guidance for environments at a higher risk for exposure to or sprea otherwise at-risk workers are more likely to be in prolonged, close contact with other workers or the public, or in cl

## Scope

OSHA provides this guidance for employers as recommendations to use in protecting unvaccinated workers and o themselves. This guidance also incorporates CDC's recommendations for fully vaccinated workers in areas of subs this guidance to determine any appropriate control measures to implement.

While this guidance addresses most workplaces, many healthcare workplace settings will be covered by the **mand** Pursuant to the Occupational Safety and Health Act (the OSH Act or the Act), employers in those settings must cor **other applicable mandatory safety and health standards and regulations** issued and enforced either by OSHA General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1), requires employers to provide their workers with a safe and healthful workpla cause death or serious physical harm. Employers who are not covered by the OSH Act (like public sector employer guidance to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 in their workplaces.

This guidance is not a standard or regulation, and it creates no new legal obligations. It contains recommendations **standards**, the latter of which are clearly labeled throughout. The recommendations are advisory in nature and info recognizing and abating hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm as part of their obligation to provide

## About COVID-19

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes **COVID-19**, is highly infectious and spreads from person to person, including th infected person exhales, talks, vocalizes, sneezes, or coughs. COVID-19 is less commonly transmitted when peopl or mouth. The virus that causes COVID-19 is highly transmissible and can be spread by people who have no symp containing the virus can travel more than 6 feet, especially indoors and in dry conditions with relative humidity belo of the virus is from individuals with no symptoms at the time of spread.

More information on COVID-19 is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## What Workers Need To Know about COVID-19 Protections in the Workplace

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, spreads mainly among unvaccinated people who are in close conta ventilated spaces.

Vaccination is the key element in a multi-layered approach to protect workers. Learn about and take advantage of getting vaccinated. Vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are highly effective at protecting workers from illness and death. According to the CDC, a growing body of evidence suggests that fully vaccinated people are less likely to get sick than others. See CDC's [Guidance for Fully Vaccinated People](#); and [Science Brief](#).

You should follow recommended precautions and policies at your workplace. Multi-layered controls tailored to your workplace can protect unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers. Many employers have established COVID-19 prevention programs that include measures to protect at-risk workers safe. These COVID-19 prevention programs include measures such as telework and flexible scheduling policies (e.g., vaccination policies), PPE, face coverings, physical distancing, and enhanced cleaning programs with disinfectants.

In addition, the CDC recommends that fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings if they are in a crowded or enclosed space where people might choose to mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they or someone in their household has COVID-19 disease, or if someone in their household is unvaccinated. Ask your employer about plans in your workplace. In addition, you may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation under the ADA.

Even if your employer does not have a COVID-19 prevention program, if you are unvaccinated or otherwise at risk, you should follow the following below:

- You should get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can. Ask your employer about opportunities for paid leave, and any potential side effects.
- Properly wear a face covering over your nose and mouth. Face coverings are simple barriers worn over the face that help prevent droplets or large particles from reaching others. Individuals are encouraged to choose higher quality masks so that they protect themselves as well as those around them. CDC provides general guidance on masks, including face coverings.
- If you are working outdoors, you may opt not to wear face coverings in many circumstances; however, your employer may require a face covering if you choose, especially if you work closely with other people.
- Unless you are fully vaccinated and not otherwise at-risk, stay far enough away from other people so that you are at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths), although this approach by itself is not a guarantee that you will avoid infection. Ask your employer about possible telework and flexible schedule options at your workplace, and take advantage of such options. Take breaks outdoors when possible.
- Participate in any training offered by your employer/building manager to learn how rooms are ventilated effectively. If such measures do not already exist, and notify the building manager if you see vents that are clogged, dirty, or blocked by furniture.
- Practice good personal hygiene and wash your hands often. Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, and dispose of it properly. Do not spit. Monitor your health daily and be alert for COVID-19 symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, or shortness of breath). See CDC's [Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#).
- Get tested regularly, especially in areas of substantial or high community transmission.

COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. If you are not yet fully vaccinated or otherwise at risk, you should follow multiple layers of interventions that prevent exposure and infection.

## The Roles of Employers and Workers in Responding to COVID-19

Under the OSH Act, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to an employee.

CDC's [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#) explains that under some circumstances, fully vaccinated people should take additional precautions, such as wearing a mask, to protect unvaccinated people. However, in light of evidence related to the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the CDC updated its guidance to recommend that fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings where people might choose to mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they or someone in their household has COVID-19 disease, or if someone in their household is unvaccinated.

mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission, or if they have had a known exposure to someone with COVID-19, they should wear a mask for 3-5 days after the last date of that exposure. Schools should continue to follow applicable CDC guidance for teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Employers should engage with workers and their representatives to determine how to implement multi-layered interventions to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19, including:

1. **Facilitate employees getting vaccinated.** Employers should grant paid time off for employees to get vaccinated. OSHA, as well as other federal agencies, are working diligently to ensure access to COVID-19 vaccinations. Businesses with fewer than 500 employees may be eligible for tax credits under the American Rescue Plan Act through September 30, 2021, for employees who decide to receive the vaccine or to accompany a family or household member to get vaccinated. Employers should also consider working with local public health authorities to provide information to workers. Finally, OSHA suggests that employers consider adopting policies that require workers to get vaccinated and wear a mask and physical distancing – if they remain unvaccinated.
2. **Instruct any workers who are infected, unvaccinated workers who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms to stay home from work** to prevent or reduce the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. People who have a known exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should get tested 3-5 days after exposure in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result. People who are not fully vaccinated should be tested again in 5-7 days after last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop during quarantine. Ensure that absent workers are encouraged to come to work sick or when unvaccinated workers have been exposed to COVID-19. Businesses should use the refundable tax credits under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act if they provide paid time off for sick and family leave. The ARP tax credits are available to eligible employers that pay sick and family leave for qualified leave from April 1, 2020, through December 31, 2021. The credits are available from the IRS.
3. **Implement physical distancing in all communal work areas for unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers.** Employers should separate them from other such people (workers or customers) – generally at least 6 feet of distance is recommended, although this may be difficult in poorly ventilated spaces. In a workplace, workers often are required to work in close proximity to each other and to customers. Maintaining physical distancing at the workplace for such workers is an important control to limit the spread of COVID-19. Employers could also limit the number of unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers in one place at any given time (e.g., telework); implementing flexible work hours (e.g., rotate or stagger shifts to limit the number of such workers in one place); or implementing flexible meeting and travel options, for such workers. At fixed workstations where unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers are not able to remain at least 6 feet away from other people, employers can separate these workers from other people. Barriers should block face-to-face pathways between individual workers and any openings should be placed at the bottom and made as small as possible. The height and posture (sitting or standing) should be considered when designing and installing barriers, as should the need for enhanced ventilation.
4. **Provide workers with face coverings or surgical masks,<sup>4</sup> as appropriate, unless their work task requires a different type of face covering.** For otherwise at-risk workers, CDC recommends that even fully vaccinated people wear masks in public indoor settings. Fully vaccinated people may appropriately choose to wear masks in public indoor settings regardless of community transmission. People who have had close contact with someone in their household who is at risk or not fully vaccinated.

Workers should wear a face covering that covers the nose and mouth to contain the wearer's respiratory droplets. Face coverings should be made of at least two layers of a tightly woven breathable fabric, such as cotton, and should fit snugly around the nose, mouth, and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face.

Employers should provide face coverings to workers who request them at no cost (and make replacements available). Under anti-discrimination laws, employers may need to provide reasonable accommodations for any workers who are unable to wear face coverings due to a disability or who need a religious accommodation under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If a worker requests a hearing, employers should consider acquiring masks with clear coverings over the mouth to facilitate lip-reading.

Unless otherwise provided by federal, state, or local requirements, workers who are outdoors may opt not to wear face coverings if they are immunocompromised. Regardless, all workers should be supported in continuing to wear a face covering if they choose to do so.

When an employer determines that PPE is necessary to protect unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers from COVID-19, the employer must provide and use PPE in accordance with **relevant mandatory OSHA standards** and should consider providing PPE in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134 (e.g., medical determination, fit testing, training, and use when workers supply their own respirators, and other PPE must be provided and used in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.132 and 133). There are times when PPE is not called for by OSHA standards or other industry-specific guidance. Employers should provide reasonable accommodation under the ADA. Employers are encouraged to proactively inform employees who have a disability about how to make such a request. Other workers may want to use PPE if they are still concerned about COVID-19. For severe illness, they may want to wear a face shield in addition to a face covering as an added layer of protection. Employers should assess circumstances and ensure the equipment is adequate to protect the worker.

For operations where the face covering can become wet and soiled, provide workers with replacements daily or more frequently. Encourage workers to use face coverings to protect them from getting wet and soiled, but they do not provide adequate protection if they are not replaced.

Employers with workers in a setting where face coverings may increase the risk of heat-related illness indoors or outdoors (for instance, straps getting caught in machinery) may wish to consult with an occupational safety and health professional about face covering/respirator use for their setting.

5. **Educate and train workers on your COVID-19 policies and procedures using accessible formats and in languages they understand.** Implement COVID-19 policies. Communicate supportive workplace policies clearly, frequently, and via multiple methods. Communications should be in plain language that unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers understand (including other accessible communication methods, if applicable) and in a manner accessible to individuals with disabilities and any other individuals on site, as appropriate, and should include:
  - A. Basic facts about COVID-19, including how it is spread and the importance of physical distancing (including hand hygiene).
  - B. Workplace policies and procedures implemented to protect workers from COVID-19 hazards.

For basic facts, see About COVID-19 and What Workers Need to Know About COVID-19 above and see more information on remote work (including remote work), PPE, and face coverings, respectively, elsewhere in this document. Some means of transportation could be utilized by the employer as appropriate.

In addition, ensure that workers understand their rights to a safe and healthful work environment, to control their own health, and their right to raise workplace safety and health concerns free from retaliation. (See Implementing Provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.) All communications should be provided in a language that workers understand. Ensure supervisors are familiar with workplace flexibilities and accommodations.

6. **Suggest or require that unvaccinated customers, visitors, or guests wear face coverings in public-facing areas.** Suggest or require that unvaccinated customers, visitors, or guests wear face coverings in public, indoor settings in areas of substantial or high traffic. Encourage workers to suggest or require that people wear face coverings, even if no longer required by your jurisdiction. Customers, visitors, or guests consuming food or beverages on site need not wear face coverings.

consuming food or beverages on site need not wear face coverings.

7. **Maintain Ventilation Systems.** The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads between people more readily indoors that can be used as part of a layered strategy to reduce the concentration of viral particles in indoor air and the workers in particular. A well-maintained ventilation system is particularly important in any indoor workplace setting as a control measure to limit the spread of COVID-19. Some measures to improve ventilation are discussed in CDC's *Guidance on Ventilation in the Workplace*. These recommendations are based on American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers' *Guidance for Building Operations and Industrial Settings during the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Adequate ventilation includes ensuring heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are operating in accordance with the manufacturer's regularly scheduled inspections and maintenance procedures, maximizing the amount of outside air supplied, installing high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters (MERV) 13 or higher where feasible, maximizing natural ventilation in buildings without HVAC systems by opening windows (where it does not pose a safety risk), and considering the use of portable air cleaners with High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters.
8. **Perform routine cleaning and disinfection.** If someone who has been in the facility within 24 hours is suspected of having COVID-19, follow cleaning and disinfection recommendations. Follow requirements in **mandatory OSHA standards** 29 CFR 1910.104 and PPE appropriate for exposure to cleaning chemicals.
9. **Record and report COVID-19 infections and deaths:** Under **mandatory OSHA rules in 29 CFR part 1904**, employers must record an illness on OSHA's Form 300 logs if the following requirements are met: (1) the case is a confirmed case of COVID-19 and (2) the case involves one or more relevant recording criteria (set forth in 29 CFR 1904.7) (e.g., medical treatment beyond first aid) and (3) the case involves one or more relevant recording criteria (set forth in 29 CFR 1904.7) (e.g., medical treatment beyond first aid). Employers must also report COVID-19 fatalities and hospitalizations to OSHA. More information on OSHA's reporting requirements is available in *Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements for COVID-19 Infections and Deaths*. Employers should also report outbreaks to local health departments as required and support their contact tracing efforts.

In addition, employers should be aware that Section 11(c) of the Act prohibits reprisal or discrimination against an employee for reporting an infection or exposure to COVID-19 to an employer. In addition, **mandatory OSHA standard** 29 CFR 1910.104 prohibits an employer from penalizing an employee for reporting a work-related illness.

*Note on recording adverse reactions to vaccines:* OSHA, like many other federal agencies, is working diligently to ensure that we do not give any suggestion of discouraging workers from receiving COVID-19 vaccination or to disincentivize employers from complying with part 1904's recording requirements to require any employers to record worker side effects from COVID-19 vaccination. OSHA's position at that time to determine the best course of action moving forward. Individuals may choose to report side effects to OSHA's Reporting System.

10. **Implement protections from retaliation and set up an anonymous process for workers to voice concerns** Section 11(c) of the Act prohibits discharging or in any other way discriminating against an employee for engaging in various occupational safety and health activities. Section 11(c) could include discriminating against employees for raising a reasonable concern about infection control measures, such as through print, online, social, or any other means. Employers should ensure that workers can safely wearing their own PPE, such as a respirator, face shield, gloves, or surgical mask.

In addition to notifying workers of their rights to a safe and healthful work environment, ensure that workers know their rights to safety and health, and that there are prohibitions against retaliation for raising workplace safety and health concerns. Employers should also ensure that workers are protected from retaliation for reporting health activities (see educating and training workers about COVID-19 policies and procedures, above); also consider providing an anonymous reporting system for concerns.

11. **Follow other applicable mandatory OSHA standards:** All of OSHA's standards that apply to protecting workers are included in *OSHA's Mandatory Standards*. OSHA's **standards** include: requirements for PPE (29 CFR part 1910, Subpart I (e.g., 1910.132 and 133)), respiratory protection from airborne pathogens: (29 CFR 1910.1030), and OSHA's requirements for employee access to records.

healthcare workplaces will be covered by the **mandatory OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard**.  
 website. Employers are also required by the General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act, to provide a safe and healthful workplace for their employees who are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

## Appendix: Measures Appropriate for Higher-Risk Workplaces with Mixed-Vaccination Status

Employers should take additional steps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers in workplaces with environmental factors, especially in locations of substantial or high transmission:

- **Close contact**— where unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers are working close to one another, for example in a manufacturing or factory setting. Such workers may also be near one another at other times, such as when clocking in or out, during breaks, or in common areas.
- **Duration of contact** – where unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers often have prolonged closeness to co-workers. The duration of contact with potentially infectious individuals increases the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission.
- **Type of contact** – where unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers may be exposed to the infectious virus through direct contact with workers in a manufacturing or factory setting cough or sneeze, especially in poorly ventilated spaces. Confined spaces increase the risk of exposure and transmission. It is also possible, although less likely, that exposure could occur from contact with shared surfaces such as break room tables. Shared closed spaces such as break rooms, locker rooms, and interior hallways in the factory.
- **Other distinctive factors that may increase risk among unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers include**
  - A common practice at some workplaces of sharing employer-provided transportation such as ride-share vans.
  - Frequent contact with other individuals in community settings, especially in areas where there is substantial transmission.
  - Communal housing or living quarters onboard vessels with other unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk individuals.

In these types of higher-risk workplaces – which include manufacturing; meat, seafood, and poultry processing; and other high-risk settings – this Appendix provides best practices to protect unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers. Please read the general precautions described above, including isolation of infected or possibly infected workers, and other measures.

In all workplaces with heightened risk due to workplace environmental factors where there are unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers:

- Stagger break times in these generally high-population workplaces, or provide temporary break areas and restrict workers congregating during breaks. Such workers should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others at all times.
- Stagger workers' arrival and departure times to avoid congregations of unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers.
- Provide visual cues (e.g., floor markings, signs) as a reminder to maintain physical distancing.
- Require unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers, and also fully vaccinated workers in areas of substantial or high transmission to wear masks, and encourage and consider requiring customers and other visitors to do the same.
- Implement strategies (tailored to your workplace) to improve ventilation that protects workers as outlined in CDC's *Guidance on Ventilation in the Workplace*, and ASHRAE *Guidance for Building Operations and Industrial Settings*.

In high-volume retail workplaces (or well-defined work areas within retail workplaces) where there are unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers:

- Ask customers and other visitors to wear masks—or consider requiring them—especially in areas of substantial or high transmission.
- Consider ways to promote physical distancing between unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk people and/or limiting the number of people in the workplace.
- Move the electronic payment terminal/credit card reader farther away from unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers.



- Move the electronic payment terminal/credit card reader farther away from unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers and such workers, if possible.
- Adjust stocking activities to limit contact between unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers and customers.

Unvaccinated or otherwise at-risk workers are also at risk when traveling to and from work in employer-provided bus

- Notify unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers of this risk and, to the extent feasible, help them limit the number of passengers.
- Make sure all unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk workers sharing a vehicle are wearing appropriate face coverings in areas of substantial or high community transmission.
- Where not prohibited by weather conditions, open vehicle windows.

In meat, poultry, and seafood processing settings; manufacturing facilities; and assembly line operations (including those involving workers:

- Ensure adequate ventilation in the facility, or if feasible, move work outdoors.
- Space such workers out, ideally at least 6 feet apart, and ensure that such workers are not working directly across from each other. Use of face coverings and physical distancing.
- If barriers are used where physical distancing cannot be maintained, they should be made of a solid, impermeable material that is easily cleaned or replaced. Barriers should block face-to-face pathways and should not flap or otherwise move out of position when used.
- Barriers do not replace the need for physical distancing – at least six feet of separation should be maintained between workers where possible.

<sup>1</sup> CDC provides information about face coverings as one type of mask among other types of masks. OSHA differs from CDC's definition of masks that meet OSHA's Respiratory Protection Standard.

CDC's definition of masks includes those that are made of cloth, those that are disposable, and those that meet a specific performance standard or improvised (i.e., homemade) and are not considered personal protective equipment (PPE). Surgical masks are typically considered medical devices and are used to protect workers against splashes and sprays (i.e., droplets) containing potentially infectious agents. Surgical masks are not considered PPE.

<sup>2</sup> People who are not fully vaccinated should be tested immediately after being identified (with known exposure to someone with COVID-19) and tested again in 5–7 days after last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop during quarantine.

<sup>3</sup> The CDC and the Department of Education have addressed situations where a student cannot wear a mask because of a medical condition. See *Schools and COVID-19 Manual - Volume 1* (updated).

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1 for more on masking.

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