



The Five Steps to
Resetting Agricultural
Operations During
COVID-19 Recovery



Gallagher

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

Gallagher's expertise can help your:

PEOPLE by supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of your workforce

PROPERTY by monitoring and mitigating potential virus rebounds or outbreaks

FINANCIAL STABILITY by reducing your risk and supporting your revenue streams

As states and other government authorities lift the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses are starting to prepare for reopening. The decision to reopen is a complex issue. We cannot advise you whether you should or should not reopen your business. If you decide to do so, we have generated this information for your review and consideration. It includes some high-level ideas that you may want to consider as you move through the process, and may not take into account all of the unique and specific issues that may be involved in opening your business. If you have questions about this information or your insurance coverages, please contact your Gallagher representative.

Agriculture is critical infrastructure and has continued to operate at nearly normal levels during the pandemic. While agriculture is functioning, it has still been affected by social and workplace distancing, increased sanitation, workforce illnesses, and supply chain and market challenges. Most agricultural businesses have restricted visitors, modified work schedules and implemented personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements.

In this whitepaper, we will take a look at steps you can take for returning to the workplace.

Five-Step Process to Returning to the Workplace

- STEP 1** Continuing Essential Operations
- STEP 2** Employees—Implementation Policies and Procedures by Role and Function
- STEP 3** Facilities—Sanitation, Life Safety, Building Systems and Social Distancing
- STEP 4** Supply Chain and Third-Party Services
- STEP 5** Customer, Client and Public Relationships

STEP
1

CONTINUING ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS

Essential operations should continue to follow guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control, the Occupation Safety and Health Administration, and state and local authorities. Guidance from these agencies continues to evolve as conditions change. It is important to note that as states loosen restrictions on business operations, the threat of the virus is not diminished. Employers must remain vigilant and use all guidance as the minimum standard that may be enhanced to meet the hazards presented in their workplaces.

The workforce is a microcosm of the surrounding community, so monitoring infection rates will help employers sense the health of their workforce. Companies with multiple locations in different jurisdictions should monitor changing conditions and requirements in each of their operational areas. Gallagher has a number of useful tools to monitor infection rates. These include:

Gallagher Peak Infection Analysis

This tool tracks infection rates, monitors for peak periods and spikes. It is especially impactful for organizations with geographically dispersed populations.

Gallagher Forecast

Gallagher Forecast provides real-time analytics that can help select clients monitor confirmed cases of COVID-19 near critical locations.



STEP
2

EMPLOYEES—IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BY ROLE AND FUNCTION

Employees are a critical part of your organizational success. Keeping them safe and ensuring their wellbeing is key as we move into the recovery phase. While performing the following steps, particular attention should be focused on employee safety and health.

Screening and Monitoring of Workers

All employees and visitors should be screened before entry. Screening can be done on-site, or the employees may self-monitor and report before leaving home. Employee screening should be completed following CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html>. These recommendations include a series of health status questions, body temperature screening and secondary screening if needed. Ensure that PPE is in working condition and worn properly.

Distancing Workers

Workers should practice self-distancing from each other as much as possible. Work areas should be arranged at a minimum of six feet apart to limit exposure to others.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are not considered PPE, but they are used to limit the potential spread of the virus and should be used when it is not possible or practical to maintain workplace distancing. Face coverings should cover the mouth and nose, but should not interfere with vision or required PPE. Face coverings may also induce heat illness. Employees should have multiple face masks so that they can keep them laundered. They may also need to change them out during the day, especially in humid and dusty environments.

Engineering Controls

Engineering controls such as barriers, sneeze guards and ventilation systems can be effective in limiting the transmission of viruses. Engineering controls should be the first line of defense and can be especially helpful when physical distancing of workers cannot be effectively implemented.

Employee Training

Employee training should include preventative measures, both at home and in the workplace. Topics should include hand-washing reminders and procedures, symptoms monitoring, cough and sneeze etiquette, how to stop the spread, and facility screening processes and requirements.

Personal Protective Equipment

PPE such as NIOSH-approved N95 masks and surgical masks should be reserved for medical workers, unless required for specific workplace protections covered under a respiratory protection program. Employers may want to consider alternative powered air purifier or elastomeric half-face respirators as an alternative to N95s to conserve those resources for medical providers. Cloth face coverings should not be used over other types of respirators as they might interfere with the proper function of the respirator.

Transportation On and Off the Job

Whenever possible, company vehicles and equipment should be assigned to just one operator to limit exposures. The equipment and or vehicles should be disinfected at the end of each shift or between users. If the vehicle is used to transport passengers, each should wear a face covering and use hand sanitizer when entering and leaving the vehicle. The vehicle should be disinfected following each trip.

Employees should be encouraged to limit ride-sharing and use proper cleaning and disinfection following each trip. Once home, they should remove clothing/footwear. Consider washing work clothes separate from family laundry.



STEP
3

FACILITIES—SANITATION, LIFE SAFETY, BUILDING SYSTEMS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Facilities Assessment

Employers should conduct a complete assessment of their operations facilities to identify areas that may lead to the spread of the virus. Evaluation should include the physical plant, processes and procedures, employee awareness and compliance.

Particular attention should be paid to employee work areas, break rooms, foot traffic patterns, shared office spaces, locker rooms and restroom facilities.

Shared tools and equipment should also be evaluated. The assessment should include motor vehicles, buses, tractors, implements, forklifts, feed trucks and harvesting equipment.

Assess supplies of hand sanitizer, paper towels, soap and disinfectants. Plan for higher usage beyond normal restocking.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Each area should be cleaned and disinfected, and particular attention should be paid to high-touch areas such as door handles, restroom facilities and break areas.

This is a good time to consider increasing hand-washing facilities and hand-sanitizer stations. If bringing in a third party to disinfect, consider performing those duties prior to workers being present or after the conclusion of each work shift.

Engineering Controls

Continue to limit employees to essential staff or those that are unable to work remotely. Separate work areas if space allows.

Physical Barriers

Where it is not possible to provide physical distancing between work areas, physical barriers may be used. These might include temporary walls, cubicle partitions, Plexiglas dividers or vinyl curtains or making use of unoccupied spaces.

Signage

As previously discussed, communicating your company's commitment to the health and safety of your visitors and employees is essential. Signage that clearly communicates your message can eliminate misunderstandings and reinforce expectations for both visitors and employees. Proper placement and font size is critical. A small note taped to the front door requires the visitor to stop and read something while they have their hand on the door handle. Many visitors will not take the time to read it, or they may be frustrated by your message. Keep messages clear and concise, with no more than three to four bullet points. It is best if the message can be read before your visitors exit their vehicles.

STEP
4

SUPPLY CHAIN AND THIRD-PARTY SERVICES

Essential Third-Party Vendors and Contractors

Identify essential third party vendors and contractors, as well as secondary or alternative vendors. Discuss with them their commitment and strategies regarding how they will serve you during this time.

Security and Screening

Identify security and screening requirements with vendors and contractors in advance. Ensure that the vendors are willing and able to abide by your requirements.

Contracts

Establish and review contracts, delivery schedules, and logistics to ensure adequate and timely deliverables.

Cleaning Sanitation and Maintenance

Inform third-party vendors and contractors of your commitment to cleaning, sanitation and maintenance requirements. Ensure that your vendors and contractors share that same commitment.



STEP
5

CUSTOMER, CLIENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

Pre-Arrival Communications

As you begin to allow clients, vendors and contractors back into your facilities, it will be important for them to understand your commitment to their health and safety as well as that of your employees. Email, phone calls and social media may be useful in communicating your message with advance notification of what will be expected.

Security and Screening

In addition to screening employees, you may consider screening visitors as well. If possible, consider non-contact delivery rather than having customers enter your facilities. Rather than using waiting rooms or lobbies, have clients call when they arrive on-site, then escort them directly to the meeting room. If meeting in person is required, set up seating at meeting tables to maintain six feet of distance. Remove extra chairs and direct guests to seating. Provide hand sanitizer, sanitized pens and copies of documents to limit the exchange of those items. Remember to sanitize the area before and after each guest.

Face Coverings and Social Distancing Requirements

In many areas, face coverings that cover the mouth and nose are required by state and or local jurisdictions. Your company should comply with those requirements both for your employees and your guests. Social distancing is not second nature and in many cases breaks social norms. We are used to body language and facial expressions when greeting others and thanking them for their business. Help visitors by setting the example and acknowledging that it may be uncomfortable.

Bio-Security Requirements

Many agricultural businesses have bio-security requirements. Those requirements are more important than ever. Employers should review and reinforce their bio-security requirements and evaluate how those requirements line up with virus containment. In some cases, current virus containment measures will reflect existing bio-security measures. This is a good time to review the relationship of both systems for maximum impact.

Gallagher will continue to provide easy to understand, meaningful guidance you can use today and in the future as pandemic conditions change. If you are reopening your operation after being closed for an extended period, modifying your current workplace strategy or having to conduct temporary closures in the future, Gallagher is here to provide guidance to assist you in making your own critical business decisions.

RESOURCES

CCD and OSHA Interim Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html>

Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person With Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html>

COVID 19 Resources for Ag Communities: https://www.unmc.edu/publichealth/cscash/_documents/COVID19-Virus-Resources-CS-CASH.pdf

The road back to normal will most likely not be linear. Our response must be nimble and adjust to conditions, day-by-day in some cases. Clear and concise communication with employees, visitors and partnering businesses is essential. Be prepared to make changes as new mandates are generated by local, state or national agencies. Your Gallagher National Risk Control team is here to help you through these challenging times. Please let us know how we can assist you.

Gallagher continues to monitor the potential risks related to returning to the workplace through OSHA, the CDC, the WHO, and state and federal regulatory authorities. Please visit ajg.com/us/pandemic-preparedness for the latest information.



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