WISCONSIN

GUIDANCE ON PREPARING WORKPLACES FOR COVID-19

WAREHOUSE AND WHOLESALE TRADES

Warehouses and wholesale suppliers play an important role in connecting Wisconsin businesses and customers with the parts and supplies they need. The industry employs more than 9,000 people in 1,000 dedicated facilities, but also impacts employees working within warehousing operations affiliated with Wisconsin's other key industry sectors, ranging from agriculture and manufacturing to health sciences and retail.

While most wholesale operations are essential businesses and have remained open, there are many that need to prepare for opening, and others that will ramp up activities as demand from other reopening business increases. To ensure consistency in keeping you and your employees safe, this document is intended to provide general guidelines and best practices for businesses looking to update procedures, prepare workers and/or reopen their facility when it is time to do so. In addition, please see the "**General Guidance for All Businesses**" document for guidance that applies to all industries, and please consult the other available industry guides as relevant for your specific business type.

Recommendations for Warehouse and Wholesale Trades

Employee health and hygiene

- Establish a strategy for on-site health screening upon entrance to the facility (see "**General Guidance for All Businesses**").
- Employees who have a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed to work.
- Maintain an adequate supply of paper goods, soap and hand sanitizer to allow employees to practice proper hand hygiene.
- Install additional hand washing and/or sanitary equipment stations.
- Educate your employees on the need to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially before preparing or eating food; after using the bathroom; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing one's nose. Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol may be used if soap and water are not available.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles.

Clean and disinfect

- Maintain an adequate supply of cleaning and disinfection products.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as workstations, touchscreens, handrails, doorknobs, light switches, countertops and bathroom fixtures.
- Consider adding extra cleaning teams to increase cleaning frequency and focus.
- Discourage staff from sharing work tools and equipment. If you are unable to individually assign tools such as hand scanners, label printers, staplers and tape dispensers, disinfect them before and after each use.

- Consider purchasing no-touch equipment such as staplers or automatic pallet wrappers.
- Add disinfection requirements to your daily checklists for shared equipment such as pallet jacks and powered industrial trucks.
- Provide personal pens, markers and other routine work supplies for each individual.

Protective equipment, face masks and cloth face coverings

- Face masks or coverings should be used by all workers in warehouse and wholesale trade environments where workers are in close proximity to others. Face coverings are not appropriate where masks or respirators are required.
- Face shields or goggles can be used by employees who must work together at distances closer than six feet.
- Instruct your employees in how to properly put on and remove a face mask or cloth face covering. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides guidance on how to properly wear a face covering and offers tutorials for how to make one.

Engineering controls

- Increase ventilation rates.
- Increase the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Review guidance from the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers and consult with HVAC professionals when considering ventilation changes to reduce the risk of COVID-19.
- Nonporous physical barriers should be used to separate employees who have work locations that are less than six feet apart.

Social distancing in the workplace

- Review your processes and workflows to ensure that employees are at least six feet away from each other, when possible.
- Do not allow personal contact (e.g., handshakes, hugs, fist bumps, high fives) or close conversations.
- Limit access to areas where people gather.
- Develop a protocol for any physical signoff requirements to avoid close contact.

Personnel movement in the facility

- If possible, make narrow hallways one-way only.
- In order to allow employees to move between areas of the facility without having to touch doorknobs or handles, consider removing or keeping doors open if security measures allow, or add automatic doors or foot pulls.
- Instruct employees to avoid hallway conversations and interactions.

Break rooms and locker rooms

- Stagger breaks and modify break room seating to ensure that employees cannot sit within six feet of one another.
- Frequently clean and disinfect tables, chairs/benches, handles, faucets, countertops, refrigerators and microwaves.
- Consider suspending coffee service and/or encouraging employees to bring their own coffee into work in travel cups.
- Make sanitizing wipes readily available in break rooms and locker rooms to clean common surfaces after each break and shift change.
- With some employees working remotely, determine if any office spaces can be repurposed for additional break room and locker room space.

Shift changes

- Stagger workdays and start times to the extent possible.
- Investigate the possibility of using phone apps, web-based apps or a camera to clock employees in/out.
- If a time clock must be used, add floor marks to ensure proper spacing of six feet between employees and provide hand sanitizer near the time clock.
- Make sure to include a regular sanitation schedule between and during shifts.

Employee training, support and communication

- Use routine meetings, postings (including electronic postings), the company website and start-of-day reminders to communicate with workers about actions being taken to prevent COVID-19 exposure.
- Institute a process for workers to report COVID-19 symptoms.
- Post signage in languages understood by your employees to remind them of safe practices for social distancing, hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Provide refresher training for employees on proper handwashing, social distancing, employee illness reporting and any other procedural changes the company has implemented to address COVID-19.
- Train employees on how to recognize and report areas or practices that pose a risk for spreading the virus. Define a process to quickly review concerns and provide mitigation strategies in these areas. Include a recognizing/reporting module in your COVID-19 response plan.
- Consider the use of electronic communication devices, such as wireless headphones for loud/ noisy areas and walkie-talkies for less noisy areas. These may help employees communicate in production areas while still maintaining safe distancing. In particular, these can be useful for cross-training and training new employees.
- Consider whether daily audits of new health and safety measures may increase acceptance and effectiveness of the new measures.
- Solicit suggestions from employees on ways to implement social distancing in the workplace.

BADGER BOUNCE BACK

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

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WISCONSIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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