

Employee Information & Training

Oregon OSHA COVID-19 Workplace Rule

Effective December 21, 2020, employers must provide workers with information and training regarding COVID-19. This can be provided in a number of ways, including computer-based models. What is important is that the material be presented in manner and language understood by the employees.

Note: To the degree training provided already by the veterinary facility before the adoption of this rule complies with all or any portion of the required training, the employer does not need to repeat the training but may need to take steps to ensure that additional information is covered.

It also is important that appropriate employee feedback can be provided on the required topics. For example, you can accomplish this conducting a safety committee meeting, a Zoom discussion, or via electronic communication.

What is covered in this information?

- Physical Distancing, Masks and Sanitation Requirements
- Safe and Healthy Work Practices and Control Measures
- COVID-19 Signs and Symptoms: Reporting Procedures
- Model Policy for Notifying Employees When a COVID-19 Exposure Occurs
- Medical Removal of an Employee from the Workplace (if required)
- Characteristics and Methods of COVID-19 Transmission
- COVID-19 Signs and Symptoms
- How COVID-19 is Transmitted by Pre-Symptomatic and Asymptomatic Persons
- How to Quarantine
- Training Verification Form

Physical Distancing, Masks and Sanitation Requirements

As healthcare providers of animal patients, veterinarians and other team members can model appropriate and necessary behavior to staff, clients, and the general public during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We encourage you to have clear guidelines in place to minimize – as much as possible – physical contact in the veterinary facility. You can't provide care to your patients without a health and physically well staff.

Every facility is different in terms of how it is configured, what services are offered, and the size of staff. There is no one-size-fits all set of guidelines to achieve optimal physical distancing.

Following are some best practices related to physical distancing, the wearing of masks, and sanitation and disinfection measures:

Physical Distancing Measures

Veterinary-specific: Employers must ensure physical distancing by adopting a curbside model for all animals while the owner remains in the vehicle, or strict enforcement of 6-foot distancing within a waiting area, or a combination of the two.

Owners may not enter veterinary facilities, except under the following circumstances:

- Owners and caretakers may come into the facility exam room for the purpose of euthanasia.
- Owners and caretakers may come into the facility exam room for the purpose of receiving instructions on how to provide home care for the animal patient, including, but not limited to, giving medications, fluids, managing feeding tubes or catheters, etc.
- In the case of examining or treating animals that may pose a threat to the veterinary worker, the animal owner or caretaker may be allowed into the veterinary facility as long as a source control is observed.

Unless one of these exceptions is met, owners are to stay in their vehicles or in a waiting area if strict 6-foot distancing can be maintained. Any employees or owners who enter the clinic must wear a mask, face covering or face shield.

At the Facility: Whenever possible, physical distancing must be adhered to by all employees, whether indoors or outdoors.

Re-work in-clinic workflow to allow for adequate distancing between the staff.

- Whenever possible, stay at least 6 feet apart. It can't always be achieved but it should be a goal.
- Review the facility layout and operations to find out if people who normally sit near each other can be separated. For instance, more than one person is in the reception area and with 6 feet of each other, consider what can be done to avoid this, if possible. This might mean moving someone to an office or lounge or transitioning some activities that can be accomplished at home.
- Look at the facility's lounge, lunchroom or office spaces and try to move people around or schedule things so that only one person is in a small room at a time.
- If a procedure necessitates close contact between people (e.g., blood collection, catheter placement, restraint), take a moment to step back and think about whether the procedure is absolutely necessary or if there are alternative ways of accomplishing the same thing that don't require multiple people.
- When employees have to be in close contact, be efficient. Get everything set up in advance so that whatever needs to be done can be done quickly.
- Limit as much as possible interactions between various groupings of staff members. Some facilities, for instance, have divided staff into teams that work in shifts.

Medication/Food: Deliver medication refills and pet food orders to clients outside the facility, maintaining personal distancing. Direct clients to your online Rx and pet food portals for home delivery of needed items.

Telemedicine: Consider the use of Veterinary Telemedicine to limit visits to the facility. Pursuant to Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-03, the OVMEB has determined that veterinarians have the option to provide treatment for the duration of the State of Emergency by VTM without first having to conduct a physical exam to establish a VCPR.

- Please note that all other portions of the VTM rule continue to apply. When using telemedicine, you can issue prescriptions if you believe it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- You must ensure that the technology you are using is sufficient and of appropriate quality to provide accuracy of remote assessment and diagnosis of the patient.
- You must also ensure that the medical information obtained via VTM is recorded completely in your patient's medical record and meets all applicable requirements for current medical recordkeeping.

Masks, Face Coverings and Face Shields

Oregon law currently requires that masks, face coverings or face shields be worn at all times inside the place of employment.

To minimize the risk of airborne spread of COVID-19, veterinary facilities must review and implement the Oregon Health Authority's guidance. In addition:

- It is strongly recommended, but not required, that individuals wear a mask or face covering as source control rather than relying upon a face shield alone.
- When employees are transported in a vehicle for work purposes, regardless of the travel distance or duration involved, all occupants in the vehicle must wear a mask, face covering, or face shield. **Note:** This requirement does not apply when all occupants within the vehicle are members of the same household.

Cleaning and Sanitation Protocols

The *Oregon OSHA Temporary COVID-19 Rule for Workplaces* requires regular cleaning of all common areas, shared equipment, high-touch surfaces at least:

- Once every 24 hours if the workplace is occupied less than 12 hours a day; or
- Every 8 hours if the workplace is occupied for more than 12 hours per day.

Following are measures to consider:

1. **Have all Safety Data Sheets** or product safety data sheets for cleaning and disinfection materials **available**. Follow instructions for proper mixing, disposal, and PPE (e.g., gloves, eye protection). As able, ensure the area is well ventilated.
2. Exam rooms and cages should be cleaned and disinfected **immediately following use**. Place signage at the room entry that it should not be used until cleaning and disinfection is completed.
3. As applicable, remove all bedding and organic material (e.g., feces, feed, hair, linens, bandage, or other materials) and dispose in designated waste bin. **Gloves should be worn** during this procedure.
4. **"Dry"-clean surfaces** (e.g., sweeping, wiping with disposable microfiber cloth) to remove loose organic material.

5. **“Wet”-clean surfaces with warm water and detergent.** Scrubbing surfaces is often necessary to remove feces or bodily fluids, biofilms, and stubborn organic debris, especially in animal housing areas.
6. **Rinse with clean water.** For all rinsing and product application procedures, care must be exercised to avoid overspray. High-pressure washing should be avoided. Higher pressures can help remove stubborn organic debris but may also force debris and organisms into crevices or porous materials, from which they can later emerge. Additionally, high-pressure washing causes aerosolization and overspray, which may spread organisms widely, even into previously uncontaminated areas.
7. **Allow the area to dry** or manually do so. If excess water remains, subsequently applied disinfectants may be diluted to the point of inefficacy.
8. **Apply disinfectant solution at the indicated concentration** and ensure the **appropriate contact time** (allotted time required for disinfectant to remain wet on the surface to kill the pathogens of interest; time is based on the product, concentration, and targeted pathogens but generally 5–10 min).
9. **Rinse thoroughly with clean water;** this is especially important for disinfectants that leave a residue or for surfaces vulnerable to damage from the disinfectant. Always follow the disinfectant label for appropriate use, antimicrobial spectrum, concentration, and contact time.
10. **Allow the treated area to dry** as much as possible before reintroducing animals or reusing the area.
11. In known contaminated or **high-risk areas, a second application of a disinfectant** with wide spectrum (e.g., accelerated hydrogen peroxide product) should be considered as a final decontamination step. Ensure appropriate contact time, rinse with clean water, and allow the treated area to dry, as stated above.

COVID-19 Signs & Symptoms Reporting Procedures

To ensure the health and safety of veterinary facility employees and clients, the Oregon Health Authority recommends the following precautions:

1. Employees should take their temperature at home prior to work. If a fever is present, employees should remain at home and notify their employer.
2. Upon arrival, ask employees about any symptoms such as:
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Fever
 - Headache
 - Loss of smell or taste
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting

Note: Employees have the responsibility to notify the facility owner, the Managing Veterinarian, or other identified lead person of any COVID-related concerns about their health. If any of the above symptoms are present, the employee should not be allowed to work.

- Any employee exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 outside of the veterinary facility (households, contact with friends, etc.) should not work and isolate and quarantine.
- Quarantine is mandatory, regardless of a negative test.

Model Policy: Notifying Employees When COVID-19 Exposure Occurs

The Oregon OSHA Temporary COVID-19 rule includes a provision requiring employers to develop a COVID-19 infection notification process. The process must provide for the notification of exposed employees – those who were within 6 feet of a confirmed COVID-19 individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more – and of affected employees – those who work in the same facility or in the same well-defined portion of the facility (such as on the same floor or in the same building within a larger complex).

This policy and procedure need not be extensive. Implementation of a simple, straightforward policy such as the following model (see next page for fillable PDF) would satisfy the requirements of the rule:

COVID-19 Notifications by _____

All employees are expected to notify _____ in the event that they test positive for COVID-19 or they become aware that another individual who has been present in the worksite (employee, client, contractor, guest, etc.) has been confirmed as having COVID-19. When such a notification occurs or the veterinary facility becomes aware that a person with confirmed COVID-19 has been in the workplace by any other means, the following measures will be taken:

- A. Based on a reasonable assessment of the activity of the individual with confirmed COVID-19, the veterinary facility will seek to identify each employee who was likely to have been within 6 feet of the infected individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more. Those employees will be notified individually of the exposure (by telephone, text message, or e-mail) and will be advised that they should seek guidance from their individual physician or from local public health officials about testing options. The individual who was the source of the exposure will *not* be identified.
- B. In addition, the following notification will be sent to everyone working in the facility where the exposure occurred, even if they did not appear to have close contact with the individual in question:

We have been notified an individual who has been present at [location] has been diagnosed with COVID-19. We are notifying those individuals who appear to have had close contact with the individual, but we want to alert everyone to the possibility of exposure.

If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 illness, please inform [contact person] and contact your health care provider. The veterinary facility, as always, will protect all employee medical information and will disclose it only to the degree such disclosure is strictly necessary.

For more information on COVID-19, including symptoms of which you may want to be aware, please visit the Oregon Health Authority COVID-19 website (<https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>) or the US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention COVID-19 website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact _____

Medical Removal (Quarantine & Return to Work)

Whenever the Oregon Health Authority, local public health agency, or medical provider recommends an employee be restricted from work due to quarantine or isolation for COVID-19, such as through identification during contact tracing activities, the affected worker(s) must be directed to remain at home and away from other non-quarantined individuals.

Note: Other than the obligation to provide direction and remove such employees from the veterinary facility, the employer has no obligation to enforce the employee's isolation or quarantine.

Quarantined individuals must be allowed to work from home if suitable work is available. The affected individual is entitled to return to their previous job duties if they are still available. Return-to-work and testing decisions must be made in concordance with public health guidance and the employee's medical provider.

Note: This provision does not require a negative COVID-19 tests or a separate contact with the medical provider.

COVID-19 Cases in Veterinary Facilities

When veterinary staff have tested positive for SARS-CoV-19 in a veterinary setting, it is necessary to help the local health authority with contact tracing to identify those exposed to COVID-19.

- Exposed individuals should be advised to get tested as per testing guidelines.
- Exposed individuals may be quarantined for 14 days.
- Only with the approval of the local health department under the guidance of the health officer and the state public health veterinarian, exposed individuals may return to the workplace in accordance with CDC guidelines for medical staff. Any new workplace contact with exposed staff should be limited the greatest extent that is feasible while maintaining essential operations.
- Exposed individuals may not attend gatherings, outings or have extended contact with anyone else outside of their home during the 14 days.
- When at home, exposed individuals should wear a face covering and follow OHA quarantine guidance for 14 days to limit exposure to other household members.

Signs, Symptoms & Transmission

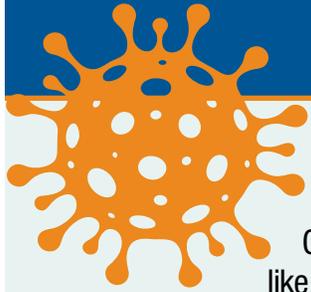
OHA has developed a multimedia course is designed to help employers meet 4 of the 10 employee training requirements found in Oregon OSHA's COVID-19 Temporary Rule. The 10 requirements are noted on their Web site (<https://osha.oregon.gov/edu/courses/Pages/COVID-19-training-requirements.aspx#other>).

The multimedia course begins with an explanation of the dangers of COVID-19 and why the temporary rule came into existence. This course is divided into 4 modules: Introduction, Signs, Symptoms and Transmission, Control Measures, and Conclusion.

The course is available at: <https://osha.oregon.gov/edu/courses/Pages/COVID-19-training-requirements.aspx>

The following document (see next page) from OHA covers Signs, Symptoms and Transmission, and the first section of this document on Physical Distancing, Masks & Sanitation covers Control Measures, so either this material or the multimedia course can be used to complete this portion of the OSHA requirements.

Know the facts about COVID-19



What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new flu and cold like illness that is caused by the novel coronavirus. While most people only experience mild symptoms, some become severely ill and die from the infection. COVID-19 is highly contagious. We have medications that help for those with severe illness but there is no effective treatment.



How does coronavirus spread?

COVID-19 is spread from symptomatic and asymptomatic people primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets infect others through contact with moist surfaces in one's nose, mouth, throat, eyes or lungs. It is believed this most commonly happens when people are near to each other – within six feet. COVID-19 can also be transmitted when one touches an object with virus present and then touches one's own mouth, eyes, or nose.

What are the symptoms and how serious is COVID-19?

When infected with COVID-19 patients can have a wide range of symptoms. Infected persons often experience no symptoms at all or have very mild symptoms resembling a cold or flu. Others experience severe symptoms that require hospitalization, medication and sometimes placement on a ventilator. Most of those who develop severe, life-threatening symptoms are older and have underlying health conditions. There have been cases of children and young otherwise healthy adults who have experienced severe disease and required hospitalization.

Symptoms



Cough



Chills



Fever



Sore throat



Muscle pain



Shortness of breath
or difficulty breathing



New loss of sense
of taste or smell



Who is at risk?

We are all at risk – this virus is easily transmitted from person to person. It has even been shown to be transmitted by individuals with few or no symptoms. We now understand that the elderly, those with chronic health conditions, those living in group care settings, and health care workers are particularly at risk for developing life-threatening illness.



How can I protect myself and others?

Steps you can take include:

- When in public cover your mouth and nose – wear a mask
- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay six feet (two big steps) distant from people outside your household (physical distancing)
- Avoid crowds
- Stay at home and away from others if you are sick
- Clean and disinfect touched surfaces and objects
- If you develop symptoms while at work or out in the public, return home, self-isolate and contact your health provider
- If you know you will sneeze – walk away from others and cover your mouth and nose (tissue or an elbow even when wearing a mask)
- If you are elderly or have underlying medical conditions – stay close to home, avoid close or physical contact with others

Document accessibility: For individuals with disabilities or individuals who speak a language other than English, OHA can provide information in alternate formats such as translations, large print, or braille. Contact the Health Information Center at 1-971-673-2411, 711 TTY or COVID19.LanguageAccess@dhsoha.state.or.us.

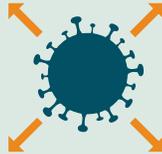


What does quarantine mean?

Quarantine means keeping someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others.

What if I feel fine?

You can spread COVID-19 to others even if you don't have any symptoms.



When should I quarantine?

Even if you don't feel sick you should quarantine if you:

- Were near someone with COVID-19.
- Traveled to Oregon from out-of-state for non-essential reasons.
- Returned to Oregon from non-essential travel out-of-state.



What is essential travel?

- Essential travel includes: work and study, critical infrastructure support, economic services and supply chains, health, immediate medical care, and safety and security.
- Non-essential travel includes travel that is considered tourism or recreational in nature.

How do I quarantine?

If you have been near someone with COVID-19:

- Stay home and at least six feet away from everyone, including the people you live with, for 14 days.

If you are quarantining because of non-essential travel:

- Stay home for 14 days. You do not need to stay six feet away from the people you live with.

You can ...

- ✓ Exercise alone
- ✓ Play games or puzzles
- ✓ Garden or sit outside your home
- ✓ Connect with people remotely



Please don't ...

- ✗ Go to the grocery store
- ✗ Go to the pharmacy
- ✗ Have friends over
- ✗ Exercise in a group



Take care

Call your health care provider if you develop COVID-19 symptoms:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of sense of taste or smell



Connect with resources

Some people may find it easy to quarantine. However, it may be harder for others. It can be especially hard for those who can't work from home, live alone, have disabilities or take care of other people in their home.

Here are some resources if you need help:

- Visit [211info.org](https://www.211info.org) or call 211.
- Oregon Health Plan members can contact ohp.oregon.gov.
- Your [local or tribal public health authority](#) will help you find resources.
- Central Oregon resources can be found at www.centraloregonresources.org.

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COVID-19 Training Verification Form

Oregon OSHA's temporary rule for COVID-19 (OAR 437-001-0744) requires all employers to provide workers with information and training regarding COVID-19.

Business/Employer Name _____

Employee Name _____

Training Date: _____

My initials next to each item verify that my employer has provided me with information, training, and an opportunity to provide feedback on these topics:

- Physical distancing requirements as they apply to my workplace and job function(s).
- Mask, face covering, or face shield requirements as they apply to my workplace and job function(s).
- COVID-19 sanitation requirements as they apply to my workplace and job function(s).
- COVID-19 signs and symptom reporting procedures that apply to my workplace.
- My employer's COVID-19 infection notification process.
- How my employer will provide direction on medical removal due to quarantine or isolation for COVID-19.
- The characteristics and methods of transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- The symptoms of the COVID-19 disease.
- The ability of pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID-19 persons to transmit the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- Safe and healthy work practices and control measures, including but not limited to, physical distancing, sanitation and disinfection practices.
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Additional employee feedback

This training verification form is provided as a convenience, but is not required by the rule. Oregon OSHA's Administrative Rule 437-001-0744 Addressing COVID-19 Workplace Risks is available at [osha.oregon.gov](https://www.osha.oregon.gov). COVID-19 information and training requirements are in 437-001-0744(3)(i).