



**COVID-19
ESSENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKER**

The individual identified in this letter works for (name of farm/company), as part of the nation’s agricultural workforce in a role identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as being part of the nation’s Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce for Food and Agriculture. DHS has determined that the food and agriculture industry is essential for the continued function of the economy in this time of crisis and that it is critical to the nation’s food supply that this individual be permitted to perform their critical job function.

In its March 19, 2020 guidance defining essential workers during the COVID-19 emergency DHS states that *“If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as ... food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule.”*

<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>

Agricultural labor, and specifically those involved in animal agriculture and the production of meat are a critical component of the nation’s food supply, and thus it is important that workers who make up an essential part of the food supply chain be allowed to remain operational. As such, the individual in possession of this letter is an “Essential Critical infrastructure Employee” of the Food and Agriculture industry and should be considered exempt from local restrictions such as curfews, shelter-in-place orders, and other mobility restrictions when reporting to, returning from, or performing his or her necessary work functions.

_____ is an employee of
[Employee Name]

[Farm Name/Business Name]

For verification or inquiries regarding this request, please contact the farm business above at

_____ .

Issued by:

[CEO/Owner/Supervisor]

Date



March 19, 2020

**MEMORANDUM ON IDENTIFICATION OF ESSENTIAL CRITICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS DURING COVID-19 RESPONSE**

FROM: Christopher C. Krebs
Director
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

As the Nation comes together to slow the spread of COVID-19, on March 16th, the President issued updated Coronavirus Guidance for America. This guidance states that:

"If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule."

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) executes the Secretary of Homeland Security's responsibilities as assigned under the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide strategic guidance, promote a national unity of effort, and coordinate the overall federal effort to ensure the security and resilience of the Nation's critical infrastructure. CISA uses trusted partnerships with both the public and private sectors to deliver infrastructure resilience assistance and guidance to a broad range of partners.

In accordance with this mandate, and in collaboration with other federal agencies and the private sector, CISA developed an initial list of "Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers" to help State and local officials as they work to protect their communities, while ensuring continuity of functions critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security. The list can also inform critical infrastructure community decision-making to determine the sectors, sub-sectors, segments, or critical functions that should continue normal operations, appropriately modified to account for Centers for Disease Control (CDC) workforce and customer protection guidance.

The attached list identifies workers who conduct a range of operations and services that are essential to continued critical infrastructure viability, including staffing operations centers, maintaining and repairing critical infrastructure, operating call centers, working construction, and performing management functions, among others. The industries they support represent, but are not necessarily limited to, medical and healthcare, telecommunications, information technology systems, defense, food and agriculture, transportation and logistics, energy, water and wastewater, law enforcement, and public works.

We recognize that State, local, tribal, and territorial governments are ultimately in charge of implementing and executing response activities in communities under their jurisdiction, while the Federal Government is in a supporting role. As State and local communities consider COVID-19-related restrictions, CISA is offering this list to assist prioritizing activities related to continuity of operations and incident response, including the appropriate movement of critical infrastructure workers within and between jurisdictions.

Accordingly, this list is advisory in nature. It is not, nor should it be considered to be, a federal directive or standard in and of itself.

In addition, these identified sectors and workers are not intended to be the authoritative or exhaustive list of critical infrastructure sectors and functions that should continue during the COVID-19 response. Instead, State and local officials should use their own judgment in using their authorities and issuing implementation directives and guidance. Similarly, critical infrastructure industry partners will use their own judgment, informed by this list, to ensure continued operations of critical infrastructure services and functions. All decisions should appropriately balance public safety while ensuring the continued delivery of critical infrastructure services and functions.

CISA will continue to work with you and our partners in the critical infrastructure community to update this list as the Nation's response to COVID-19 evolves. We also encourage you to submit how you might use this list so that we can develop a repository of use cases for broad sharing across the country.

Should you have questions about this list, please contact CISA at CISA.CAT@cisa.dhs.gov.

Attachment: "Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19 Response"



CISA
CYBER+INFRASTRUCTURE

DEFEND TODAY, SECURE TOMORROW



Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19 Response

Version 1.1 (March 23, 2020)

THE IMPORTANCE OF ESSENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS

Functioning critical infrastructure is imperative during the response to the COVID-19 emergency for both public health and safety as well as community well-being. Certain critical infrastructure industries have a special responsibility in these times to continue operations.

This guidance and accompanying list are intended to support State, Local, and industry partners in identifying the critical infrastructure sectors and the essential workers needed to maintain the services and functions Americans depend on daily and that need to be able to operate resiliently during the COVID-19 pandemic response.

This document gives guidance to State, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions and the private sector on defining essential critical infrastructure workers. Promoting the ability of such workers to continue to work during periods of community restriction, access management, social distancing, or closure orders/directives is crucial to community resilience and continuity of essential functions.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS

This list was developed in consultation with federal agency partners, industry experts, and State and local officials, and is based on several key principles:

1. Response efforts to the COVID-19 pandemic are locally executed, State managed, and federally supported
2. Everyone should follow guidance from the CDC, as well as State and local government officials, regarding strategies to limit disease spread.
3. Workers should be encouraged to work remotely when possible and focus on core business activities. In-person, non-mandatory activities should be delayed until the resumption of normal operations.
4. When continuous remote work is not possible, businesses should enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, separating staff by off-setting shift hours or days and/or social distancing. These steps can preserve the workforce and allow operations to continue.

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Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

5. All organizations should implement their business continuity and pandemic plans, or put plans in place if they do not exist. Delaying implementation is not advised and puts at risk the viability of the business and the health and safety of the employees.
6. In the modern economy, reliance on technology and just-in-time supply chains means that certain workers must be able to access certain sites, facilities, and assets to ensure continuity of functions.
7. Government employees, such as emergency managers, and the business community need to establish and maintain lines of communication.
8. When government and businesses engage in discussions about critical infrastructure workers, they need to consider the implications of business operations beyond the jurisdiction where the asset or facility is located. Businesses can have sizeable economic and societal impacts as well as supply chain dependencies that are geographically distributed.
9. Whenever possible, jurisdictions should align access and movement control policies related to critical infrastructure workers to lower the burden of workers crossing jurisdictional boundaries.


IDENTIFYING ESSENTIAL CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE WORKERS


The following list of sectors and identified essential critical infrastructure workers are an initial recommended set and are intended to be overly inclusive reflecting the diversity of industries across the United States. CISA will continually solicit and accept feedback on the list (both sectors/sub sectors and identified essential workers) and will evolve the list in response to stakeholder feedback. We will also use our various stakeholder engagement mechanisms to work with partners on how they are using this list and share those lessons learned and best practices broadly. We ask that you share your feedback, both positive and negative on this list so we can provide the most useful guidance to our critical infrastructure partners. Feedback can be sent to CISA.CAT@CISA.DHS.GOV.



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Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

LAW ENFORCEMENT, PUBLIC SAFETY, FIRST RESPONDERS


- Personnel in emergency management, law enforcement, Emergency Management Systems, fire, air medical, and corrections, including front line and management
- Emergency Medical Service Technicians
- 911 call center employees
- Fusion Center employees
- Hazardous material responders from government and the private sector.
- Workers – including contracted vendors – who maintain, manufacture, or supply digital systems infrastructure supporting law enforcement emergency service, and response operations.


FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies, convenience stores, and other retail that sells human food, animal/pet food, and beverage products
- Restaurant carry-out and quick serve food operations - Carry-out and delivery food employees
- Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food processing (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) facilities; livestock, poultry, seafood slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging
- Farm workers to include those employed in animal food, feed, and ingredient production, packaging, and distribution; manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to produce our food supply domestically
- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs
- Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor-managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company cafeterias - in-plant cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs in private industries and in institutions of higher education
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- Employees of companies engaged in the production, storage, transport, and distribution of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants, renderers, and associated regulatory and government workforce
- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution

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