



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



What Offshore Oil and Gas Workers Need to Know about COVID-19

Updated Nov. 13, 2020

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Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness (see list of [symptoms](#)) caused by a virus (SARS-COV-2).

COVID-19 can sometimes cause serious complications. [People at an increased risk for severe illness](#) include:

- Older adults
- People of any age who have [underlying medical conditions](#)

More Info for Offshore Oil and Gas

[Employers](#)



How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning about it. Here's what we currently know:

- It mainly [spreads](#) from person-to-person:
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You can get the virus from people who don't seem sick or don't have symptoms.
- You might get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

As a worker on an offshore rig or platform, you might come into contact with the virus at your job when:

- In [close contact](#) with coworkers during travel to/from an offshore worksite via helicopter or boat.
- In [close contact](#) with coworkers in work areas, living quarters, the galley and other common areas.
- Touching or handling common surfaces (hand railings, doorknobs, etc.) and shared equipment (workstations, computers, controls, tools, etc.) and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Stay home if you are having [symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

- Follow [CDC recommended steps](#) if you are sick.
- If you develop symptoms en route to your worksite, while at a shorebase or heliport, or at your worksite, notify your supervisor immediately.
- Do not return to work until you meet the criteria to [discontinue home isolation](#).
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about when it's safe for you to return to work and coordinate with your employer.
- Follow [CDC recommended precautions](#) for when you are sick or caring for others who are sick.
- Tell your supervisor if you are well but someone you live with or had recent [close contact](#) with has COVID-19.

Stay at least 6 feet away from visitors and coworkers, when possible.

- Plan your movement around the offshore facility to reduce your chance of exposure to the virus. Avoid unnecessarily walking floors and between floors and

avoid enclosed spaces like elevators.

- Be aware when entering areas that may lead to close contact with coworkers, such as break rooms, the galley, locker rooms, and living quarters.
- Your employer may modify your schedule to reduce mingling and close contact with other workers, such as staggering mealtimes and forming small groups of workers who work and eat at the same times and do not mix with other groups of workers. Follow this schedule to protect yourself.
- Comply with your employer's efforts to physically separate workers in work areas and other areas such as break rooms, the mess and galley, and locker rooms.

Wear a cloth face covering or [mask](#) in public, and at work if permitted by your employer, when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings or masks may prevent people who don't know they have the virus from spreading it to others.

- Be careful when putting on and taking off cloth face coverings or masks:
 - Wash your hands before putting on and after taking off the covering or mask.
 - Do not touch the face covering or mask while wearing it.
 - Do not touch your face, mouth, nose, or eyes while taking off the covering or mask.
 - [Wash](#) the covering or mask after each use.
- Do not wear cloth face coverings or masks if their use creates a new risk (for example, interferes with driving or vision, or contributes to heat-related illness) that exceeds their COVID-19 related benefits of slowing the spread of the virus.
- If you are concerned about the use cloth face coverings or masks at your workplace, discuss them with your employer.
- Continue to wear your normal personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your job tasks and duties.

[Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces.

- Clean and disinfect tools used by multiple workers between shared use.
- Follow the directions on the cleaning product's label.
- Wash your hands afterwards.

[Wash your hands](#) regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You don't need to wear gloves if you wash your hands regularly (unless they are already required for your job).

- Use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water aren't available.
- Wash your hands at these key times:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food
 - Before eating food
 - After using the toilet
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

- After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings or masks
- Before and after work and work breaks
- After using shared workspaces, tools, and equipment

Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose, or eyes.

Cover your coughs and sneezes.

- Use tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not available.

How to Cope with Stress

Mental health and emotional well-being are important parts of worker safety and health. The COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges in the ways many people work and connect with others, which may raise feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression.






Information and resources about mental health, knowing signs of stress, taking steps to manage stress, and knowing where to go if you need help are available [here](#).

How Your Employer Can Protect You

Your employer should develop a COVID-19 response plan and share it with you. CDC created a [fact sheet to help your employer](#).

How To Get More Information

Talk to your employer or supervisor, or whoever is responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Use these sources for more information about reducing the risk of worker exposures to COVID-19:

- [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- [CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
- [NIOSH Workplace Safety and Health Topic: COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings](#)
- [CDC COVID-19](#)
- [OSHA COVID-19](#) 
- [OSHA Guidelines on Preparing Workplaces for COVID](#)  
- [National Ocean Industries Association \(NOIA\) COVID-19 and Offshore Safety](#) 
- [Offshore Operators Committee COVID-19 Mitigations](#) 
- CDCINFO: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) | TTY: 1-888-232-6348 | website: cdc.gov/info

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)