



Five Minute Meeting:

Topic: Guidance for using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Date: April 1, 2020 (updated June 1, 2022)

Audience: PG&E Employees

The key thing you need to know

This communication provides guidance on when and how to use PPE on the job during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Why it matters to you

As local public health orders change with local conditions and remote work is being reconsidered, PG&E remains focused on prioritizing critical and essential safety and maintenance work.

Offering the latest PPE information will help employees stay safe while performing this work.

Key discussion points

- Both the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) and Cal OSHA define “close contact” as being within 6 feet of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes in a given day OR being coughed or sneezed on by a known or suspected case of COVID-19. Individuals who meet these criteria are the only people for whom supplemental PPE against infectious disease is recommended (e.g., N95 or equivalent respirator, gown, disposable coveralls, nitrile gloves, etc.).
- Both the CDC and Cal OSHA recommend getting vaccinated to decrease the severity and transmission of COVID-19. As a precaution, maintaining social distance (at least six feet) is still a recommended best practice when working around other people.
 - In situations where this is not possible and there are no symptomatic people present, additional personal protective equipment (PPE) is not required, but is still recommended, including wearing an approved face covering.
 - Effective precautions and protective measures include:
 - Cover your cough or sneeze.
 - Avoid touching each other and shared surfaces as much as possible.
 - Wash your hands frequently with soap and water (as soon as possible after coughing, sneezing or handling shared equipment) or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose and mouth in particular).
 - Use engineering or administrative tools, such as:
 - Install barriers where possible (e.g., plastic or glass barriers at customer payment counters).
 - Stagger work shifts and personnel to allow for greater distance.
 - Work remotely, where possible and as allowed by local leadership.

- Postpone work that isn't critical.
- Self-monitor and stay home if ill. Complete the LiveSafe health screening prior to reporting to work locations outside your home.
- The primary means of transmission is thought to be aerosolized respiratory droplets from an infected person (e.g., they are talking, coughing or sneezing near you).
- Vaccination and keeping up to date on recommended boosters is the best way to minimize both the severity and transmission of serious transmissible illness.
- Using social distancing and/or approved face coverings, avoiding touching your face, covering your cough or sneeze, isolating where possible and frequent hand washing are the best protective measures to take against infectious disease, regardless of vaccination status. PPE is prone to human error and is not infallible and is the last line of defense in situations where the other protective measures are not possible. Wearing it will not by itself prevent the wearer from becoming infected but can decrease the likelihood over a given period.

Questions to ask for understanding

When asking for additional PPE during the current pandemic event, the request should be based on the relative risk of exposure to those who are ill with COVID-19.

- 1) A worker must perform work inside a hospital, morgue or home where a person has COVID-19 symptoms.

The worker should wear an N95 or equivalent respirator and nitrile gloves and should wash their hands after leaving the facility. In addition to wearing this PPE the worker should ensure that the customer understands that they need to keep their distance. The employee should cover their cough or sneeze; avoid touching their face; and touch only what is necessary to do the work. Any shared equipment or tools should be disinfected before and after use.

- 2) A worker must enter a facility or enclosed area (office, vault, manhole, trench, etc.) that does not have any known or suspected COVID-19 cases, but they can't maintain 6 feet between people.

The worker should communicate the following expectations: individuals who feel ill or who have been caring for a person with COVID-19 symptoms should self-identify and return home to begin self-quarantine; keep the work group as small as possible; keep as much distance as possible between individuals and consider wearing approved face coverings; and keep the group together only for as long as is needed to complete the work. All individuals should take standard precautions against infectious disease (including avoiding touching their face, covering their cough or sneeze, disinfecting shared tools/equipment before and after use and practicing frequent hand washing).

- 3) A worker must perform work outdoors with others and they can't maintain 6 feet of distance between individuals.

The worker should communicate the following expectations: individuals who feel ill or who have been caring for a person with COVID-19 symptoms should self-identify and return home to begin self-quarantine; keep the work group as small as possible; keep as much distance as possible between individuals and consider wearing approved face coverings; and keep the group together only for as long as is needed to complete the work. All individuals should take standard precautions against infectious disease (including avoiding touching their face, covering their cough or sneeze, disinfecting shared tools/equipment before and after use and practicing frequent hand washing).



OSHA Occupational Risk Assessment For Infectious Disease

Very high risk: Employees with a very high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of infection during specific medical, postmortem or laboratory procedures.

- **Examples:** A small number of clinicians at fixed or mobile clinics, emergency medical technicians or fire fighters/paramedics.
- **Recommended PPE:** N95 or better respirator with no exhalation valves or vents and nitrile gloves as a minimum; eye, face and body protection if blood or bodily fluid splashing is likely.

High risk: Employees with a high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of infection.

- **Examples:** A small number of employees who need to enter hospitals, morgues or long-term care facilities to perform their work.
- **Recommended PPE:** N95 or better respirator with no exhalation valves or vents. Nitrile gloves if unable to wash hands after leaving the site.

Medium risk: Employees whose work requires frequent and/or close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) people who are not known or suspected to be infected, but who may be (e.g., recently traveled to an area with a travel advisory in place, went on a cruise or has been caring for a person known or suspected to be infected)

- **Examples:** Employees who work in crowded workspaces or customer-facing functions, such as Call Centers, Customer Service Office lobbies and Distribution Control Centers.
- **Recommended PPE:** Nitrile gloves if frequently handling currency or other items from the general public; otherwise, consider wearing approved face coverings when 6 feet of physical distance is not possible, frequent hand washing, cover your cough/sneeze, avoid touching your face, wipe down high-touch surfaces periodically, disinfect shared tools before and after use and stay home if ill.

Lower risk: Employees whose work does not require contact with people known or suspected to be infected with transmissible disease, nor frequent close contact with the general public.

- **Examples:** Most PG&E employees.

- **Recommended PPE:** Approved face coverings that cover the nose and mouth when maintaining at least 6 feet of physical distance is not possible, frequent hand washing, cover your cough/sneeze, avoid touching your face, wipe down high-touch surfaces periodically, disinfect any shared tools before and after use and stay home if ill. Face coverings may be mandatory in some locations/situations as local public health orders change in response to local conditions.

Who do I contact with questions

- The HR Help Line is available to help employees and leaders with questions related to time coding and other matters. Please reach out to them for guidance at (415) 973-HELP Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-10 p.m. On weekends, the HR Help Line monitors for voicemails 7 a.m.-10 p.m. and will respond within 1 hour.
- This situation continues to evolve and we are committed to keeping you informed and up-to-date through PG&E's Daily Digest, PG&E@Work, the LiveSafe app and the PG&E Spotlight app, which you can **download to your company-issued or personal phone.**