

# Construction Industry COVID-19 Guidance from New York City and OSHA

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New York City has recognized that ordinary practices at construction sites (such as shared tools, huddled shift meetings, and packed schedules with various trade contractors) can present unique dangers at construction sites and has issued guidance to construction workers on best practices to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued non-industry-specific guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19, a potentially deadly respiratory disease. Amid growing concerns of construction workers who share tools and portable commodes without adequate sanitation, New York City guidance addressing work practices specific to construction work is on top of the OSHA guidance.

In addition to universal tips on handwashing, cleaning surfaces, and monitoring symptoms, the guidance recommends staggered schedules for pre-shift meetings, new employee orientations, and other in-person meetings. It also suggests telephonic or outdoor meetings when a group has to convene.

Employers should also:

- Ensure sufficient handwashing stations with soap and running water near commodes and break areas;
- Keep workers at least six feet apart whenever possible while working together or supervising each other; and
- Sanitize shared equipment and tools.

General contractors, prime subcontractors, and site owners also may consider sharing known or suspected cases of COVID-19 with subcontractors at every level and inspectors before entering the site and encourage them to do the same. Contractors and necessary visitors can use this information to develop plans to segregate tasks by time or distance to prevent spread.

Jackson Lewis attorneys and the dedicated COVID-19 Task Force are available to assist employers with workplace health matters and to answer questions.

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