TOP * (#top) NY HERO Act



Department of Labor (/)



NYS HERO ACT

Protecting New York Workers from Airborne Diseases

The New York Health and Essential Rights Act (NY HERO Act) was signed into law on May 5, 2021. The law mandates extensive new workplace health and safety protections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of the NY HERO Act is to protect employees against exposure and disease during a future airborne infectious disease outbreak.

On September 6, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul <u>announced the designation of COVID-19 as an airborne infectious disease</u>
(https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-kathy-hochul-announces-designation-covid-19-airborne-infectious-disease-under-new) under the HERO

Act. This designation requires all employers to implement workplace safety plans.

Under this new law, the New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL), in consultation with the NYS Department of Health, has developed a new Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Standard, a Model Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Plan, and various industry-specific model plans for the prevention of airborne infectious disease. Employers can choose to adopt the applicable policy template/plan provided by NYS DOL or establish an alternative plan that meets or exceeds the standard's minimum requirements.

The airborne infectious disease exposure prevention plans must go into effect when an airborne infectious disease is designated by the New York State Commissioner of Health as a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health.

The standard and model plans are available in English and will be available in Spanish in the coming days. Employers are required to provide a copy of the adopted airborne infectious disease exposure prevention plan and post the same in a visible and prominent location within each worksite. Templates and resources are available below.

DOL will be sharing more details about this law in the near future. Please check this website for updates.

FEEDBACK AND INQUIRIES

(mailto:Airborne.Infectious.Diseases@labor.ny.gov)

RESOURCES



Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention
Standard (/airborne-infectious-disease-exposureprevention-standard)



Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention
Standard Spanish (/airborne-infectious-diseaseexposure-prevention-standard-spanish)



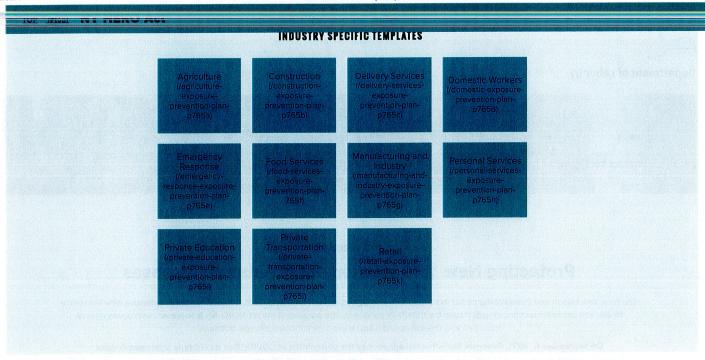
Model Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure
Prevention Plan (/model-airborne-infectious-disease-exposure-prevention-plan)



Model Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Plan... (/model-airborne-infectiousdisease-exposure-prevention-plan-spanish)

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https://dol.ny.gov/ny-hero-act



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https://dol.ny.gov/ny-hero-act 2/2

September 6, 2021 | 2:37 pm

COVID-19 Vaccines

On August 23, the FDA announced the full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals age 16 and older. Read more.

DETAILS >



GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL



Designation by State Department of Health Requires All Employers to Implement Workplace Safety Plans to Help Protect Workers from COVID-19

Law Protects Employees from Retaliation for Making a Complaint About Employer's Failure to Comply with the Law or the Adopted Plan

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced that the commissioner of health has designated COVID-19 a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health under New York State's HERO Act, which requires all employers to implement workplace safety plans in the event of an airborne infectious disease, helping to prevent workplace infections. The NY HERO Act mandates extensive new workplace health and safety protections in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the law, all employers are required to adopt a workplace safety plan, and implement it for all airborne infectious diseases designated by the New York State Department of Health. Employers can adopt a model safety plan as crafted by the New York State Department of Labor, or develop their own safety plan in compliance with HERO Act standards.

"While we continue to increase our vaccination numbers, the fight against the Delta variant is not over, and we have to do everything we can to protect our workers," **Governor Hochul said.** "This designation will ensure protections are in place to keep our workers safe and support our efforts to combat the virus and promote health and safety."

The HERO Act's purpose is to ensure that businesses are prepared with protocols and resources to protect their employees and the public from the spread of airborne infectious diseases, like COVID's Delta variant.

Under the HERO Act, the DOL in consultation with the DOH has developed a new Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Standard, a Model Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Plan, and various industry-specific model plans for the prevention of airborne infectious disease. Additional information and industry-specific templates for employers are available on the DOL's website. (https://dol.ny.gov/ny-hero-act).

Senator Michael Gianaris said, "I'm very thankful Governor Hochul has acted quickly to save lives and protect workers by implementing the New York HERO Act. It took too long to effectuate and too many workers have already sacrificed their health for our community's benefit, but we can finally recognize their efforts by giving workers the tools to protect themselves while on the iob."

Assemblymember Karines Reyes said, "New Yorkers have been eagerly awaiting the safe reopening of our state. With the more contagious COVID-19 Delta variant on the rise, we must take every active measure we can to keep the virus under control. I commend the Governor for swiftly taking action and directing the Health Department to identify COVID-19 as "highly contagious." The complete implementation of the NY HERO Act will ensure that businesses across the state have safety protocols in place to protect employees and customers against airborne infectious diseases like COVID-19."

Mario Cilento, President, New York State AFL-CIO, said, "I thank Governor Hochul for taking decisive action, particularly on Labor Day, to ensure the critically important NY HERO Act is applied as intended, to protect workers from COVID-19 and future communicable disease events. From day one, Governor Hochul promised to work collaboratively with the Legislature and Labor to deliver for working people, and this action fulfills that promise."

Pat Kane, RN Executive Director of the New York Nurses Association, said, "I thank Governor Hochul for making workplace health and safety a priority by acting on the NY HERO Act on this Labor Day. This will ensure our nurses and all working people will finally have their rights to a safe working environment during the COVID-19 pandemic enforced and protected."

Vincent Aivarez, President, New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, said, "We are grateful to Governor Hochul for her strong leadership as we continue to battle the COVID variants, and for taking action to keep workers safe. Workers have sacrificed too much already during the pandemic, and this designation will help ensure that no worker has to risk their own health and safety, or that of their family, as they continue to provide essential services for our City and State."

Stuart Appelbaum, President, Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, said, "As the pandemic has highlighted yet again, workplace safety must be prioritized. We need the enforceable standards at the state level provided in this Act to keep all working New Yorkers safe. No worker should be forced to sacrifice their health and safety in order to earn a living. We thank Governor Hochul for announcing that the Commissioner of Health has designated COVID-19 a serious risk to public health under the NYS Hero's Act. This is the appropriate way to celebrate Labor Day in 2021."

Teamsters Joint Council 16 President Thomas Gesualdi said, "Teamsters and other essential workers stayed on the job through the height of the pandemic, often without the protections they needed to be safe, to get our state through the crisis. As the Delta variant continues to circulate and more New Yorkers return to work, this designation will ensure that workers have the enforceable standards they need to do their jobs safely and go home to their families. We commend Governor Hochul for taking this action to protect our essential workers."

Beverley Brakeman, Regional Director, United Auto Workers Region 9A, said, "There is no more fitting tribute to honor Labor Day today, and all the workers still working during the COVID-19 pandemic, than to fully implement the NY Hero Act. We thank Gov. Hochul for her leadership in telling employers that they must provide their workers, the lifeblood of their businesses, with a safe working environment. Fully implementing the NY Hero Act, that labor and community groups worked together to achieve, is a great first step."

The plans adopted by employers must address a number of safety measures, including but not limited to: employee health screenings, masking and social distancing requirements, workplace hygiene stations, workplace cleaning protocol, quarantine protocol, and building airflow technology.

Employers are required to distribute their work safety plan to all employees and post it in a visible and prominent location within each worksite.

Additionally, the HERO Act includes anti-retallation protections for employees which prohibit discrimination or adverse actions taken against an employee for following the requirements of these plans, reporting concerns on the implementation of a plan, or refusing to work.

Contact the Governor's Press Office

Contact us by phone:

Contact us by email:

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418 New York City: (212) 681 - 4640

Press.Office@exec.ny.gov

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NY HERO ACT Model Airborne Infectious Disease Exposure Prevention Plan

The purpose of this plan is to protect employees against exposure and disease during an airborne infectious disease outbreak. This plan goes into effect when an airborne infectious disease is designated by the New York State Commissioner of Health as a highly contagious communicable disease that presents a serious risk of harm to the public health. This plan is subject to any additional or greater requirements arising from a declaration of a state of emergency due to an airborne infectious disease, as well as any applicable federal standards.

Employees should report any questions or concerns with the implementation this plan to the designated contact.

This plan applies to all "employees" as defined by the New York State HERO Act, which means any person providing labor or services for remuneration for a private entity or business within the state, without regard to an individual's immigration status, and shall include part-time workers, independent contractors, domestic workers, home care and personal care workers, day laborers, farmworkers and other temporary and seasonal workers. The term also includes individuals working for digital applications or platforms, staffing agencies, contractors or subcontractors on behalf of the employer at any individual work site, as well as any individual delivering goods or transporting people at, to or from the work site on behalf of the employer, regardless of whether delivery or transport is conducted by an individual or entity that would otherwise be deemed an employer under this chapter. The term does not include employees or independent contractors of the state, any political subdivision of the state, a public authority, or any other governmental agency or instrumentality.

As of the date of the publication of this document, while the State continues to deal with COVID-19 and a risk still exists, no designation is in effect at this time. Please check the websites of Departments of Health and Labor for up to date information on whether a designation has been put into effect, as any such designation will be prominently displayed. No employer is required to put a plan into effect absent such a designation by the Commissioner of Health.

The Wayne County Action Program, Inc. has adopted this Model plan with edits on 8/3/2021. It has been reviewed and accepted by the Health and Safety Committee.

CONTENTS

I. RESPONSIBILITIES	2
II. EXPOSURE CONTROLS DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK	2
A. Minimum Controls During an Outbreak	2
B. Advanced Controls During an Outbreak	4
C. Exposure Control Readiness, Maintenance and Storage:	6
III. HOUSEKEEPING DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK	7
IV. INFECTION RESPONSE DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK	7
V. TRAINING AND INFORMATION DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK	7
VI. PLAN EVALUATIONS DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK	8
VII. Retaliation Protections and Reporting of Any Violations	9

RESPONSIBILITIES

This plan applies to all employees of Wayne County Action Program Inc , and [all]/[the following work sites]:

51 Broad Street, Lyons, NY	159 Montezuma Street, Lyons, NY	28 Canal Street, Lyons, NY	6 Clyde Road, Lyons, NY
7192 Ridge Road, Sodus, NY	120 E. Main Street, Palmyra, NY	11359 Ridge Road, Wolcott,	NY
214 E. Dezeng Street, Clyde, I	NY 6264 Buerman Road, Sodus, N	IY 7188 Ridge Road, Sodus	, NY
301 Stuart Avenue, Newark, N	Υ		7 2 1 1

This plan requires commitment to ensure compliance with all plan elements aimed at preventing the spread of infectious disease. The following supervisory employee(s) are designated to enforce compliance with the plan. Additionally, these supervisory employees will act as the designated contacts unless otherwise noted in this plan:

Lori Lancaster	Data Comptroller	51 Broad St, Lyons, NY	315-333-4155
J. Ryan Robbins	H E Administrator	51 Broad St, Lyons, NY	315-333-4155
*See attached designated contactive for additional contacts per	it		

II. EXPOSURE CONTROLS DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK

A. MINIMUM CONTROLS DURING AN OUTBREAK

During an airborne infectious disease outbreak, the following minimum controls will be used in all areas of the worksite:

- 1. **General Awareness:** Individuals may not be aware that they have the infectious disease and can spread it to others. Employees should remember to:
 - · Maintain physical distancing;
 - Exercise coughing/sneezing etiquette;
 - Wear face coverings, gloves, and personal protective equipment (PPE), as appropriate;
 - · Individuals limit what they touch;
 - Stop social etiquette behaviors such as hugging and hand shaking, and
 - Wash hands properly and often.
- 2. "Stay at Home Policy": If an employee develops symptoms of the infectious disease, the employee should not be in the workplace. The employee should inform the designated contact (see designated contact list for your location) and follow New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance regardingobtaining medical care and isolating.
- 3. **Health Screening:** Employees will be screened for symptoms of the infectious disease at the beginning of their shift. Employees are to self-monitor throughout their shift and report any new or emerging signs or symptoms of the infectious disease to their supervisor and appropriate site designated contact. An employee showing signs or symptoms of the infectious disease should be removed from the workplace and should contact a healthcare professional for instructions. The health screening elements will follow guidance from NYSDOH and CDC guidance, if available.

- 4. Face Coverings: To protect your coworkers, employees will wear face coverings throughout the workday to the greatest extent possible. Face coverings and physical distancing should be used together whenever possible. The face covering must cover the nose and mouth, and fit snugly, but comfortably, against the face. The face covering itself must not create a hazard, e.g. have features could get caught in machinery or cause severe fogging of eyewear. The face coverings must be kept clean and sanitary and changed when soiled, contaminated, or damaged. Disposable face coverings are available at all WCAP, Inc. locations for employee use.
- 5. **Physical Distancing:** Physical distancing will be followed as much as feasible. Avoid unnecessary gatherings and maintain a distance of at least six feet (or as recommended by the NYSDOH/CDC for the infectious agent) from each other. Use a face covering when physical distance cannot be maintained.

In situations where prolonged close contact with other individuals is likely, use the following control methods:

- restricting or limiting customer or visitor entry;
- limiting occupancy;
- allowing only one person at a time inside small enclosed spaces with poor ventilation;
- reconfiguring workspaces;
- physical barriers will be placed at the Reception areas in each location if needed;
- signage;
- telecommuting with a signed Remote Working agreement;
- · remote meetings;
- · preventing gatherings;
- restricting travel;
- creating new work shifts and/or staggering work hours;
- · adjusting break times and lunch periods;
- · delivering services remotely or through curb-side pickup;
- 6. **Hand Hygiene:** To prevent the spread of infection, employees should wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to clean hands BEFORE and AFTER:
 - Touching your eyes, nose, or mouth;
 - · Touching your mask;
 - · Entering and leaving a public place; and
 - Touching an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people, such as door handles, tables, gas pumps, shopping carts, or electronic cashier registers/screens.

Because hand sanitizers are less effective on soiled hands, wash hands rather than using hand sanitizer when your hands are soiled.

- 7. Cleaning and Disinfection: See Section V of this plan.
- 8. "Respiratory Etiquette": Because infectious diseases can be spread by droplets expelled from the mouth and nose, employees should exercise appropriate respiratory etiquette by covering nose and mouth when sneezing, coughing or yawning.
- 9. Special Accommodations for Individuals with Added Risk Factors: Some employees, due to age, underlying health condition, or other factors, may be at increased risk of severe illness if infected. Please inform your supervisor or the HR department if you fall within this group and need an accommodation. Employees will need to fill out an Accommodation request form and send to HR.

B. ADVANCED CONTROLS DURING AN OUTBREAK

For activities where the Minimum Controls alone will not provide sufficient protection for employees, additional controls from the following hierarchy may be necessary. Employers should determine if the following are necessary:

- 1. Elimination: Employers should consider the temporary suspension or elimination of risky activities where adequate controls could not provide sufficient protection for employees.
- 2. Engineering Controls: Employers should consider appropriate controls to contain and/or remove the infectious agent, prevent the agent from being spread, or isolate the worker from the infectious agent. Examples of engineering controls could include:

Opening outside windows and doors:

Opening windows on one side of the room to let fresh air in and installing window exhaust fans on the opposite side of the room so that they exhaust air outdoors:

Automatic disinfection systems such as ultraviolet light disinfection systems may be added to some sites.

Install additional timeclocks to avoid overcrowding.

Air purifiers

Install hand washing or sanitizing stations throughout the worksite; and

Utilize doors, walls or plastic sheeting as physical barriers to separate workers;

Subject to changes based on operations and circumstances surrounding the infectious disease, engineering controls that are anticipated to be used are listed in the following table:

Engineering Controls Utilized/Location:
Possibility of Purchasing HEPA Air sanitizers for common areas at each site.
The use of non touch towel dispensers at each location.
The use of minimal touch timeclocks at each location and adding additional timeclocks as needed.

Note to Employer: One of the best ways to reduce exposure to infectious agents is to improve ventilation. The aim is to deliver more "clean air" into an occupied area and exhaust the contaminated air to a safe location. In some cases, the air may have to be filtered before it enters the work area and/or before it is exhausted. Direct the contaminated air away from other individuals and from the building's fresh air intake ports. Consult your ventilation system's manufacturer or service company to determine if improvements are possible for your system.

- 3. "Administrative Controls" are policies and work rules used to prevent exposure. Examples include:
 - · Increasing the space between workers;
 - · Do not allow sharing of tools
 - Cancelling any recreational activity on site;

- · Disinfecting procedures for specific operations;
- · Not shaking out soiled laundry;
- · Employee training;
- · Identify and prioritize job functions that are essential for continuous operations;
- · Cross-train employees to ensure critical operations can continue during worker absence;
- · Limit the use of shared workstations;
- · Post signs reminding employees of respiratory etiquette, masks, handwashing;
- Rearrange traffic flow to allow for one-way walking paths;
- · Provide clearly designated entrance and exits;
- · Provide additional short breaks for handwashing and cleaning;

Prohibit using compressed air or dry sweeping for cleaning;

Clean equipment and tools prior to handoff;

Host meetings outdoors if possible

Subject to changes based on operations and circumstances surrounding the infectious disease, the following specific administrative controls are anticipated to be used:

nistrative controls are anti	
Administrative Cor	ntrols Utilized/Location:
Some Agency Programs must hey become available.	t adhere to specific guidance by their Funders. These additional guidelines will be added to our plan as
JPK Classrooms within Scho	ool District buildings must adhere to the School District policy on Infectious Disease controls.
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Paleminan yksinetoa istoria biregeriaen ristoria	Make Bulling and Alexandra Alexandra Make Bulling Commission (Make Bulling Commission Co
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that protect the wearer	quipment (PPE) are devices like eye protection, face shields, respirators , , and gloves from infection. PPE will be provided, used and maintained in a sanitary and reliable the employee. The PPE provided to an employee will be based on a hazard assessmer
PPE Required - Ad	tivity Involved/Location:
	ns must adhere to specific guidance from their Funders and depending on types of PPE OSHA standard ems required for different position will be supplied by the Employer and Employees will be trained on aid PPE items.
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- 1 The use of respiratory protection, e.g. an N95 filtering facepiece respirator, requires compliance with the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134 or temporary respiratory protection requirements OSHA allows for during the infectious disease outbreak.
- 2 Respirators with exhalation valves will release exhaled droplets from the respirators. Respirators are designed to protect the wearer. Surgical masks and face coverings, which are not respirators, are designed to protect others, not the wearer.

C. EXPOSURE CONTROL READINESS, MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE:

The controls we have selected will be obtained, properly stored, and maintained so that they are ready for immediate use in the event of an infectious disease outbreak and any applicable expiration dates will be properly considered.

III. HOUSEKEEPING DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK

A. Disinfection Methods and Schedules

Objects that are touched repeatedly by multiple individuals, such as door handles, light switches, control buttons/levers, dials, levers, water faucet handles, computers, phones, or handrails must be cleaned frequently with an appropriate disinfectant. Surfaces that are handled less often, or by fewer individuals, may require less frequent disinfection.

The disinfection methods and schedules selected are based on specific workplace conditions.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have compiled lists of approved disinfectants that are effective against many infectious agents (see **dec.ny.gov** and **epa.gov/pesticide-registration/selected-epa-registered-disinfectants**). Select disinfectants based on NYSDOH and CDC guidance and follow manufacturer guidance for methods, dilution, use, and contact time.

B. Adjustments to Normal Housekeeping Procedures

Normal housekeeping duties and schedules should continue to be followed during an infectious disease outbreak, to the extent practicable and appropriate consistent with NYSDOH and/or CDC guidance in effect at the time. However, routine procedures may need to be adjusted and additional cleaning and disinfecting may be required.

Housekeeping staff may be at increased risk because they may be cleaning many potentially contaminated surfaces. Some housekeeping activities, like dry sweeping, vacuuming, and dusting, can resuspend into the air particles that are contaminated with the infectious agent. For that reason, alternative methods and/or increased levels of protection may be needed.

Rather than dusting, for example, the CDC recommends cleaning surfaces with soap and water before disinfecting them. Conducting housekeeping during "off" hours may also reduce other workers' exposures to the infectious agent. Best practice dictates that housekeepers should wear respiratory protection. See **cdc.gov** for more guidance.

- C. If an employee develops symptoms of the infectious disease at work, it is ideal to isolate the area in accordance with guidance issued by NYSDOH or the CDC, before cleaning and disinfecting the sick employee's work area. This delay will allow contaminated droplets to settle out of the air and the space to be ventilated.
- D. As feasible, liners should be used in trash containers. Empty the containers often enough to prevent overfilling. Do not forcefully squeeze the air out of the trash bags before tying them closed. Trash containers may contain soiled tissue or face coverings.

IV. INFECTION RESPONSE DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK

If an actual, or suspected, infectious disease case occurs at work, take the following actions:

- Instruct the sick individual to wear a face covering and leave the worksite and follow NYSDOH/CDC guidance.
- · Follow local and state authority guidance to inform impacted individuals.

V. TRAINING AND INFORMATION DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK

- A. <u>Designated Contacts at each location</u> will verbally inform all employees of the existence and location of this Plan, the circumstances it can be activated, the infectious disease standard, employer policies, and employee rights under the HERO Act. (Note: training need not be provided to the following individuals: any individuals working for staffing agencies, contractors or subcontractors on behalf of the employer at any individual work site, as well as any individual delivering goods or transporting people at, to or from the work site on behalf of the employer, where delivery or transport is conducted by an individual or entity that would otherwise be deemed an employer under this chapter)
- B. When this plan is activated, all personnel will receive training which will cover all elements of this plan and the following topics:
 - 1. The infectious agent and the disease(s) it can cause;
 - 2. The signs and symptoms of the disease;
 - 3. How the disease can be spread;
 - 4. An explanation of this Exposure Prevention Plan;
 - 5. The activities and locations at our worksite that may involve exposure to the infectious agent;
 - 6. The use and limitations of exposure controls
 - 7. A review of the standard, including employee rights provided under Labor Law, Section 218-B.

C. The training will be

- 1. Provided at no cost to employees and take place during working hours. If training during normal work hours is not possible, employees will be compensated for the training time (with pay or time off);
- 2. Appropriate in content and vocabulary to your educational level, literacy, and preferred language; and
- 3. Verbally provided in person or through telephonic, electronic, or other means.

VI. PLAN EVALUATIONS DURING A DESIGNATED OUTBREAK

The employer will review and revise the plan periodically, upon activation of the plan, and as often as needed to keep up-to-date with current requirements. Document the plan revisions below:

Date	Participants	Major Changes	Approved By
08/03/2021	Safety Committee	Additions to the model plan template	Safety Committee members.

VII. RETALIATION PROTECTIONS AND REPORTING OF ANY VIOLATIONS

No employer, or his or her agent, or person, , acting as or on behalf of a hiring entity, or the officer or agent of any entity, business, corporation, partnership, or limited liability company, shall discriminate, threaten, retaliate against, or take adverse action against any employee for exercising their rights under this plan, including reporting conduct the employee reasonably believes in good faith violates the plan or airborne infectious disease concerns to their employer, government agencies or officials or for refusing to work where an employee réasonably believes in good faith that such work exposes him or her, other workers, or the public to an unreasonable risk of exposure, provided the employee, another employee, or representative has notified the employer verbally or in writing, including electronic communication, of the inconsistent working conditions and the employer's failure to cure or if the employer knew or should have known of the consistent working conditions.

Notification of a violation by an employee may be made in writing, and without limitation to format including electronic communications. To the extent that communications between the employer and employee regarding a potential risk of exposure are in writing, they shall be maintained by the employer for two years after the conclusion of the designation of a high risk disease from the Commissioner of Health, or two years after the conclusion of the Governor's emergency declaration of a high risk disease. Employer should include contact information to report violations of this plan and retaliation during regular business hours and for weekends/other non-regular business hours when employees may be working.

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