Meat Processing Facility COVID-19 Checklist

This document outlines a draft checklist for COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies for meat processing plants. Recommended measures to be implemented are based on the hierarchy of controls, a hazard mitigation framework that outlines controls in decreasing order of effectiveness. This is a guide only and should be adapted to the context of each facility.

Engineering Controls

Engineering Controls are controls that place a barrier between the worker and the virus. They are not dependent on a person's knowledge, practice, or compliance; thus, they reduce opportunity for human error.

☐ Wherever possible, exhaust room air and deliver clean air; if re-circulation is required, this should be done in concert with appropriate filtering (HEPA) or sterilization measures (e.g., UV)

☐ If fans are used in the facility, ensure fans blow clean air toward workers' breathing zone

☐ Determine if it is possible to place physical barrier between workers on production line (e.g., plexiglass)

☐ Identify opportunities to place physical barrier (e.g., plastic sheeting) in hallways to guide employee traffic to/from production and limit crossover

☐ Identify opportunities to place physical barrier at cafeteria lunch tables for tables with built-in seating (e.g., cardboard, plexiglass)

Administrative Controls

Administrative controls are considered less effective than engineering controls but are the primary control measures available for COVID-19. These include policies, procedures, training, and workplace practices. Ineffective policies or practices or inconsistent compliance may heighten exposure risks.

Universal Mask Policy

☐ Policy in place for all employees and essential visitors to wear face masks at all times while in the facility

☐ Provide employees with information on proper face mask use

Communication/Education

☐ Provide easy to understand information (e.g., posters, infographics) that can be translated into the multiple languages spoken by workers

☐ Post multilingual signage throughout facility directing risk-minimizing behavior for employees
    Examples:
       ☐ Hand-washing procedures
       ☐ COVID-19 symptoms and how to stop the spread
       ☐ Screening process/requirements

☐ Provide resources to employees on social distancing outside of workplace (e.g., in homes, carpooling)

☐ Refresh staff on proper hand hygiene and glove practices and refraining from touching their face

☐ As available, share information and training via onsite televisions

General Guidance for Worker Protection at Home and in the Community

☐ Provide information to employees on self-monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms

☐ Provide information to employees on safe social distancing practices

☐ Provide information to employees on basic protective measures against COVID-19
Examples:
☐ Handwashing procedures
☐ Staying home when sick
☐ Avoiding contact with people who are sick
☐ Following guidance of local and state public health officials on staying home and avoiding unnecessary trips outside of the home

☐ Engage local community leaders (e.g., Imams, elders) to help educate and message to community members

☐ Encourage workers to wear cloth masks outside of the workplace (e.g., transport, at home, close contact situations)

☐ Encourage workers to wear cloth masks during transport to work (if carpooling) and to protect others when waiting to be screened prior to them receiving a new mask for their shift

☐ Carpooling
☐ Encourage workers to minimize carpooling to work, when possible
☐ As able, limit the number of people per vehicle and space out
☐ Remind carpoolers of basic protective measures

Environmental Cleaning

☐ Implement an SOP for enhanced cleaning and disinfection of common contact areas

☐ Identify common high-touch surfaces (e.g., tables, door handles) and develop a checklist to ensure frequent sanitization throughout the day

☐ Hand sanitizer dispensers available throughout facility, particularly at entrance, exits, and transition areas

☐ Assess supply of cleaning supplies, sanitizers, and disinfectants and encourage their practical use

☐ Sanitizing wipes and soap readily available in lunch and breakrooms

☐ Identify common shared tools and develop procedures to sanitize between users

☐ Implement a process for route deep cleaning of common areas, either daily/nightly or, at minimum, weekly

☐ Use no-touch receptacles when possible

Active Screening

☐ Designate a single point of entry

☐ Develop and implement screening questions conducted daily for all individuals entering facility

☐ Employees are subject to daily temperature screening prior to entering the facility
    ☐ Screener is trained to administer the temperature checks
    ☐ Screener has adequate PPE and, as applicable, maintains social distancing as testing is performed

☐ Secondary screening, if offered, conducted by staff with medical training

☐ If using an infrared temperature tool, ensure proper validation prior to use

Social Distancing

☐ Limit visitors except for required essential services

☐ Maintain at least a 6 feet distance whenever possible

☐ Strategies in place to ensure social distancing during breaks
    ☐ Staggered break times to avoid large groups of employees
    ☐ Additional rooms designated for break areas or tents outside
    ☐ Break and meeting room seating are reset to promote physical distancing
        ☐ Limit chairs per table
        ☐ Use tape on floors, if necessary, to designate spots 6 feet apart
        ☐ Ensure cleaning of tables between use (by self-cleaning or e.g., Cargill example of laminated card flipped to red when employee finishes eating lunch to inform EVS worker table is in need of cleaning; once EVS cleans, flips to green side indicating table ready for use)

☐ If office staff required onsite, maintain 6 feet distancing practice

☐ Create walk-up windows for employees needing assistance from HR

Cohorting and Personnel Workflow/Movement

☐ Wherever possible, implement cohorting of work teams
    ☐ Work teams should be small and consistent, so that staff in close proximity to each other always work together, with lockers, breaks, and meals taken together
    ☐ This serves to both decrease number of potential exposures for each person and to simplify identifying possible exposures if a case presents

☐ Limit crossover in entrances, hallways, and common spaces by adjusting personnel workflow
    ☐ Limit the number of persons in a hallway or entryway at one time
    ☐ As able, limit contact with high-touch surfaces (e.g., keep doors open to allow movement without touching knobs when possible and when it doesn't impact food safety zoning)

☐ As able, promote unidirectional flow through locker areas and when entering/exiting production floor
    ☐ Employees enter the uniform area with clean hands
    ☐ Touching non-selected uniform clothing and hangars kept to minimum

Workforce Policies

☐ Institute flexible workplace and sick leave policies and communicate these policies to all workers

    ☐ Unemployment and disability compensation are not adequate sick leave policies for COVID-19

☐ Institute a no-penalty approach for those taking sick leave

    ☐ Ensure supervisors understand that they are not to penalize workers for using these benefits

☐ Recognize certain policies may incentivize employees to come to work sick (e.g., extra food at end of shift, bonus pay)

☐ Develop SOPs that detail actions to be taken if an employee or visitor is tested for COVID-19 and/or tests positive for COVID-19 or is exposed to an individual positive for COVID-19. This should include:

    ☐ Process to contact relevant third parties who may have been exposed

    ☐ Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to limit employee exposure

    ☐ Working with local authorities to take appropriate steps

☐ Develop a return to work policy in coordination with local public health to department

☐ Identify workplace coordinators for COVID-19 issues and their workplace impact

    ☐ Coordinators should be known and accessible to all

    ☐ They should serve as the main source of information and primary person(s) to answer questions related to COVID-19 (e.g., Occupational Health RN, Plant Safety Manager)

☐ Engage plant safety/ergonomics teams and supervisors in strategy development and implementation

☐ Provide frontline supervisors additional training on COVID-19 and PPE so they can provide effective and reliable communications to workers and monitor for protective measures and PPE compliance

☐ Develop plans to operate with a reduced workforce

☐ Cross-train workers to perform essential functions to maintain operations

Testing

☐ A testing strategy should be developed in coordination with local public health officials

☐ Work with local and state public health officials to conduct testing of priority cases

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is considered the least effective method to protect workers due to its reliance on the user; if the user wears improperly, or the PPE fails, the worker is exposed.

☐ Measures to distribute daily cycled PPE to avoid unnecessary touching by multiple workers

☐ Adequate PPE provided to all employees

☐ PPE worn correctly by all employees

☐ Emphasize proper hand hygiene after gloves or facial coverings are removed

☐ Checklist/instructions posted for donning/doffing PPE in multiple languages