



HUDSON RIVER – BLACK RIVER REGULATING DISTRICT CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN FOR A STATE DISASTER EMERGENCY INVOLVING A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Purpose

To ensure the continuation of services provided by the State of New York and the health and safety of the public sector workforce, each New York State agency and authority must prepare a plan for the continuation of operations in the event that the Governor declares a state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease.

Applicable agencies and authorities must post finalized plans by April 1, 2021 in (1) a clear and conspicuous location (e.g., bulletin boards or other similar location where employees normally view information posted by the employer), (2) in their employee handbook if they have one, and (3) on either their intranet or internet website.

Continuity of Operations Plan for a Disaster Emergency Involving a Communicable Disease

Individual(s) Responsible for Maintaining this Plan:

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Date of Posting:

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Statutory Elements of the Plan:

- A list and description of the types of positions considered essential in the event of a state-ordered reduction of in-person workforce.

Essential shall refer to a designation made that a public employee is required to be physically present at a worksite to perform his or her job. Such designation may be changed at any time in the sole discretion of the employer.

- A description of protocols the employer will follow for non-essential employees to telecommute including, but not limited to, facilitating or requesting the procurement, distribution, downloading and installation of any needed technology, including software, data, and the transferring of office



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phone lines to work or personal cell phones as practicable or applicable to the workplace, and any devices.

Non-essential shall refer to a designation made that a public employee is not required to be physically present at a work site to perform his or her job. Such designation may be changed at any time in the sole discretion of the employer.

- A description of how the employer will, to the extent possible, stagger work shifts of essential employees in order to reduce overcrowding on public transportation systems and at worksites.
- A description of the protocol that the employer will implement in order to procure the appropriate personal protective equipment for essential employees, based upon the various tasks and needs of such employees, in a quantity sufficient to provide personal protective equipment to each essential employee during any given work shift. Such description shall also include a plan for storage of such equipment to prevent degradation and permit immediate access in the event of an emergency declaration.
- A description of the protocol in the event an employee is exposed to a known case of the communicable disease that is the subject of the state disaster emergency, exhibits symptoms of such disease, or tests positive for such disease in order to prevent the spread or contraction of such disease in the workplace. Such protocol shall also detail actions to be taken to immediately and thoroughly disinfect the work area of any employee known or suspected to be infected with the communicable disease as well as any common area surface and shared equipment such employee may have touched, and the employer policy on available leave in the event of the need of an employee to receive testing, treatment, isolation, or quarantine. Such protocol shall not involve any action that would violate any existing federal, state, or local law, including regarding sick leave or health information privacy.
- A protocol for documenting hours and work locations, including off-site visits, for essential employees. Such protocol shall be designed only to aid in tracking of the disease and to identify the population of exposed employees in order to facilitate the provision of any benefits which may be available to certain employees on that basis.
- A protocol for how the public employer will work with such employer's locality to identify sites for emergency housing for essential employees in order to further contain the spread of the communicable disease that is the subject of the declared emergency, to the extent applicable to the needs of the workplace.

Any other public health requirements determined by the New York State Department of Health (DOH) that are designed to reduce transmission of infectious diseases, such as face coverings, contact tracing, diagnostic testing, social distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene, and cleaning and disinfection protocols.



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A. Essential Personnel

What are the positions your agency or authority considers essential in the event of a state-ordered reduction of your in-person workforce? Please provide a list and description of the types of positions.

The following positions require the employee to be physically present at a work location to perform his or her duties: Maintenance Specialist, Assistant Foreman, Foreman, Field Assistant, Senior Field Assistant, Plant Operator, Principal Plant Operator, Laborer, Engineering Assistant, and Resident Gate Operator. These positions are located in the Hudson River Area and Black River Area and specific reporting locations include the Sacandaga Field Office in Mayfield, Fulton County, the Conklingville Dam in Hadley, Saratoga County, the Black River Field Office in Webb, Herkimer County, and the Indian Lake Dam in Indian Lake, Hamilton County. These positions are engaged in operations and maintenance activities for structures and facilities under the Regulating District's jurisdiction. These employees will be notified directly of their status by the Executive Director via telephone or in person.

B. Telecommuting

What are the protocols your agency or authority will follow for non-essential employees to telecommute including, but not limited to, facilitating or requesting the procurement, distribution, downloading and installation of any needed technology, including software, data, and the transferring of office phone lines to work or personal cell phones as practicable or applicable to the workplace, and any devices? Please provide a description of these protocols as follows:

- Protocol for telecommuting
 - *For the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) has established a Statewide, uniform, pilot telecommuting program which outlines how agencies/authorities manage telecommuting. In the event of a future state disaster emergency involving a communicable disease, the agency/authority will receive direction from GOER on the rules and guidelines applicable to telecommuting but will take these steps in order to implement and operationalize any telecommuting program, where applicable, for the agency/authority.*
- Protocol for procurement, distribution, downloading and installation of needed technology
 - *HRBRRD has worked with its Managed Service Provider (MSP) Logical Net to establish VPNs for all workstations affording access to HRBRRD's network. This capability has been rolled out and all personnel who do not need to be physically present to perform their duties has been suitably equipped. HRBRRD will periodically assess its technology needs for telecommuting and work with ITS to ensure that appropriate information technology resources are available.*
- Protocol for phone coverage and transfer of office phone lines to work or personal cell phones.



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- *HRBRRD's Compliance Officer has been designated to transfer HRBRRD's Shoretell VOIP phone numbers for personnel who do not need to be physically present to perform their duties to work or personal cell phones.*

C. Work Shifts/Schedules

How will your agency or authority, to the extent possible, stagger work shifts or adjust work hours of essential employees in order to reduce overcrowding on public transportation systems and at worksites? Consider the following in developing your work shift/schedule adjustments, if applicable:

- Will you need to alter working hours/shifts/schedules of essential employees?
 - *To the extent practicable, HRBRRD will initiate alternate work schedules equaling 37.5 hours per work week or 75 hours per pay period to reduce same-day density at work locations and decrease per-work week/ per-pay period commuting cycles.*
- Will you need to split shifts or change operations to different days of the week?
 - *Given the limited staffing at HRBRRD's remote locations, and the necessity of having at least two people to safely perform certain tasks, split shifts are not envisioned.*
- How will you manage engagement between employees and any clients and/or visitors at the worksite, accounting for physical distancing requirements, as applicable?
 - *Visitors to the Sacandaga Field Office will be required to wear a face covering prior to entering the lobby area. Hand sanitizer will be available in the vestibule. The public restroom accessible from the vestibule will be closed to the public for at least the initial month of reopening. A plexiglass shield has been installed above the counter. Interaction with SFO staff will be from the other side of the shield. Members of the public will not be admitted into the inner office area, and SFO staff will not enter the lobby when visitors are present. A different door will be designated for exiting the lobby so that visitors maintain social distancing even if arriving and departing at the same time.*
- How will you promote physical/social distancing in this type of operation or work setting?
 - *We have implemented a plexiglass barrier at the SFO location for employee to client interaction.*
 - *We have developed an online payment system for permit transactions, reducing the need for customers to visit the Sacandaga Field Office for permit transactions.*
 - *Occupancy in the kitchen/ break room at Sacandaga Field Office will be limited to one employee at a time and the lunch table and chairs will be removed. The door opening to the rest of the office will be designated for entrance only, and the door opening to the porch used for exiting – eliminating the potential for physical proximity between employees entering and exiting at once.*
 - *The conference rooms in Albany & Mayfield will not be utilized unless necessary. If more than one person is present in a conference room, face coverings must be worn by all individuals in the room.*
 - *Board meetings will be held virtually.*



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- What common situations that may not readily allow for 6 feet of distance between individuals exist at the worksite (including employees, clients and essential visitors)?
 - *For multiple employees working together in a boat, use of masks will be required and maximum practical distancing enforced. For each boat, no more than one employee can remove his or her mask temporarily for communication purposes but must wear mask at all other times.*
 - *For multiple employees working together in a gatehouse, other confined area at a dam or other facility, or workshop...use of masks will be required and maximum practical distancing enforced. For each such space, no more than one employee can remove his or her mask temporarily for communication purposes but must wear mask at all other times.*
 - *For each common space occupancy will be limited to one employee at a time.*
 - *At the Sacandaga Field Office, uni-directional flow will be implemented with entrance-only and exit-only doors designated.*
 - *For vehicle use, occupancy in vehicles will be limited to two people with the passenger in the back seat, and face covering worn by both occupants.*

D. Personal Protective Equipment

What is the protocol your agency or authority will implement in order to procure the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for essential employees, based upon the various tasks and needs of such employees, in a quantity sufficient to provide personal protective equipment to each essential employee during any given work shift? You should consider different job groupings or responsibilities (e.g., patient/direct care, public-facing positions) when describing the protocol. Also, consider the following in developing your protocol:

- What is your plan for storage of such PPE to prevent degradation and permit immediate access in the event of an emergency declaration?
 - *PPE will be storage in a designated cool, dry place at each HRBRRD work location. An employee responsible to ensure PPE needs are met – and PPE is stored, inspected, rotated, and protected from degradation will be identified during annual PPE training.*
- What will be your protocol for cleaning and/or disposal of PPE, to the extent applicable?
 - *Employees will be reminded to properly care for, clean and (if applicable) dispose of PPE during all hands calls and directly by supervisors.*
- How will you train employees on how to put on, take off, clean and disinfect (as applicable) and discard PPE?
 - *Employees will receive training annually on the proper donning, doffing, cleaning (as appropriate) and disposal of PPE at a scheduled, all-hands training. Virtual participation will be possible for employees in remote locations.*
- What is your plan for posting signage to remind employees of appropriate use of PPE?
 - *Signs will be posted at each HRBRRD work location where employees normally report in a visible location in a common area.*



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E. Exposure Protocol

What is the protocol in the event an employee is exposed to a known case of the communicable disease that is the subject of the state disaster emergency, exhibits symptoms of such disease, or tests positive for such disease in order to prevent the spread or contraction of such disease in the workplace?

- *HRBRRD will utilize engineering controls, safe work practices and PPE in order to minimize exposure in a future state disaster emergency caused by a communicable disease which will be dependent on the communicable disease that causes such disaster emergency.*
- *HRBRRD will provide periodic updates, as information becomes available, on the communicable disease and its transmission as part of its exposure protocols in order to assist with reducing transmission.*

Telephone/ text screenings (temperature and check of symptoms) will be implemented before employee enters the workplace through a remote, self-administered process.

- *Prior to arrival at the office, individuals must take their own temperature check, and ensure their condition results in a NO to any of the following:*
- *A temperature equal to or greater than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit;*
- *Symptoms consistent with COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath, troubled breathing, or a combination of chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell;*
- *Any known close contact with a person confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 in the past 14 days.*

If at the conclusion of the self-assessment, the employee cannot answer NO to all of the above, he or she will not report to work, and will notify HRBRRD's designated plan implementation owner of his/ her condition.

If at the conclusion of the self-assessment, the employee can answer NO to all of the above, he or she may report to work, and must notify the HRBRRD's designated plan implementation owner within 30 minutes of arrival by telephone, text, or email.

The HRBRRD's designated plan implementation owner will maintain a daily (Mon-Fri) log of each employee's check-in, and by 10 am each day will report to the Executive Director whether any employee's self-assessment has precluded his/ her reporting to work.

Supervisors will continue to monitor employee health/ symptoms even on non-working days via telephone and text for required daily reporting.

Further, agencies/authorities and staff must abide by all additional directives from the Director of State Operations and Infrastructure memorandum, entitled, "[Employee Testing and Evaluation Protocols for](#)



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[COVID-19](#),” which includes cleaning and disinfecting protocols, as well as notification to health officials and potential employee contacts.

- What actions will be taken to immediately and thoroughly disinfect the work area of any employee known or suspected to be infected with the communicable disease as well as any common area surface and shared equipment such employee may have touched?
 - *Any area occupied or touched by infected employee will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected by staff or, depending on the location and availability of personnel, a qualified contractor.*
 - *Employees will be required to clean and disinfect shared objects before and after use.*
- What is your policy on available leave in the event of the need of an employee to receive testing, treatment, isolation, or quarantine?
 - *While the amount and types of leave available to an employee will be dependent on the particular disaster emergency that has been declared and any provisions of law that provide for leave under such circumstances, during the COVID-19 pandemic an employee’s leave options included GOER quarantine leave, other applicable State policy, leave provided under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and an employee’s own leave accruals. Policy on available leaves will be established by the Department of Civil Service and/or GOER who shall provide guidance to the agencies/authorities on how to instruct employees about available leaves.*

F. Protocol for Documenting Work Hours/Locations

How will your agency or authority document hours and work locations, including off-site visits, for essential employees? Your protocol shall be designed only to aid in tracking of the disease and to identify the population of exposed employees in order to facilitate the provision of any benefits which may be available to certain employees on that basis. You should also consider the following questions in describing your protocol:

- How will these records be maintained?
 - *Logs are maintained at remote locations, and time and attendance records are submitted to supervisors and ultimately to payroll. For telecommuting or administrative leave, these are designated on time and attendance records. Telecommuting Pilot Program records for participating employees are maintained by the Executive Director in Albany.*
- Who is responsible for maintaining these records?
 - *The Executive Director is responsible for maintaining these records.*
- Who will be in charge of accessing these records for the purposes of disease tracking and identifying potential exposures?
 - *The Executive Director.*
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- If these records are in paper form, what are your protocols for preserving these records?
 - *These records are maintained in electronic form in a network file accessible remotely via VPN which has been established.*



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G. Protocol for Identifying Emergency Housing for Essential Employees

How will you work with local officials to identify sites for emergency housing for essential employees in order to further contain the spread of the communicable disease that is the subject of the declared emergency, to the extent applicable to the needs of the workplace?

To the extent needed, Compliance Officer Stephanie Ruzycky will be the point of contact for the identification of emergency housing for essential employees. This may include housing at HRBRRD facilities equipped with lodging and/or facilities such as bathrooms and showers. The DFA or local equivalent will be responsible for contacting county and local elected officials, owners/operators of local hotels and similar establishments, and local college and university officials (both public and private) to develop information about the local availability of emergency housing for essential employees. Emergency housing opportunities, once developed, will be communicated to employees who may be in need of such housing.

H. Other Requirements Determined by the NYS DOH

- HRBRRD will also comply with all executive orders and emergency regulations related to the state disaster emergency.

- Current DOH guidelines for COVID-19 are as follows and will be modified depending on the particular emergency declared.
 - Ensure a distance of at least 6 feet is maintained among employees at all times, unless safety of the core activity requires a shorter distance (e.g., moving and lifting equipment). Any time an employee must come within 6 feet of another person, the employee and person should wear acceptable face coverings.
 - When distancing is not feasible between workstations or areas, provide and require the use of face coverings or erect physical barriers, such as plastic shielding walls, in lieu of face coverings in areas where they would not affect air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation.
 - Tightly confined spaces should be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings. If occupied by more than one person, occupancy will be kept under 50% of maximum capacity.
 - Social distancing markers should be posted around the workplace using tape or signs that indicate 6 feet of spacing in commonly used areas and any areas in which lines are commonly formed or people may congregate (e.g., clock in/out stations, health screening stations, break rooms, water coolers, etc.). Further, bi-directional foot traffic should be reduced by using tape or signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways or spaces.
 - Post signs, consistent with the DOH COVID-19 signage, to remind employees about social distancing, hand hygiene, PPE, and cleaning guidelines.



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- Limit employee travel for work to only essential travel.
- Hygiene and sanitation requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DOH must be followed, and cleaning logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning must be maintained.
- Hand hygiene stations, including handwashing with soap, water, and disposable paper towels, as well as NYS Clean hand sanitizer or a hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical, must be provided and maintained for personnel.
- Appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces must be provided, and employees must use these supplies before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene.
- Regular cleaning and disinfection of the office location must be undertaken. More frequent cleaning and disinfection must be undertaken for high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces, at least after each shift, daily, or more frequently as needed, and align with DOH's "Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19".
- Exposed areas must be cleaned and disinfected in the event of an employee testing positive for COVID-19. Such cleaning should include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., vending machines, handrails, bathrooms, doorknobs, etc.).
- CDC guidelines on "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility" should be complied with if someone in your facility is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Agencies/authorities must have internally identified key points of contact including but not limited to site safety monitors, individuals responsible for monitoring compliance with this plan and central points of contact who will coordinate efforts to notify appropriate health authorities of positive cases and assist with required contact tracing.