Reopening New York

Forestry Guidelines for Employers and Employees

These guidelines apply to all forestry businesses in regions of New York that have been permitted to reopen, as well as to forestry businesses statewide that were previously permitted to operate as essential.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, all businesses involved in harvesting and milling wood products should stay up to date with any changes to state and federal requirements related to forestry activities and incorporate those changes into their operations. This guidance is not intended to replace any existing applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and standards.

	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Physical Distancing	✓ Ensure 6 ft. of distance between personnel, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance (e.g. assembly lines). ✓ Any time employees are less than 6 ft. apart from one another, they must wear acceptable face coverings. ✓ For any work occurring indoors, limit workforce presence to no more than 1 worker per 250 sq. ft. on site, excluding supervisors in this calculation, unless additional personal protective measures are implemented (e.g. face coverings at all times). ✓ If small spaces (e.g. elevators, hoists) are occupied by more than one person, keep occupancy under 50% of maximum capacity. ✓ Limit in-person employee gatherings (e.g. shift line up, safety meetings) as much as possible. ✓ Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible. ✓ Ensure adequate social distancing in small areas, such as restrooms and breakrooms, with appropriate signage and systems (e.g. flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy.	✓ Create additional space for employees by limiting in-person presence to only personnel necessary for the current task(s), adjusting workplace hours, staggering arrival/departure times, creating A/B teams, and/or scheduling only one team in an area at a time. ✓ Modify alignment of workstations to maintain 6 ft. distance and avoid multiple crews and/or teams working in one area. If not feasible, provide and require face coverings or enact physical barriers (e.g. plastic shielding walls), in accordance with OSHA guidelines, in areas where they would not impair air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation. ✓ Small spaces (e.g. elevators, hoists) should be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings. ✓ Reduce bi-directional foot traffic by posting signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces. ✓ Prohibit non-essential visitors on the site. ✓ Use tele- or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings (e.g. meetings) should be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants. ✓ Encourage employees to bring lunch from home and reserve adequate space for employees to observe social distancing while eating meals. Post social distancing markers using tape or signs that denote 6 ft. of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations).

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Protective Equipment	✓ Provide employees with an acceptable face covering at no-cost to the employee and have an adequate supply of coverings in case of replacement. ✓ Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth (e.g. homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana) and surgical masks, unless the nature of the work requires stricter PPE (e.g. N95 respirator, face shield). ✓ Face coverings must be cleaned and disinfected or replaced after use or when damaged or soiled, may not be shared.	
Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection	✓ Adhere to hygiene and sanitation requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Department of Health (DOH) and maintain logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. ✓ Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations for personnel, including handwashing with soap, water, and paper towels, as well as an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible. ✓ Provide and encourage employees to use cleaning and disinfecting supplies before and after use of shared and frequently touched surfaces, followed by hand hygiene. ✓ Conduct regular cleaning and disinfection at least after every trip, daily, and more frequently as needed, of shared objects (e.g. tools, knives, machinery, vehicles) and surfaces, as well as high transit areas, such as restrooms and common areas, using Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) products identified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as effective against COVID-19. ✓ Limit the sharing of objects (e.g. tools, machinery, vehicles) and discourage touching of shared surfaces (e.g. panels, keypads, remotes); or, when in contact with shared objects or frequently touched areas, wear gloves (trade appropriate or medical); or, perform hand hygiene before and after contact.	✓ Wherever possible, increase ventilation of outdoor air (e.g. opening windows and doors) while maintaining safety precautions.

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	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Communication	✔ Affirm you have reviewed and understand the state-issued industry guidelines, and that you will implement them. ✔ Post signage throughout the site to remind personnel to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, appropriate use of PPE, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols. ✔ Train all personnel on new protocols and frequently communicate safety guidelines. ✔ Notify the state and local health departments immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by an employee. ✔ Conspicuously post completed safety plans on site.	✔ Use social media, verbal communication, and signs to provide customers with instructions and to encourage them to use of face coverings, in accordance with Governor's Executive Orders, CDC, and DOH guidance. ✔ Establish a communication plan for employees, visitors, and clients with a consistent means to provide updated information.
Screening	✔ Implement mandatory health screening practices (e.g. questionnaire, temperature check) for employees asking about (1) COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days, (2) positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or (3) close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days. ✔ An individual who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms must not be allowed to enter the location and must be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing. ✔ Immediately notify state and local health departments of confirmed positive cases. ✔ Have a plan for cleaning, disinfection, and contact tracing in the event of a positive case. ✔ Designate a central point of contact, which may vary by activity, location, shift or day, responsible for receiving and attesting to having reviewed all questionnaires, with such contact also identified as the party for individuals to inform if they later are experiencing COVID-19- related symptoms, as noted on the questionnaire.	✔ Perform screening remotely (e.g. by telephone or electronic survey), before reporting to the site, to the extent possible. ✔ Maintain a daily log of every person who may have close or proximate contact with other individuals; excluding deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means. Encourage but not require customer and visitor information as part of this log. ✔ Screeners should be trained by individuals familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols and wear appropriate PPE, including at a minimum, a face covering. ✔ Coordinate screening to prevent people from intermingling in close or proximate contact with each other prior to completion of the screening. ✔ Refer to CDC guidance on "Symptoms of Coronavirus" for the most up to date information on symptoms associated with COVID-19. ✔ Refer to DOH guidance regarding protocols and policies for employees seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the employee had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19.