



## At-Home Service Providers

Common examples of non-healthcare at-home service providers include: Electricians, Plumbers, HVAC Technicians, Carpenters, Landscape workers, Household cleaners/maid service, Painters, Pest Control Specialists, Computer Repair Technicians, Appliance Repair Technicians, Telecommunications Technicians

With restrictions beginning to lift, at-home service providers are faced with difficult questions that need to be addressed before continuing or returning to work.

### **What should an Employer do to protect themselves and their customers?**

Employers and tradespeople that provide at-home services should continually monitor international (World Health Organization), national (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), state, and local guidelines for changes in recommendations, cleaning strategies, and other best management practices. Employers should also consider developing a team of professionals to monitor, assess, and implement new COVID-19 transmission risk mitigation strategies as they become available. In addition, employers should consider the following strategies for reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmissions that include physical distancing, personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning practices, and communication

- Educate employees on common residential high-touch surfaces (e.g. doorknobs, faucet handles, light switches, etc.) and develop strategies to minimize contact and wash hands/utilize hand sanitizer before and after touching.
- Establish a payment system that discourages the use of cash or checks (e.g. use a pre-payment or app-based system where possible or have service provider take payment information over the phone).
- Implement procedures to avoid customer contact with service provider (e.g. if a signature is required from the resident, have them use their own pen).

#### **Other Control Measures**

Provide employees with face coverings, gloves, shoe covers and hand sanitizer.

**(NOTE: Homemade face coverings primarily protect others not yourself).**

Ensure employees are trained on proper use and limitations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Provide a cloth or towel for the employee to cough or sneeze into should the need arise. If a towel is not available, employees should use the inside of their elbow. Consider additional disposable barriers where appropriate (e.g. plastic sheeting for covering the resident's floor or table in work area). Employees should carry out all trash and waste using a plastic sealable bag.

Conduct training for appropriate donning and doffing, and disposal procedures of protective equipment (e.g. new gloves should be put on prior to entering the home and removed after exiting the home).

- Employers should consider providing infographic sheets to employees as a visual reminder of appropriate donning and doffing techniques of PPE.

Ask any customer that intends to be in the same room as the at-home service provider to wear a face covering.

**NOTE: If an employer chooses to provide an N95 respirator, please fully consider all the potential OSHA requirements.**

### **Enhanced Cleaning Practices**

Select appropriate disinfectants – consider effectiveness and safety.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a list of products that meet EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2.
- Review product labels and Safety Data Sheets and follow manufacturer specifications.
- Consider consulting industrial hygiene experts if additional advice is needed.

Establish a disinfection routine.

- Ensure disinfection protocols follow product instructions for application and contact time.
- Provide hand sanitizer in work van/trucks and ask employees to apply prior to touching interior surfaces.
- Use disposable products when possible.
- If reusable products are used, ensure that these products are maintained, handled, and cleaned as instructed in product instructions.
- Consider using a checklist or audit system to track when and how cleaning is done
- Provide employees with infographics depicting new procedures.

Require the employee to disinfect tools (including any electronic devices) following each service visit.

- Consider consulting the manufacturer for the proper disinfection of electronic equipment.

Eliminate sharing of tools or equipment where possible. Develop a disinfection protocol for equipment or tools that must be shared (e.g. work trucks/vans). Encourage employees to wash and dry clothes and face coverings daily on the highest setting allowable for the fabric. Ensure that employees use appropriate disinfectants on the surfaces they touched within the customer’s home (e.g. the device they repaired, the chair or table they used or cleaned, the fixtures they touched, etc.). If allowed by customer, disinfect work area and surfaces interacted with prior to working. If vacuuming, use HEPA filter. Wear a face covering or mask or respirator when emptying contents or changing filter.

### **Communication**

Communicate to customers in advance of the at-home service provider’s visit on what the service provider is doing to protect the resident and its employees. Giving a considerable amount of time beforehand can help customers and employees prepare for additional precautions. Consider asking customers if they have special requests or concerns about the upcoming site visit. Employers should ensure that employees are comfortable when leaving a customer site when there is a concern of transmission of COVID-19.

Perform as much of the pre-work consultation as possible before arriving on a customer site (e.g. have the customer send pictures or more detailed information than usual/customary). Encourage any additional on-site communication to occur outdoors when possible. Request, upon arrival and departure, that the customer opens the door and steps back 6 ft from the door before the service provider enters/exits the residence. Ask that customers cancel or reschedule any non-emergency service if they are COVID-19 positive, have been in contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive, or are or living with someone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

## **What should an Employee do to protect themselves and the customer?**

Evaluate your health constantly; if you are sick stay home. If you have a temperature stay home. If someone at home is sick, stay home. If you have allergies and are sneezing, stay home. NOTE: Employer HR Policies, HIPPA guidelines and other laws should be followed at all times. Wear a face covering when out in public and maintain physical distancing. At minimum, wash your hands when you arrive at work, after touching your face covering, and when you leave work.

At all times, wear a face covering or something better if you have it. Let your employer know if you have concerns about the PPE that may be provided to you and that you are properly instructed on how to use it. Carry a towel, if you get the urge to sneeze or cough, cover your nose, mouth, and mask. Towels should never be placed on a surface within a customer's home and should be kept in a sealable bag. Clean towels and contaminated towels should be kept separate. Employees should attempt to plan bathroom breaks before and after site visits to limit the use of a customer's bathroom. Employees should keep adequate drinking water with them and should be discouraged from accepting drinks from customers

## **What can a Customer do to minimize the transmission of COVID-19?**

If you or someone in your home are sick, or have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, reschedule your service appointment. Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the service provider at all times. If your presence is not necessary, do not remain in the immediate area during the service. Wear a face covering or something better if you have it. At minimum, wash your hands prior to your service appointment, after touching your face covering, and after the service provider has left.

If you get the urge to sneeze or cough, put on your mask, cover your nose, mouth, and mask with a napkin or handkerchief, attempt to delay the urge to sneeze or cough, immediately leave the room, wash your hands and face thoroughly before returning. Customers are encouraged to minimize interactions between at-home service personnel and other occupants to the greatest extent possible. Customers should isolate pets prior to at-home service personnel arrive and during work.