

Department of Homeland Security Releases Memorandum on Identification of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers During COVID-19 Response

UPDATE HOMELAND SECURITY ISSUES COVID-19 GUIDANCE

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has released a COVID-19 document:
Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce.

NC STATE EXTENSION

On March 16, 2020, the Trump Administration stated “If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule.”

In response, The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has developed a list of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” in a [guidance document](#) released March 19, 2020.

According to the document, the list provided is advisory in nature and should not be considered to be a federal directive or standard in and of itself.

The excerpt below covers food and agriculture workers:

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other retail that sells food and beverage products

- Restaurant carry-out and quick serve food operations - Carry-out and delivery food employees
- **Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food processing (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) facilities; livestock, poultry, seafood slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging**
- **Farm workers to include those employed in animal food, feed, and ingredient production, packaging, and distribution; manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to produce our food supply domestically**
- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs
- **Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor-managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers**
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company cafeterias - in-plant cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs in private industries and in institutions of higher education
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- **Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids**
- **Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce**
- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution

Should you have questions about this list, please contact CISA at CISA.CAT@cisa.dhs.gov.

For more updates on COVID-19 from the CISA, visit their [CISA Information & Updates on COVID-19](#) page online.

If you have questions about animal food safety, please contact [Marissa Herchler](#).