

## Mutual Aid Checklist

### COVID-19 Pandemic

Adapted from the 2020 ESCC Mutual Assistance Checklist

This checklist is designed to provide NEPPA Requesting and Assisting Utilities with guidance on how to conduct mutual assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEPPA and its members are committed to protecting the people working for them and to ensuring energy operations and infrastructure are supported throughout an emergency. The items in this checklist can help provide guidance for mutual aid efforts while protecting the health and safety of employees, customers, and communities. These practices are suggested for all NEPPA member systems regardless of the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the area.

This checklist should be used when providing mutual assistance for outage incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also should be used when providing mutual assistance if a Requesting Utility is so impacted by COVID-19 cases that it is unable to conduct normal daily operations without assistance.

### Work Practices

- At a minimum, responding crews should follow their system's policies and procedures, and each crew member is asked to complete a COVID-19 Questionnaire before traveling to the Requesting Utility. ([See COVID-19 Mutual Assistance Questionnaire.](#))

**NOTE:** The COVID-19 Questionnaire is recommended to be used as a best practice to prevent unnecessary exposures. It is the responsibility of the Requesting and Assisting Utilities to ensure compliance. For the occupational health and safety of the Requesting and Assisting Utilities, if an individual responds "Yes" to any of the questions, it may result in further review, including being denied access to the facility.

- When possible, Requesting and Assisting Utilities should avoid sending crews into areas with significant COVID-19 outbreaks. The Requesting Utility should restore in those areas.
- Regional Coordinators will minimize movement of crews within the NEPPA territory as much as possible, considering the circumstances and magnitude of need. Requesting Utilities should implement practices that minimize movement of crews to different regions within their territory.

By assigning the same crews to the same work areas, cross pollination and potential exposures are limited. Note, this may require additional resources and could impact restoration times.

- Requesting and Assisting Utilities should consider moving toward more isolated and self-contained responding teams to limit the exposure between requesting and assisting crews.

Keep crew teams intact to minimize exposure and execute "transfer of control" best practices for restoration when possible. The Requesting and Assisting Utilities shall institute best practices to limit exposure between requesting and assisting crews (i.e. one person per truck; one individual per room for sleeping quarters; do not congregate on-site or at the requesting utility's shop; etc.).

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- The Requesting Utility should assign a liaison to provide full situational awareness of their COVID-19 impact and local conditions, both prior to and during deployment. This shall include the number of cases in the community (or region), and what protective measures are in place for Assisting Utility crews and their organization.
- As is common practice for NEPPA's Mutual Aid Program, Requesting Utilities should clarify how long they expect assisting crews to be in their area.
- Requesting Utilities should minimize person-to-person contact for material distribution and look for opportunities to execute restoration functions remotely.  

For example: Using drop points, conference calls or video conferencing for onboarding and briefings, conducting briefings in the field or remotely, utilize dispatching functions, advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) functionality, assessment, etc..
- Requesting Utilities should proactively communicate with customers, regulators and government partners that power restoration and recovery may be slower due to extra precautions taken to ensure the health and safety of Requesting and Assisting Utility crews and the public.

### **General COVID-19 Safety Practices (See [CDC Recommendations](#).)**

- If you are sick or have any flu-/virus-like symptoms, report this immediately to your supervisor and consult your physician.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then immediately throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Regularly clean your phones and handheld devices as these are some of the dirtiest items we carry.
- Whenever possible, maintain social distancing [six (6) feet distance]. Avoid shaking hands and touching others.
- Use “non-circulating mode” for vehicle air conditioning/heating/ventilation.
- Regularly clean trucks and equipment, or implement work practices and control measures to limit exposure. ([See CDC Recommendations](#).)

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#### Staging Sites

- Instead of large staging sites, Requesting Utilities should consider having multiple, smaller staging sites to limit contact with and exposure to crews.
  - Design smaller staging sites to allow CDC distancing recommendations to be followed (currently 6 feet of distancing at all times).
- Cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, sanitation supplies, etc. should be available for all crews located at staging areas.

#### Lodging and Meals

- Requesting Utilities should establish lodging and dining sites where social distancing can be practiced, as well as manage control, access, and sanitation.
  - Limit overnight rooms to one person per room.
  - Keep crews that are working together in the same lodging and dining facilities.
  - Have a plan for feeding crews in the event restaurants are closed by government order.
  - Have lodging, dining, and common areas cleaned following CDC guidelines. ([See CDC Recommendations.](#))
  - Cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, sanitation supplies, etc. should be available for all crews located at all lodging and meals areas.
  - Regional Coordinators will minimize the movement of crews within the NEPPA territory and keep crews as local as possible.
  - Crews should use their own fleet for transportation between lodging and work sites.
  - Try to minimize exposure by providing box lunches, snacks, water, etc.

#### Health Issues

- Requesting and Assisting Utility crews should utilize the COVID-19 Visitor Questionnaire to evaluate health risks. ([See COVID-19 Visitor Questionnaire.](#))
- Workers who become ill should follow CDC guidelines. ([See CDC Recommendations.](#))
- Workers should minimize the use of currency and use credit cards instead to avoid hand-to-hand contact.

Current as of March 24, 2020

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#### CDC Recommendations

**Interim Guidance for Business and Employers:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

**Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

**What to Do If You Are Sick:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

**Guidance for Large Events:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>

# COVID-19 Mutual Assistance Questionnaire

Updated as of 03/19/2020

The health and well-being of employees, strategic partners, families, and visitors remains our industry's top priority. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to reduce the potential risk of exposure to our workforce, contractors, and visitors, we are requesting mutual assistance workers fill out a simple screening questionnaire. The participation of the screening questionnaire is required for all visitors/contractors who are expected on-site and for employees who are responding to a mutual assistance request in another NEPPA member's territory.

This will be required for each contract employee or visitor prior to coming onsite or travelling to another NEPPA member's territory.

Visitor's Name:	Personal Phone Number (mobile/home):
Visitor/Assisting Utility Company:	Name of Requesting Utility Liaison:

Facility Name:

## SELF-DECLARATION BY VISITOR

Have you returned from any of the countries listed by the CDC as a travel/health advisory warning for Covid-19 Level 3 or higher in the last 14 days? Current list can be found here:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Yes  No

Have you had close contact with or cared for someone diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?

Yes  No

Have you been in close contact with anyone who has traveled within the last 14 days to one of the countries listed as a level 3 or higher travel/health advisory by the CDC for Covid-19?

Yes  No

Have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days (to include fever of 100.4 degrees F or higher, dry cough, difficulty breathing, or shortness of breath)?

Yes  No

Have you or any member of your household traveled on a cruise ship within the last 14 days?

Yes  No

Please report any air travel, cruise ship travel, and/or destinations visited within the last 14 days, both work- related and personal travel.

**NEPPA: COVID-19 Mutual Assistance Questionnaire**

For the occupational health and safety of the requesting and other responding utilities, if you answer “yes” to any of the questions above, it may result in further review.

Signature (Visitor): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** If you plan to be on requesting utility’s property for consecutive days and your response to this self-declaration changes, please notify your requesting utility liaison immediately.

**Please complete and return this form electronically to:  
POC**

ACCESS TO FACILITY (circle one):    APPROVED            DENIED