

# COVID-19 Response and Recovery

## Health Advisory No. 4

### APPENDIX 03

### PROTECTIVE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT COMMERCIAL HARVESTERS

This Appendix will establish general recommendations for commercial fishing harvesters operating from shore, open skiffs, and other means where the crew is not living on board a vessel for multiple days at sea. Due to the wide variation of conditions between geographic regions, additional guidance may be passed by local governments and regional fisheries associations. This alert establishes the minimum standards for protective measures recommended by the State of Alaska. Harvesting Site Managers may choose to enact measures which meet or exceed these standards. Harvesting Site Managers that choose not to enforce these standards are making the decision to accept additional risk to their site workers and the surrounding communities.

#### **I. Applicability.**

- a. This Appendix applies to all commercial fishing harvesters who do not meet the applicability definition for independent commercial fishing vessels contained in Health Advisory No. 4, and that have not agreed to operate under a fleet-wide plan submitted by a company, association, or entity that represents a fisheries sector.

#### **II. Documentation.** Harvesting Site Managers should maintain a log as a written or time-stamped electronic document covering, at a minimum, the following information:

- a. For the 2021 season, each Site Manager should sign the Health Advisory No. 4, Appendix 04 - Acknowledgement Form prior to actively participating in the 2021 commercial fishing season. This form is an acknowledgement of the recommendations of this Appendix.
- b. Certification that crew members have been screened upon arrival in accordance with Section V.
- c. Certification that arriving crew members have completed Entry Quarantine in accordance with Section IV.

#### **III. Definitions.**

- a. **Close Contact** means being within six feet of a known or suspected COVID-19 positive case for 15 minutes or greater or having had direct contact with the infectious secretions of a positive COVID-19 case. This determination is irrespective of whether or not either person was wearing a face covering. The 15-minute time period does not have to be continuous, it may be cumulative over a 24-hour period.

- b. **Harvesting Operation.** Multiple harvesters working at the same site in close proximity will be considered a Harvesting Operation. They may be in shared accommodations or separate facilities, but using the same equipment and selling their catch collectively.
- c. **Isolation** is the separation of people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. It is mandatory that anyone with a positive test result (that has not recently recovered from the virus), or who is diagnosed by a medical professional through symptoms, should isolate immediately. Isolation is monitored by medical professionals and is discontinued upon receipt of a clearance letter from a medical provider.
- d. **Non-Safe Transit** is a mode of transportation on which some passengers have not completed entry quarantine and testing requirements, or their quarantine and testing status is unknown. This can also apply when social distancing and/or appropriate PPE cannot or is not used to isolate the travelers from the vehicle crew. Unless verified by the air carrier, all non-chartered commercial air travel is considered Non-Safe Travel.
- e. **Onward Travel** refers to the leg of travel from the quarantine location to the final destination port for a crewmember who is conducting pre-travel or mid-travel entry quarantine.
- f. **Quarantine** is the separation of individuals whose medical status is unknown, in order to prevent the possible spread of the virus to others. For the purposes of this Appendix, there are two primary types of quarantine, Close Contact Quarantine and Entry Quarantine:
  - i. **Close Contact Quarantine** is a quarantine process where an individual is suspected of infection after being exposed to a positive case. Close Contact Quarantine is monitored by a medical professional or designated representative of the employer to ensure compliance and daily health checks. Section VIII.e provides detailed guidance for the observation of close contact quarantine.
  - ii. **Entry Quarantine** is a sequestering process that occurs when an individual arrives to the State of Alaska, or returns after being away for longer than 72 hours. Section IV.a provides detailed guidance for the observation of entry quarantine.
- g. **Quarantine Group** is any group of crewmembers that are living or working in close proximity during Entry Quarantine. These crewmembers will be assigned to a Quarantine Group and complete the remainder of their quarantine and travel together. All crewmembers sleeping in one room should be assigned to the same Quarantine Group. Quarantine Groups should be kept as small as possible to prevent multiple crewmembers from being exposed at once, and may not exceed ten individuals. Should any member of the Quarantine Group develop symptoms or have a positive test, all other members of the Group should start Close Contact Quarantine.
- h. **Safe Transit** is a mode of transportation on which all travelers have completed quarantine and testing requirements, and are not mixing with any populations whose quarantine and testing status is unknown. This can be a chartered aircraft, a ground vehicle, or a vessel. Social distancing and/or appropriate PPE will be used to isolate the travelers from the vehicle crew, particularly in chartered aircraft and taxis.
- i. **Site Manager.** Though there may be several individual permit holders in a Harvesting Operation, the senior permit holder who conducts business transactions on behalf of the

Harvesting Operation will be considered the Site Manager, and be responsible for enacting and enforcing this order within his or her Harvesting Operation.

- j. **Strict Social Distancing** is a limited form of Entry Quarantine. While observing Strict Social Distancing (SSD), an individual:
  - i. May be in an outdoor public place, but should remain six feet away from anyone not in their immediate household or workgroup, and should wear a face covering.
  - ii. May arrange curbside shopping or have food delivery, but should not enter restaurants, bars, gyms, community centers, sporting facilities, retail stores, office buildings, and school or daycare facilities.
  - iii. Should not participate in any group activities, including sporting events and practices, weddings, funerals, or other gatherings.
- k. **Testing.** There are three purposes for COVID-19 testing: Diagnostic Testing, Entry Testing, and Continuous Screening Testing.
  - i. **Diagnostic Testing** is intended to identify current infection in individuals and is performed when a person has signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or when a person is asymptomatic but has recent known or suspected exposure to a confirmed case. This testing should be conducted as soon as possible once the individual is identified as a close contact. The individual should be kept separate from all others while test results are pending.
  - ii. **Entry Testing** is conducted during a crewmember's Entry Quarantine process to determine if it is safe for the crewmember to travel and enter the designated entry quarantine site, or be released from quarantine.
  - iii. **Continuous Screening Testing (CST)** is performed to identify persons who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Screening testing should be conducted on asymptomatic harvesters after completion of Entry Quarantine and without known exposure to a confirmed case.
  - iv. **Molecular tests** are presently the most accurate tests for determining whether someone is currently infected with COVID-19. Testing required under this Appendix can be accomplished with any available molecular testing method that is FDA-approved, or allowable under an FDA Emergency Use Authorization. This includes all Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and other molecular-based rapid testing such as the Abbott ID-NOW or Cue.
  - v. A full list of FDA authorized tests is available at: (<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-emergency-use-authorizations-medical-devices/vitro-diagnostics-euas>).
  - vi. **Antigen Testing.**
    - 1. Antigen testing should not be used for Entry Testing.
    - 2. Antigen tests should only be considered for Diagnostic under direction of a healthcare provider with a repeating interval of at least 24 hours when no access to molecular testing is available.
      - a. When used during Diagnostic Testing for a symptomatic individual, if four consecutive antigen tests taken 24 hours

apart are all negative, the individual may be presumed negative and that the symptoms are caused by a disease other than COVID-19. The individual should be kept separated and treated in accordance with the site's normal communicable disease plan.

#### IV. Travel Procedures

- a. **Out-of-State Travel and Entry Quarantine Options.** Harvesting Operations should make every effort to prevent a potentially infectious harvester from exposing other harvesters or community members during travel and in their final destination community in Alaska. Harvesting Operations should arrange for their arriving harvesters to follow one of the following methods:
  - i. **Mid-Travel Quarantine** – Harvesters should travel to Alaska and observe a 14-day self-quarantine period in temporary lodging in a large community that has a General Acute Care or Critical Access Hospital (*i.e.*, Anchorage or Juneau) prior to beginning onward travel to their final destination community. This method will allow harvesters to immediately begin provisioning and operating under the protective measures in Section VI below upon arrival to their destination community.
    1. **Pre-Travel Testing.** To the greatest extent possible, arriving harvesters should receive a molecular test within 72 hours of commencing travel to Alaska, or as close to commencing travel as possible in order to have results prior to traveling. Individuals with positive test results should not travel. The initial test should be completed prior to entering their Entry Quarantine lodging. Harvesters should retain documentation of test results.
    2. **Travel.** All harvesters in transit on commercial aircraft must wear a cloth face covering that meets the recommendations contained in the new Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel. This face covering must be worn while transiting air terminals (to be temporarily removed for security screening), while on the plane, and any follow-on ground transportation until they reach their quarantine facility. Harvesters in transit should carry documentation indicating that they are an essential Critical Infrastructure Worker as defined under the Federal (CISA) Guidance. Arriving harvesters should proceed directly to their designated quarantine location, should practice social distancing and avoid interaction with the community, and should not stop at any location between arrival at the airport and transport to the Entry Quarantine location, unless it is to receive a test.
    3. **Entry Quarantine.** All harvesters should comply with the protective measures set by Health Advisory No. 02, International and Interstate Travel, the local government, and their lodging facility during Entry Quarantine. Crewmembers' temperature should be taken twice daily during self-quarantine. Should fever symptoms develop, follow the **Isolation** protocol in Section VIII.b. Seek testing and medical treatment immediately if symptoms are suspected to be caused by COVID-19.

4. Entry Quarantine Testing. All harvesters should receive a molecular test within 72 hours of completing Entry Quarantine, and should not commence onward travel until receiving negative results.
  5. Arrival Screening. All harvesters should be screened (see Section V) for symptoms upon arrival at the worksite prior to being allowed to enter the lodging facility.
- ii. **Post-Travel Quarantine** – Harvesters should travel to their final destination community in Alaska and observe a 14-day self-quarantine period prior to any interaction with harvesters from other Harvesting Operations or members of the local community. This method will require harvesters to follow stricter protective measures in Section IV.b.ii.4 after arrival to their destination community while in their 14-day self-quarantine period.
1. Testing. To the greatest extent possible, arriving harvesters should receive a molecular test within 72 hours of commencing travel to Alaska, or as close to commencing travel as possible in order to have results prior to traveling. Individuals with positive test results should not travel. If a pre-travel test is not possible, harvesters should test at their own or the employer’s expense immediately upon arrival in Alaska. The initial test may be conducted in route to their destination port, but should be completed prior to entering their Entry Quarantine lodging. Harvesters should retain documentation of test results.
  2. Travel. All harvesters in transit on commercial aircraft must wear a cloth face covering that meets the recommendations contained in the new Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel. This face covering must be worn while transiting air terminals (to be temporarily removed for security screening), while on the plane, and any follow-on ground transportation until they reach their quarantine facility. Harvesters in transit should carry documentation indicating that they are an essential Critical Infrastructure Worker as defined under the Federal (CISA) Guidance. Arriving harvesters should proceed directly to their designated quarantine location, should practice social distancing and avoid interaction with the community, and should not stop at any location between arrival at the local airport and transport to the Entry Quarantine location.
  3. Arrival Screening. All harvesters should be screened (see Section V) for symptoms upon arrival at the worksite prior to being allowed to enter the lodging facility.
  4. Entry Quarantine. Arriving harvesters should proceed directly to their designated quarantine location, should practice social distancing and avoid interaction with the community, and should not stop at any location between arrival at the local airport and transport to the worksite or self-quarantine location unless it is to receive a molecular test.
    - a. If possible, arriving harvesters will quarantine in single rooms and practice social distancing from other members of the Harvesting Operation. If single rooms are not available and/or

social distancing is not feasible, the entire Harvesting Operation should observe quarantine together.

- b. If a new harvester joins a quarantined Harvesting Operation and social distancing is not feasible, the 14-day clock should re-start for the entire Harvesting Operation.
  - c. Quarantined harvesters should maintain social distancing measures from all people outside of their Harvesting Operation, regardless of their quarantine status.
  - d. Harvesting Operations should arrange for provisioning via delivery services, curbside pick-up, or supply runners.
  - e. Quarantined harvesters may not enter public spaces, to include retail stores, for any reason other than to seek medical attention.
  - f. If the lodging facility is not adjacent to the worksite, quarantined harvesters should only travel between their designated self-quarantine lodging and worksite.
  - g. Harvesting Operations may commence work and begin fishing during quarantine, provided they can maintain social distancing measures from all people outside of their Harvesting Operation. If they need to off-load catch during this time, they should inform the tender, processor, or transporting agent of their quarantine status.
- b. **Initial In-State Travel and Strict Social Distancing (SSD) Options.** Harvesters who are already resident in the State for longer than 14 days prior to joining a harvesting site will follow Health Advisory No. 02, International and Intrastate Travel, when traveling to a community off the road system or Alaska Marine Highway System to join a harvesting site.
- c. Compliance with this Appendix does not constitute a right to travel or access into any areas. It is incumbent upon the individual traveler to ensure that any proposed travel itinerary is still possible and to adhere to any and all additional restrictions enacted by air carriers and lodging facilities or by small communities.
- d. All harvesters arriving to Alaska by air directly from a foreign airport must also comply with the CDC International Air Travel Testing Order of 12 Jan, 2021, including those arriving on chartered aircraft.
- i. The CDC entrance testing requirements may be met with an FDA-authorized antigen test. If the traveler is getting tested solely to meet the Federal requirements (with a molecular test planned later in their Entry Quarantine process), an antigen test may suffice. But if the test is intended to satisfy Entry Quarantine testing required by Sections IV.a, then it should be an FDA-authorized molecular test.

**V. Screening of Personnel.** All harvesters should be screened upon arrival to the worksite or lodging facility, using the following procedures or an equivalent medically vetted procedure. Site Managers may wish to arrange for dedicated spaces to conduct arrival screening in a space that can be disinfected should an arriving harvester fail the screening.

- a. Verbal Screening Questions

- i. Have you experienced any cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, sore throat, unusual fatigue, or symptoms of acute respiratory illness in the last 72 hours?
  - ii. Have you experienced a fever (100.4° F [38° C] or greater using an oral thermometer) within the last 72 hours?
  - iii. Have you experienced signs of fever such as chills, aches & pains, etc. within the last 72 hours?
  - iv. In the past 14 days, have you traveled in an area or country with widespread COVID-19 transmission without practicing social distancing?
  - v. Have you had contact within the past 14 days with a lab-confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case-patient? (Contact defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (10 minutes) or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case).
- b. **Physical Screening**
- i. Each harvester should demonstrate a measured temperature of < 100.4° F [38° C]. (This reference is for oral temperature, a forehead (temporal) scanner is usually 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) lower than an oral temperature. An ear (tympanic) temperature is 0.5°F (0.3°C) to 1°F (0.6°C) higher than an oral temperature.)
  - ii. Anyone performing a physical screening should wear appropriate PPE. If PPE is not available, the harvester may take their own temperature.
  - iii. Each harvester should be free of fever or respiratory symptoms. A possible exception would be if harvester has mild symptoms that are clearly attributable to another source (i.e. allergies).
- c. If a harvester fails verbal or physical screening or is displaying viral symptoms they will immediately be isolated in accordance with Section VIII.b.
- d. Additionally, site managers should assess each harvesters' individual risk factors (*e.g.*, older age; the presence of chronic medical conditions, including immunocompromising conditions) and enact additional protective measures as needed to minimize their risk.

**VI. Protecting the Public.** After all members of a Harvesting Operation have completed quarantine, it is anticipated that harvesters may have local community contact. Harvesters should use the following procedures to limit contact with members of the public to the greatest extent possible:

- a. Harvesters should adhere to any and all additional protective measures enacted by municipal or tribal governments through local Emergency Ordinances.
- b. For harvesters who live locally or return to port daily, harvesters and families or roommates should comply social distancing guidelines.
- c. Travel to high-traffic areas in communities such as retail stores will be kept to an absolute minimum. Harvesting Operations should take advantage of delivery services, curbside pick-up, and supply runners as much as possible.
- d. All face-to-face interaction between harvesters and other fisheries industry workers should be kept to an absolute minimum, such as receiving for supplies, off-loading catch, fish tickets, and refueling. Those interactions that cannot be conducted remotely should follow social distancing guidelines.

- e. Private sector businesses such as retailers, hotels, and air carriers may also enact additional measures as a part of their protective plans which must be followed in order to obtain their services.

## VII. **Worksite/Campsite Protective Measures.**

- a. Harvesting Operations should encourage basic common hygiene practices, such as frequent and thorough hand washing; respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes; discouraging harvesters from using others' personal property, work tools, and equipment.
- b. Harvesters are strongly recommended to stay in their assigned accommodations if they are sick.
- c. Harvesting Operations should confine harvesters to their own campsite and practice social distancing with neighbors as much as possible.

## VIII. **Procedures for Harvesters who Become Ill.** Harvesting Operations should follow the following procedures for identification, isolation, and assessment of harvesters who begin to show symptoms of infection:

- a. **Identification.** Screen all harvesters daily for:
  - i. New signs of fever, cough, difficulty breathing, loss of smell or taste, unusual fatigue or shortness of breath.
  - ii. If there is a respiratory illness identified, take temperature twice daily of each harvester.
  - iii. If symptoms are presenting, repeat the screening from Section V.
  - iv. If a harvester screens "yes" to any of the symptom questions (1-3), place a surgical mask on if tolerated.
  - v. If a harvester screens "yes" to BOTH: (1) any of the symptom questions (1-3); AND (2) an epidemiological risk factor questions (4 or 5), place a surgical mask on harvester and isolate them per the **Isolation** protocol below.
  - vi. Evaluating provider should don appropriate PPE and begin to document who has had exposure to the harvester within the last 2 days.
  - vii. If available, or as soon as practicable, obtain a rapid influenza swab. If positive, and no other reason to suspect COVID-19, treat harvester as an influenza case, not a COVID-19 case. There can be co-infection with COVID-19 and influenza, if there is any suspicion for COVID-19 exposure in the prior 14 days, continue to treat as a suspected COVID-19 case.
  - viii. If a harvester screens "yes" to fever and respiratory symptoms, but does not clearly have an exposure that would qualify for a COVID-19 suspect case, seek medical evaluation and, at a minimum, recommend isolation for 72 hours AFTER the fever ends without the use of fever-reducing medications AND an improvement in initial symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) before returning to work.
- b. **Isolation.** Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. When possible, isolate sick harvesters in a separate room and designate a head that is only for the isolated crew. For Harvesting Operations that cannot

accommodate isolation, consider all members of the Harvesting Operation under Close Contact Quarantine for 14 days.

- i. If a harvester is identified as a potential COVID-19 case, immediately ask them to wear a facemask (a surgical mask, not N-95), unless they are having difficulty breathing. If there are no facemasks available, a cloth face covering may be used as a last resort.
  - ii. Place the harvester in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available. Place a label on the door indicating no one is to enter the room without proper PPE. This room should have a separate toilet and bathing facilities.
  - iii. Any staff entering the room should use Standard Precautions, Contact Precautions, and Airborne Precautions, and use eye protection such as goggles or a face shield. If N-95 masks are not available, a surgical mask may be considered an acceptable alternative at this time.
  - iv. Access to the room should be limited to personnel involved in direct care. Meals should be delivered to the room and dishes and utensils cleaned separately. Anyone with exposure to the harvester should document the date and time of exposure, nature of exposure (close contact, same room, secretions), and PPE worn. Meticulous hand hygiene should be performed immediately after doffing PPE.
  - v. Maintain a distance of six feet from the sick harvester and keep interactions with them as brief as possible.
  - vi. Limit the number of people who interact with sick people. To the extent possible, have a single person give care and meals to the sick person.
  - vii. Provide tissues and access to soap and water, and ask the sick harvesters to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue (or facemask) when coughing or sneezing.
- c. **Notification.** Site managers should notify the nearest Public Health Nursing Center or the DHSS Section of Epidemiology at 907-269-8000 in the event of a positive clinical diagnosis or positive test result in their workplace. A full list of Public Health Nursing Centers is available here: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Nursing/Pages/locations.aspx>.
- i. Site managers may also be required by local ordinances to contact the local or Borough government authorities or Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
  - ii. The information that should be provided when notifying Public Health of a case includes the name of the case and his/her date of birth, current address, state or country of permanent residence, telephone number, and the date of test result.
  - iii. For a person ill or injured and not suspected of COVID-19 follow an established process to evaluate for requesting healthcare.
  - iv. If the ill harvester is not directed to a medical facility, the Harvesting Operation may continue to fish and complete a 14-day Close Contact Quarantine. If unloading to a tender/processor is necessary during this time, the Harvesting Operation should tell the tender/processor it has a sick harvester. During the unloading, all crew should wear gloves and face coverings.

- d. **Transportation.** Procedure on transportation of suspected COVID-19 cases at disembarkation
- i. For the harvester with suspected COVID-19: A facemask should be worn by the patient for source control. Alternatively, an oxygen mask can be used if clinically indicated. If the patient requires intubation, *see*: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html> for aerosol-generating procedures.
  - ii. If ambulance transportation is required: Local EMS should be notified that this is a potential COVID-19 case so that responders may use appropriate PPE and follow their protocols.
  - iii. If private vehicle transportation is utilized: Anyone who will be driving a harvester with suspected COVID-19 should maintain as much distance from the harvester as possible, wear a mask if available, and avoid unnecessary contact with the ill person and their belongings. If the driver will provide direct care to the ill person (*e.g.*, moving patients onto stretchers), they should wear recommended PPE. After transportation is complete and before reentering a driver's compartment, the driver should remove and dispose of any PPE in a sealed plastic bag and perform hand hygiene. Windows should be down to allow for air exchange if possible.
  - iv. The receiving healthcare facility should be notified that a patient with suspected COVID-19 is being brought in so that they may take appropriate infection control precautions.
- e. **Close Contact Quarantine.** Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. If separate accommodations with designated bathrooms are available, this procedure may be considered for the individual crew. Otherwise, consider for the entire Harvesting Operation under Close Contact Quarantine.
- i. Harvesters who have had exposure to a person suspected of having COVID-19 should be quarantined in their assigned accommodations. All potentially exposed members should avoid leaving the worksite or lodging facility and self-monitor under the supervision of the site manager or telemedicine providers until 14 days after the last possible exposure. If an entire Harvesting Operation is under quarantine, they may continue to work.
  - ii. Harvesters who are identified as Close Contacts but remain asymptomatic that have been fully vaccinated, with documented proof that they have received all required doses of an FDA-authorized vaccination against COVID-19 with the final dose being administered more than 14 days prior to their exposure, should follow [quarantine guidance from the CDC specifically for vaccinated persons](#).
  - iii. If personnel develop fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms of COVID-19 while in quarantine, they should be isolated and undergo a medical assessment, reporting, and transportation as per the other relevant sections of this order.

- iv. The site manager and telemedicine providers should remain in contact with personnel through the self-monitoring period to oversee self-monitoring activities.
- v. If harvesters are going to remain at the site in congregate living or working conditions upon completion of Close Contact Quarantine, they should not use testing strategies recommended by the CDC to reduce Close Contact Quarantine to less than 14 days. If the harvester will be departing the site and heading immediately home following quarantine, they may consider the CDC [Options to Reduce Quarantine](#) to 10 or 7 days using PCR testing.
- vi. The remaining exposed harvesters should complete a 14-day quarantine period, from the time the sick harvester is transported, in a suitable quarantine location.

**IX. Continuity of Fisheries Operations.**

- a. Site managers should consider the impact that this pandemic will have on the fishing industry as a whole, their suppliers, and wrap-around services such as fuel, groceries, and lodging.
- b. Site managers should consider the potential impact on their operations that may arise as a result of outbreaks or increased rates of harvester absenteeism, and enact plans for cross-training harvesters to the greatest extent possible.
- c. Site managers should temporarily cease operations if they do not have enough healthy harvesters remaining to safely run the Harvesting Operation.