

COUNTY OF BERKS, PENNSYLVANIA

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March 25, 2020

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Reclassification of Construction Industry as Life Sustaining

Dear Governor Wolf,

We understand the awesome responsibility that you have in protecting the citizens of Pennsylvania and that difficult decisions must be made. Individuals and businesses must sacrifice for the greater good.

The world and the people are interconnected and during this difficult time we see, feel, and understand this intensely.

It is with the utmost respect for the responsibility of all mankind to best combat the war on coronavirus that we make this appeal to you regarding the status of the construction industry.

The construction industry is vast and serves a wide variety of services including a wide range of industries and consumers. As an industry, we are providing life sustaining work that is imperative to our infrastructures, governments, manufacturing, citizens and families. From families that may be quarantined in houses with no drywall to experiencing delays in the construction of our infrastructure, health facilities, and services to other life sustaining organizations, the construction industry literally puts roofs over peoples' heads and rebuilds hope by providing well-paying jobs and careers for our employees.

We appreciate your administrations expedient management of waivers; however, the restriction on the construction industry at large has a wide range ripple effect including but not limited to, service chains, logistical support losses, additional administration and management expenses, and additional burdens to service providers and those they serve.

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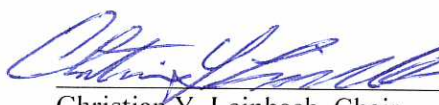
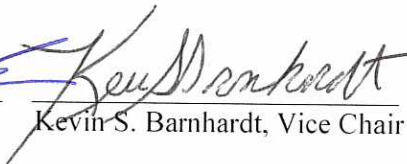
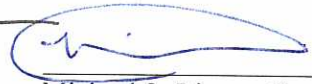
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It is with respect of our joint mission to win the war on coronavirus that we ask that the entire Construction Industry be categorized as life sustaining. We offer the attached guidelines, **Proposed Precautionary Best Practice Guidelines**, that are in addition to current CDC guidelines and in context of the Construction Industry. We propose that with the categorization of the industry as life sustaining, our industry leaders and organizations distribute the guidelines to the industry at large and urge the full implementation.

In closing, we are asking you to recategorize the construction industry as life sustaining.

Sincerely,

Berks County Board of Commissioners

		
Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair	Kevin S. Barnhardt, Vice Chair	Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner

Coronavirus/COVID19

Proposed Precautionary Best Practice Guidelines

Construction Industry

Objective: Create best practice guidelines as a tool for the construction industry at large to continue its works in a safe manner and in the protection of employees, customers, and the community at large. Appropriate precautions can be incorporated in the works of the construction industry to manage and mitigate the risks of contracting and/or spreading coronavirus.

The construction industry is diverse in many ways including but not limited to who they serve, how they serve, the activities they engage in, and risk. The following are general best practices for the construction industry and are applicable based on the individual organization or proprietor. The below are in addition to existing guidelines, regulations, safety policies and practices, and OSHA requirements in place within the construction industry at large. The below guidelines should be adapted to job site policies, customer policies, and local governing bodies.

- I. **Training:** Basic training on the Coronavirus serves as a basis to applying the appropriate precautionary measures.
 - a. Basic Training on the Coronavirus
 - i. Enveloped Virus – Easy to Inactivate
 - ii. How it behaves and spreads?
 1. Respiratory Droplets
 2. Close Contact
 3. Surfaces and Touch Points
 - b. Understanding Risk Assessment and How to Protect Yourself and Others:
Training on the virus in general, how it spreads and its viability on a variety of surfaces allows you to take the most appropriate precautionary measures for a variety of situations.

- i. Be aware of your surroundings and assess risk
 - 1. Stores
 - 2. Job Sites
 - 3. Customer Interactions
 - ii. Precautionary Measures
 - 1. Individuals
 - 2. Buildings
 - 3. Vehicles
 - 4. Tools/Equipment
 - 5. Materials
 - c. PPE and Disinfection: Provide training on appropriate PPE and Disinfection.
 - i. PPE
 - ii. Disinfection Products and Techniques
 - 1. Read Label
 - 2. PPE
 - 3. Dwell Time
 - iii. Mechanical Means: When appropriate, this would be company specific.
- II. **Policies** are recommendations and to be considered as applicable and adjusted to the individual company's situation:
 - a. Assign a Coronavirus Safety Officer person within your company
 - i. Responsible to evaluate and assess company's policies daily
 - ii. Responsible for the enforcement of the company's policies
 - iii. Communicates and evaluates employees' health concerns
 - b. Building
 - i. Limit/Restrict outside visitors
 - ii. Allow for office staff to work remotely when possible in the continuity of operations.
 - iii. Visitors and Staff wash their hands upon arrival and throughout the day.
 - iv. Established protocol for cleaning and disinfecting spaces with a focus on touch points
 - v. Visitors and Staff are not allowed in building if they have undiagnosed symptoms or have any concerns of being at risk of being infected.
 - vi. Other: Company will proactively assess and adjust precautionary measures based on developments and identified opportunities to increase precautions. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Reducing touch points – Keeping Doors Open
 - 2. Disinfection of cell phones
- III. **Job Sites and Buildings**
 - a. Appropriate social distancing is maintained between staff and customers

- b. Handwashing or hand sanitizing agent is made available
 - c. Employees wash/sanitize upon entering and exiting job sites/buildings.
 - d. When applicable, customers/occupants are questioned to appropriately assess risk and it is communicated to the staff or subcontractor.
 - i. Appropriate policies are in place to keep employees safe.
 - e. If risk deems PPE appropriate, it is made available to the employee.
- IV. **Equipment:** Based on understanding the virus, its viability, and how it spreads, company will take precautionary measures as deemed appropriate to avoid spreading the virus or contaminating people, places and things.
- V. **Vehicles:** Employees will disinfect their hands upon entering vehicle. Precautionary measures will be applied as appropriate for company.
- VI. **Employees:** A series of employee policies will be instituted in accordance with law and directives including but not limited to: Employees with undiagnosed symptoms or possible confirmed contact will not come to work, building, job site, etc.
- VII. **Supplies:** Company will make available, accessible, and provide training on any PPE, Products, and/or Equipment in executing appropriate precautionary measures.