



MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

Return to Work Protocols

COVID-19

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS RETURN TO WORK PROTOCOLS

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (“MBCI” or “Tribe”) is committed to the health and safety of its employees. For this reason, we are closely monitoring government policy changes, Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) guidelines, government mandates and public health directives and will continue to make any necessary changes or modifications to these protocols as are appropriate. CDC and EPA regulations and guidance may be found at www.cdc.gov and www.epa.gov.

As an employer, we can assist in slowing and preventing the spread of COVID-19. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”), most American workers will likely experience a low or medium risk of exposure at their job or place of employment. OSHA regulations and guidance may be found at www.osha.gov.

We are following the CDC guidelines for returning to work and coordinating with local health officials at the Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services so timely and accurate information can guide appropriate responses. Local conditions will influence the decisions that are made regarding community-level and employment strategies in accordance with CDC guidance for mitigation according to the level of community transmission or the severity impact of COVID-19.

While implementing these Return to Work Protocols, it is the goal of MBCI to meet the following three objectives so that there may be continued provision of services for the benefit of the members of the Tribe:

1. reduce transmission among employees;
2. maintain healthy government operations; and
3. maintain a healthy work environment.

By meeting these three objectives, MBCI can effectively combat COVID-19 and continue to meet the important needs of members of the Tribe by providing them essential governmental services. MBCI intends to meet these objectives by taking the steps outlined below.

I. REDUCE TRANSMISSION AMONG EMPLOYEES

Educate Employees On How They Can Reduce The Spread Of COVID-19

- Employees will take steps to protect themselves at work and at home.
- Employees will minimize face-to-face contact with other employees. Supervisors should provide employees with appropriate contact number to employees who do not have access to a computer work station to encourage telephone communications.

- Employees will utilize face coverings in the workplace that fully cover the nose and mouth and are properly secured to the face until such time as the restriction is lifted by the Tribal Chief.
- Employees will practice social distancing by maintaining a distance of six feet from other individuals in the workplace.
- Employees will stay home if sick, except to get medical care.
- Employees will inform their supervisor if they 1) have tested for COVID-19 or 2) have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 or 3) have a household member who has tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting test results; 4) have a healthcare or first responder employee that resides in their household.
- Employees will wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Employees will use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content, if soap and water are not available.
- Employees will avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Employees will cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of their elbow. Used tissues will be thrown in the trash and hands will be immediately washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol will be used.
- Employees will clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs.
- Employees will avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, employees will clean and disinfect these items before and after use.
- Employees will not travel together in MBCI vehicles, unless necessary.

Daily Health Self Certification Of All Employees

- Employees will self-certify in writing daily before their shift that they 1) do not have any fever; 2) are not experiencing any symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath or other symptoms recognized by the CDC); 3) have not been tested for COVID-19 or been around any person known to have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are awaiting test results for COVID-19 testing.
- Employees will participate in MBCI directed COVID-19 testing, once test kits become available.

- When thermometers are available, employees will submit to non-contact body temperature measurement by their supervisor or his/her designee. Those with a body temperature exceeding 99.4° will be required to leave work immediately.

Direct Sick Employees To Stay Home

- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath or other symptoms recognized by the CDC) shall notify their supervisor, request leave and stay home.
- Employees will stay home if sick, except to get medical care
- Employees will inform their supervisor if a household member has been tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting results
- Sick employees shall not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home quarantine or isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers or Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services.
- Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 shall notify their supervisor, request leave and follow CDC recommended precautions and any directives from their healthcare provider or Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services before returning to work.
- Employees who have tested negative for COVID-19 shall immediately notify their supervisor and follow any directives from the healthcare provider or Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services before returning to work.
- Employees who take leave in excess of two days related to any sickness must present a doctor's excuse to return to work.
- Although MBCI will implement flexible sick leave policies, these policies are to only be used by persons who are affected by COVID-19. Any attempt by employees who are not legitimately affected by COVID-19 to manipulate the leave policies intended for COVID-19 affected employees will not be tolerated.
- MBCI will continue to enforce the Administrative Personnel Policies, including the no-call, no-show policy. Failure to report daily to your supervisor will result in disciplinary action.

Separate Sick Employees

Employees who appear to have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath or other symptoms recognized by the CDC) upon arrival at work during the Health Self Certification or who do not complete the Health Self Certification or who become sick during the day shall immediately be separated from other employees, customers, and visitors and sent home on available leave or if no leave is available, leave without pay.

Exposure Response Plan

- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, supervisors will immediately notify Human Resources and inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, while maintaining confidentiality by not identifying the employee by name as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regarding the affected employee. The supervisor will give the names of potentially exposed employees to the Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services who will contact employees to assess their exposure risk. The supervisor shall instruct potentially exposed employees to proceed based on the guidance of Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services. If employees are instructed by Choctaw Health Center, Public Health Services to go home, the employee shall contact their supervisor to request leave for the period of time directed.

For an exposed employee to return to work, a Return To Work certificate from a healthcare provider is required that states the date the employee can return to work. No follow up test is required for the employee to return to work.

High Risk Employees

Employees who are in high-risk categories for infection may request increased measures for protection such as additional Personal Protective Equipment or an isolated work station. MBCI will try to accommodate these requests.

II. MAINTAIN HEALTHY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Identify A Task Force and Workplace Coordinator

MBCI has appointed a Return To Work Task Force comprised of officials from Tribal Administration, Human Resources, Choctaw Health Center, Risk Management, Public Works and the Attorney General's Office. The Task Force will monitor internal and external data and recommend modifications, additions or deletions to these Protocols. MBCI has designated the Director of Human Resources as a contact person for Directors and Supervisors for questions regarding COVID-19 safety issues and their impact at the workplace.

Implement Return To Work Procedure

- MBCI will have an **organized** and controlled approach for return of employees and may utilize the following processes or a combination thereof:

Different phasing in return schedules based on departmental needs;

Reduced Schedules;

Schedule Changes;

Rotational Schedules;

Teleworking.

Implement Flexible Sick Leave And Supportive Policies And Practices

- MBCI is making Emergency Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act available to Tribal Employees who are eligible and has developed guidance and forms to assist employees and posted flyers about the leave in compliance with Department of Labor regulations. Supervisors and Human Resources will make certain that employees are aware of and understand these policies.
- MBCI maintains additional leave policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school and childcare closures including, if applicable, FMLA leave, annual leave, sick leave, advance sick leave, the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program and the additional leave under the Life Threatening Condition Provision.
- Although MBCI will implement flexible sick leave policies, these policies are to only be used only by persons who are affected by COVID-19. Any attempt by employees who are not legitimately affected by COVID-19 to manipulate the leave policies intended for COVID-19 affected employees will not be tolerated.
- MBCI will connect employees to employee assistance resources that are available such as Behavioral Health Services.

Assess Essential Functions And The Reliance That Others And The Community Have On Tribal Services

- MBCI is prepared to change practices if needed to maintain critical operations or for the safety of employees (e.g., temporarily suspend some operations, if needed).
- MBCI will identify alternate supply chains for critical goods and services since some goods and services may be in higher demand or unavailable.
- MBCI will share best practices with other businesses and partners in the communities to improve community response efforts.

Determine How MBCI Will React To Absenteeism

To mitigate the effects of absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to care for children unable to attend childcare programs and K-12 schools, MBCI will:

- Implement plans to continue essential business functions in the event higher than usual absenteeism occurs;
- Prepare to institute additional flexible workplace and leave policies, including teleworking;
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate if key employees are absent.

Establishing Policies And Practices For Social Distancing

Social distancing will be implemented in all workspaces. Social distancing means avoiding gatherings of ten or more people and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others (e.g., break or conference rooms). Strategies that MBCI may use include:

- Implementing flexible worksites (e.g., telework)
- Implementing flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts)
- Providing physical barriers or distance between employees at the worksite
- Increasing physical space between employees and visitors to Tribal Government Offices (e.g., drive through, partitions)
- Implementing flexible meeting and travel options (e.g., postpone non-essential meetings events or travel)
- Delivering services remotely (e.g. phone, video, or web)
- Delivering products through curbside or contactless pick-up or delivery
- Postponing large events, including athletic events, until a later date
- Avoiding more than one person in non-commercial, non-emergency MBCI vehicles, if possible

III. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT

Limit Visitors To Tribal Government Departments, Offices And Facilities

All visitors must complete the Health Screen Form For Visitors and wear a mask when on MBCI property.

- Prohibit or limit all visitors initially
- Over time, ease limitations on visitors who are absolutely necessary, such as vendors
- Control visitor traffic through workplace

Erect Physical Barriers In Some Locations

Erect physical barriers (e.g., plexiglass) for the protection of employees who are in immediate contact with the public. Programs needing physical barriers will contact Tribal Maintenance for assistance in obtaining these items.

Provide Personal Protective Equipment

For emergency responders, healthcare workers and other essential services, MBCI will provide Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) such as gowns, gloves, face coverings or face shield or goggles. Until the restriction is lifted, all employees are to wear facial coverings that fully cover the nose and mouth and are properly secured to the face. Employees are to provide their own facial coverings, if possible. If an employee needs a facial covering provided to them, the employee should notify their supervisor.

Support Respiratory Etiquette And Hand Hygiene For Employees, Customers, And Worksite Visitors

- Display posters near entrances of buildings asking visitors to STOP before entering and to assess their condition
- Require worksite visitors and vendors to undergo the same self-certification process utilized for employees and complete the Health Screen Form For Visitors
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles
- Provide soap and water in the workplace. If soap and water are not readily available, MBCI will endeavor to provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Place hand sanitizer in multiple locations to encourage hand hygiene
- Send communications that encourage employees to have good hand hygiene to help stop the spread of COVID-19

- Discourage handshaking and encourage the use of other noncontact methods of greeting
- Direct employees to visit the CDC coughing and sneezing etiquette and clean hands webpage for more information

Perform Routine Environmental Cleaning

- MBCI will direct employees to clean their personal workspaces and will provide the necessary supplies to routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces in the work area, such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, and doorknobs
- MBCI will discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect these items before and after use.
- MBCI will provide, when available, disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

Perform Enhanced Cleaning And Disinfection After Persons Confirmed To Have COVID-19 Have Been In Tribal Government Offices Or Facilities

If a sick employee is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, MBCI will follow the EPA and CDC cleaning and disinfection guidelines. Supervisors shall contact Environmental Health Services at Choctaw Health Center for assessment of the situation. MBCI has contracted with a commercial restoration and cleaning services vendor to provide services that are outside the scope of Environmental Services.

Establish COVID-19 Complaint Process

MBCI has established an account at covid@choctaw.org to receive complaints of non-compliance with these protocols or for recommendations regarding COVID-19 issues. MBCI will in good faith address all complaints. Additionally, violations of Tribal law regarding communicable or infectious diseases, may be reported anonymously at 1-855-484-3739 or at www.wetip.com.

Advise Employees Before Traveling To Take Additional Preparations

- Carefully consider whether travel is necessary, and if necessary, whether it can be postponed
- Only allow essential travel initially then ease restrictions over time
- Check the CDC's Traveler's Health Notices for the latest guidance and recommendations for each country to which the employee will travel. Specific travel information for travelers

going to and returning from countries with travel advisories can be found on the CDC website

- Advise employees to be aware of possible symptoms of COVID-19 (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) before starting travel and notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick
- Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and promptly call a healthcare provider for advice, if needed
- If outside the United States, sick employees should follow company policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country overseas.

Advise Employees Regarding Meetings And Gatherings

- Videoconferencing or teleconferencing is preferred for the near future for work-related meetings and gatherings
- Consider canceling, adjusting, or postponing large work-related meetings or gatherings that can only occur in-person
- When videoconferencing or teleconferencing is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces with attendance limited to persons necessary for the meetings with proper social distancing

MBCI is committed to providing the necessary resources and support to ensure that employees are adequately protected during these unpredictable and challenging times. MBCI reserves the right to modify these protocols as new guidance is issued by government agencies and public health authorities.

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