

# Worker Exposure Risk to COVID-19

## Classifying Worker Exposure to SARS-CoV-2

Worker risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, during an outbreak may depend in part on the industry type and need for contact within 6 feet of people known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19.

OSHA has divided job tasks into four risk exposure levels, as shown below. Most American workers will likely fall in the lower exposure risk (caution) or medium exposure risk levels.

## Occupational Risk Pyramid for COVID-19

### VERY HIGH EXPOSURE RISK

Jobs with a high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19 during specific medical, postmortem, or laboratory procedures. Workers include:

- Healthcare and morgue workers performing aerosol-generating procedures on or collecting/handling specimens from potentially infectious patients or bodies of people known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 at the time of death.

### HIGH EXPOSURE RISK

Jobs with a high potential for exposure to known or suspected sources of COVID-19. Workers in this category include:

- Healthcare delivery, healthcare support, medical transport, and mortuary workers exposed to known or suspected COVID-19 patients or bodies of people known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 at the time of death.

### MEDIUM EXPOSURE RISK

Jobs that require frequent/close contact with people who may be infected, but who are not known or suspected patients. Workers in this category include:

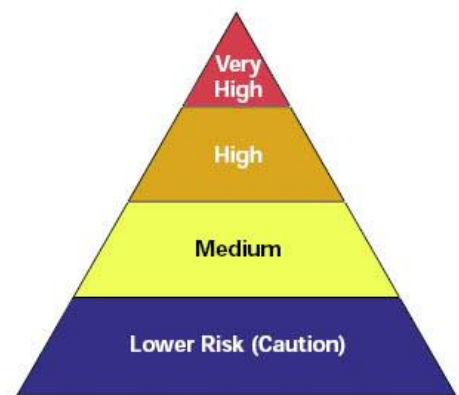
- Those who may have contact with the general public (e.g., schools, high-population-density work environments, some high-volume retail settings), including individuals returning from locations with widespread COVID-19 transmission.

### LOWER EXPOSURE RISK (CAUTION)

Jobs that do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected.

- Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public and other coworkers.

For more information, see the [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#).



*The four exposure risk levels represent probable distribution of risk.*