YouthBuild USA

Construction Lab Readiness and Learning Environment Standardization

Tip Sheet

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COVID-19 has impacted the way that DOL YouthBuild grantees run their programs. While COVID-19 has caused a myriad of challenges for in-person program implementation, it is a critical priority to support grantees with health and safety guidelines as they choose to return to in-person or hybrid models of program delivery. Programs should prioritize the safety and wellbeing of participants, staff, and other stakeholders.

Grantees are working to adapt to the new realities that COVID-19 has created and are currently using a variety of program models, including virtual, in-person, and hybrid. The constantly evolving public health landscape has been challenging to navigate for all sectors, particularly for programs designed to be implemented in-person, such as construction.

As grantees explore different models to return to in-person programming, navigating emergent health and safety guidance, and applying it in practice, may be an overwhelming task. This Tip Sheet is designed for grantees operating within a hybrid (a combination of in-person and virtual) or a fully in-person model. It will provide standardized guidance and best practices on how to safely and adequately prepare Construction Labs/Classrooms (CL/Cs) with the tools and resources to return to fully in-person and/or continue in hybrid programming.

The lab readiness and learning environment standards align with the available health and safety guidance from the following institutions, governmental agencies, and credentialing agencies:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)
- National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)
- Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3)
- Home Building Institute (HBI)

**Lab Readiness Standards and Information**

**Physical Space Standard:** It is critical to create an ideal physical space for the CL/Cs and utilize that space effectively from an ergonomic standpoint while also prioritizing safety standards. The diagram below shows a potential layout from the CDC’s website that programs can modify for a construction lab.
Table 1: CDC, OSHA, and ASHRAE

Safety guidance from CDC, OSHA, and ASHRAE will help support grantees with setting rigorous standards for health and safety for all CL/Cs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Guidance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)</td>
<td>The CDC has synthesized guidance for community-based organizations (CBOs) that include both personal and institutional protocols to increase safety as in-person programming resumes.</td>
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<td>Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)</td>
<td>OSHA has created guidance to protect workers by mitigating and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. CL/Cs should take similar steps to prepare for a return to in-person programming.</td>
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ASHRAE has assembled a detailed infographic with clickable links to guidance ranging from building guides and mitigation strategies to their core recommendations for adaptively managing work on the job site amid COVID-19.

Table 2: Credentialing Agencies NCCER, MC3, and HBI

Grantees are working with a variety of credentialing agencies, including NCCER, MC3, and HBI. Each of these agencies has put forth information and resources related to COVID-19. The table below includes information from these credentialing agencies.

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)</td>
<td>NCCER, in conjunction with Coordinating Committee for Automotive Repair (CCAR) and Electude, has created Skilled Trades: COVID-19 Career Education Guidelines to help organizations best support their staff and trainees with the utmost safety and thoughtfulness regarding COVID-19 mitigation.</td>
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<td>Home Building Institute (HBI)</td>
<td>HBI produced this short video, Coronavirus in the Classroom: Precautions and Preventive Measures for COVID-19, with best practices to mitigate the risks for COVID-19 in a classroom setting.</td>
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<td>Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3)</td>
<td>North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU), the parent organization of the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3), has assembled a COVID-19 resource page that provides guidance on various topics ranging from relevant legislation and legal support to federal and state-level support for organizations.</td>
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The following resources provide additional information in various areas that may apply to grantees and their unique needs:

- National Association of Home Builders: Job site safety and recordkeeping for Coronavirus
- World Health Organization: Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Health and safety in the workplace

The safety and wellbeing of DOL YouthBuild grantee participants, staff, and other stakeholders is a top priority. As programs begin to partially or fully re-open, it will be important to consider the information collected in this Tip Sheet to perform Construction Lab/Classroom-related activities safely.