Railroads & COVID-19 Response: Keeping Workers Safe

North America's freight railroads remain focused on **safeguarding the health and safety of the rail workforce** amid the COVID-19 pandemic **while working to maintain the necessary flow of goods**. Railroads maintain and routinely review their pandemic response plans. Since news of COVID-19's spread in early January 2020, railroads and their Chief Medical Officers have been updating their plans to specifically address **the need to contain, mitigate and respond to the coronavirus outbreak**, pursuant to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations.

Protecting Employee Health & Well-Being

- **Providing timely and accurate information** on virus-related news, CDC-recommended workplace spatial distancing and mitigation strategies, and company-specific protection and mitigation efforts through a variety of dedicated channels.

- **Limiting possible exposure** by screening workers pre-shift where feasible, directing employees to avoid contamination "hot spots," enabling employees to enter records remotely, avoiding face-to-face briefings where possible, and providing access to railroads' licensed health professions to assist with questions and keep teams updated as the situation evolves.

- **Expanding the frequency of cleaning and sanitation** with EPA-approved products and in accordance with CDC recommendations in maintenance facilities, railroad headquarters, dispatch and operations centers, on locomotives and rail equipment and railroad-operated sleeping facilities and in railroad-operated motor vehicles. Railroads have also requested enhanced cleaning of hotels and motor vehicles used by railroad contractors. Railroads are making sanitizers and wipes broadly available across the network to employees.

- **Expanding benefits** by broadening insurance coverage for virus testing and telemedicine, and in some cases offering paid leave for virus-related absences.

Social Distancing & Limiting Potential Exposure to the Virus

- **Limiting group settings** by conducting meetings and briefings via phone or radio, postponing training classes and spreading out or isolating work areas. Additional efforts for frontline employees include allowing single occupancy hotel accommodations, staggering breaks, limiting crew members per locomotive and motor vehicle and limiting group dining by making to-go options available and, in some cases, providing financial stipends for takeout meals.

- **Restricting access to mission-critical locations** like operations and dispatching centers to only essential staff who must be present to perform their duties and restricting vendor presence on railroad property.

- **Expanding social distancing** by limiting movement around the network by individual employees and activating secondary dispatch and operation locations.

- **Transitioning employees to telework where possible to reduce density**, including those not directly involved in train operations and at headquarters.

- **Instituting new measures to limit spread** by restricting domestic and international employee air travel, selectively allowing personal vehicle use and coordinating with suppliers and vendors to ensure they are also taking proper protections.

Adhering to CDC Guidelines for COVID-19 Exposure & Quarantining

- Requiring employees to **follow CDC guidance for self-protection**.

- Directing sick employees **to stay home and seek medical guidance**.

- Instructing workers to **self-isolate** if they have been exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID-19 and to notify their designated railroad contact to identify other railroad employees who may have been exposed.

- Following CDC and local health departments' recommendations to **monitor impacted employees**.

- Implementing approved cleaning and decontamination protocols **for any affected facility and/or equipment**.

Railroads are in constant communication with federal, state and local partners on evolving public health developments and containment efforts. Railroads continue to monitor the situation and will modify their response as needed.