### Guidance on Critical Infrastructure / Essential Worker Terminology

**Purpose:**

To clarify status of critical infrastructure/essential workers and their ability to work during the COVID19 response.

**Kentucky Department for Public Health Guidance:**

During a worldwide pandemic, defining specific groups that may or may not continue their work is a difficult decision.  The original intention of CISA (Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19 Response) was to ensure that society would have essential services, including provision of food, water, housing and healthcare.  Kentucky is not now in the same situation it faced in March/April. All industries have been permitted to reopen, albeit at reduced capacities. As such, quarantine of persons with high-risk exposures has become even more, not less, important to minimize the spread of contagion.

Although all jobs are "essential" to a healthy, functioning society, in the face of an ongoing infectious disease pandemic, the greater good of society is to minimize risk in order to protect the vulnerable and at-risk populations within the community.  Therefore, the Kentucky Department for Public Health has made a determination that healthcare workers and first responders alone fall into the category of Critical workers who may be exempt from specific quarantine if exposed to a confirmed case.  All other workers who might be exposed to cases of COVID-19 are assessed by public health staff to determine the necessity of quarantine and the terms of that quarantine. Thus, determination of quarantine does not depend on job title, but on assessment of the risk of exposure to oneself as well as the risk one might pose to others who are vulnerable in their community.

A public health emergency creates a need to transition from an individual focus to a population-based approach, meaning that we implement measures that strive to protect the greatest number of individuals from sickness and death.

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