

# A Guide for Safe and Adequate Housing for Agricultural Workers



**NCFH**

National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc.

# Introduction

The well-being of agricultural workers is essential as their hard labor brings food to the tables of many families year-round. Where and how they live are important factors that impact their overall health and well-being. According to recent data from the National Agricultural Worker Survey (NAWS), about 33% of Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers (MSAWs) reported living in substandard and “crowded” housing conditions.<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organization defines “crowded housing” as when the number of people living in the dwelling is more than the space available, whether measured as rooms, bedrooms, or floor area.<sup>2</sup>

This guide will provide an overview of the types of agricultural worker housing across the U.S. and specific recommendations and strategies for health centers, farmworker-serving organizations, agricultural employers, farm owners, and other farm worker advocates to reduce health risks and promote safe and healthy living environments for MSAWs.



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# Agricultural Worker Housing

Common types of housing where agricultural workers and their families live include foundational houses, trailers or mobile homes, motels/hotels, and other unconventional sites, such as self-made shelters, cars, garages, barracks, camping tents, etc. (refer to Graphic 1). According to the 2019-2020 NAWS report, out of the 2,172 farmworkers surveyed, 16% of respondents lived in employer-provided housing while 53% lived in rented units, 31% owned their home or lived in a relative's-owned home, and 1% lived in housing provided by the government or charity.<sup>1</sup>

**Graphic 1: Types of housing**

## Foundational Houses



## Trailers/Mobile Homes



## Motels/Hotels



## Other Types of Unconventional Housing

Car



Barracks



Camping Tents



Garages/barns/others



Self-made Shelters



MSAW housing may be considered substandard because of the lack of adequate living space, utilities, safety, and other aspects. All housing provided by employers should meet the required standards, set by the [Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act \(MSPA\)](#) of 1983, enacted by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). These standards are put in place to provide regulations to employers for farmworker living and sleeping spaces. However, not all housing sites designated for farmworkers can be classified as MSAW housing under the federal or state's jurisdiction, so these employers do not have to follow the MSPA regulations.<sup>3,7,9</sup>

## Housing Problems and their Impact on MSAW Health

Housing problems impact MSAW health and well-being. See the table below for common risks that result and affect health outcomes in farmworker populations.

Housing Problems	Impact on Health and Wellbeing
Lack of Electricity	<p><b>Increased risk for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food-borne illnesses due to no access to safe food storage, cooking, and refrigeration.</li> <li>• Illnesses caused by extreme temperatures due to lack of cooling and heating.</li> <li>• Fires caused by candles or gas lamps.</li> </ul>
Overcrowding	<p><b>Increased risk for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing respiratory illnesses due to poor air quality and proper ventilation.</li> <li>• Hygiene-related issues due to limited access to restrooms, sinks, and showers.</li> <li>• Exposure to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases due to the inability to safely quarantine, inadequate physical space and distance, and proper hygiene.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
Sanitation	<p><b>Increased risk for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allergies due to mold, mildew, and other allergens exposure.</li> <li>• Exposure to illnesses due to unsafe sewage disposal.</li> <li>• Diseases associated with pest infestations.</li> <li>• Diseases associated with pesticides and chemical exposure.<sup>4,5</sup></li> </ul>
Water Supply	<p><b>Increased risk for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gastrointestinal illness due to drinking unsafe or unpotable water.</li> <li>• Lack of hygiene due to limited water supply for bathing and hand washing.</li> </ul>
Remote and Isolated Locations	<p><b>Increased risk for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime and violence</li> <li>• Accidents due to housing structural deficiencies.</li> <li>• Food insecurity due to lack of access to healthy food options in their location.</li> <li>• Lack of access to health care services and emergency management due to remote location.</li> <li>• Mental health issues such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and other mood disorders.<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>

## Common Barriers that Impact MSAW Housing

### Location & Costs

MSAW housing is usually located in remote and isolated areas across the country, with most workers living and working in states such as California, Texas, Washington, Florida, and North Carolina.<sup>10,11</sup> These states are known to have high living and housing costs, adding to the economic burden that the MSAWs experience. Unfortunately, most farmworkers pay for their housing or live in remote unregulated employer-provided housing because they are not covered by the [Immigration and Nationality Act](#). Many MSAW families also have incomes below the federal poverty level due to low-earned wages, so they may struggle to pay for rent, transportation, and health care.



### Mobility and Communications

Millions of migratory farmworkers often move from state to state following the crops and looking for new farm labor opportunities. Moving so frequently also makes it difficult for farmworkers to maintain communication with their providers, especially if they don't have access to a telephone, internet, or local communication channels like radio in their living units, especially in rural areas. Migration and constant mobility also make it more difficult for farmworkers to find health care providers or farmworker serving organizations that can meet their health needs close to their living areas.



## Current Efforts to Improve and Maintain Safe Housing for Agricultural Workers

Government and nonprofit organizations have reinforced their efforts in improving MSAW housing conditions in the last few years.

- **The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** has annual grants available through [HUD Programs web page](#), for organizations who serve residents and migratory farmworkers.
- **The National Housing Trust Fund:** works to increase and preserve the supply of affordable rental housing for extremely low-income households, and is available annually through [Housing Trust Fund web page](#), and state government and non-profit organization programs.
- **The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development state offices:** provide affordable financing to develop or rehabilitate rental housing for very-low-income domestic, migratory, and seasonal farmworkers on an annual basis, through [USDA web page](#).

Access to homeownership is a priority for many of these advocates, as it has shown that MSAWs who own homes have better community engagement and an increased perception of community efficacy.<sup>8</sup> For H-2A workers specifically, the Immigration and Nationality Act from the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor offers protections, including housing at no cost to the employer.<sup>9</sup>

Housing is one of the main social drivers of health (SDOH) that affects farmworker populations and is often linked to poor mental health and negative behaviors.<sup>12</sup> Health centers are vital in screening for MSAW housing needs by assessing for SDOH. Health centers first identify and classify MSAWs and their families, then screen for SDOH using any of the available screening tools and address social and health needs through services and community referrals. Health centers can also improve housing by implementing mobile clinics and telehealth services. These interventions improve access to care by reducing the need for transportation due to location and mobility barriers. They also allow MSAW patients to receive and engage in virtual services through the internet and technology in rural areas and remote housing communities.





# Recommendations for Safe and Adequate Housing

Housing was recognized as a human right by the United Nations in 1948 through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and has been reaffirmed in many resolutions and declarations in the U. S. However, housing is seen as a commodity rather than a right in our country, particularly for special and vulnerable populations like MSAWs.

The following recommendations can help create safer and better-quality living spaces for MSAWs:

## Recommendations for health centers, farmworkers serving organizations, and others advocates:

- Create partnerships in collaboration with employer and growers to provide health education on hygiene and safety, and outreach services to improve housing unit conditions.
- Integrate housing assessments within health and social services to assess needs on an ongoing basis.
- Partner with legal services organizations to provide farmworkers with legal assistance when they face unsafe or unsanitary housing conditions which may affect their health and wellbeing.
- Support and guide farmworkers in applying for subsidized housing, utilities, and other essential services.
- Partner with public health researchers to create and improve housing policies and create better standards for MSAW housing in their communities.
- Engage with local and national housing groups and apply for funding opportunities to develop safe and adequate housing projects for farmworker communities.
- Actively screen for housing as a social determinant of health.

## Recommendations for employers and farm owners:

- Connect with health centers, community-based organizations, and other agricultural health advocates.
- Physical and structural areas should be built according to federal or state standards, free of pests, physical or environmental hazards and well-spaced and equipped to house an adequate number of habitants.
- Equip and arrange sleeping areas for the comfort and security of an adequate number of habitants.
- Equip kitchen and eating areas with appliances and equipment to ensure food preparation and consumption are safe and free of any physical or environmental hazards.
- Provide toilet, bathing, handwashing, and laundry areas, according to gender, number of habitants and needs. These facilities should be equipped and maintained to ensure proper hygiene for all farmworkers.
- Have utilities such as proper lighting, heating, cooling, water supply and waste disposal available to ensure protection against extreme weather conditions, biological agents and proper hydration, hygiene, and consumption of all habitants.
- Put in place structural and environmental safety protocols and actions to ensure that personal protection, adequate equipment and first aid products are available for all habitants.

## Recommendations for Farmworkers:

- Clean and disinfect the housing unit on a regular basis to maintain healthy conditions and reduce the risk of food and airborne diseases and exposure to harmful chemicals or pesticides.
- All habitants should clean and disinfect their personal bedding and beds on a regular basis.

- Equip and clean kitchen and eating areas to decrease the risks of foodborne illnesses related to food storage and preparation.
- Clean and disinfect hygiene areas such as toilets, bathrooms, handwashing stations and laundries on a regular basis.
- Use lighting, heating, cooling, water supply and other utility equipment according to your needs, and clean and disinfect on a regular basis.
- Follow safety protocols established by government, employer or tenant to maintain a safe housing unit for all habitants.
- Call your health provider, your nearest health center or contact [NCFH's Call for Health](#) at **1 (800) 377-9968** or through WhatsApp at **1 (737) 414-5121** to look for health and housing services in your area.

For additional recommendations and support in assessing MSAW housing, refer to [Appendix A: MSAW Housing Safety and Hygiene Assessment](#) and for additional recommendations for farmworkers, refer to [Appendix B: Hygiene Tips for Agricultural Worker Housing](#).

## National Housing Resources

Below is a list of federal and state agencies and community-based organizations working to address housing needs. This list can help agricultural employers, farm owners, and other farmworker-serving organizations, including health centers, to improve housing safety, and provide sources of funding for adequate housing, utility assistance programs, transportation resources, internet service assistance programs, etc. Utility and housing assistance resources are provided too.

### Federal Housing Agencies

- U.S. Department of Labor
  - [Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act \(MSPA\)](#)
  - [MSPA Regulations](#)
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
  - [HUD Programs for Colonias and Farmworkers](#)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
  - [OSHA Housing Standards](#)
- Employment and Training Administration
  - [Housing Regulation Standards](#)
- Electronic Code of Federal Regulations
  - [Off-Farm Labor Housing Grants](#)
- United States Department of Agriculture
  - [USDA Resources for Seasonal MSAW Housing](#).
  - [Rural Housing: Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants](#)

### State Housing Agencies

- National Housing Resource Center
  - [Farmworker Housing Development Corporation](#)
  - [Findhelp.org](#)
  - [The EveryONE Project Neighborhood Navigator](#)

# Conclusion

We hope this guide has provided helpful information on the structural, environmental, and health-related needs of MSAWs and housing. We also hope you find the recommendations and assessments below beneficial in establishing collaborations between providers and the MSAW community to start and continue providing safe, healthy, and adequate MSAW housing.

## References

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# Appendix A: MSAW Housing Safety and Hygiene Assessment

The MSAW Housing and Hygiene Assessment should be used by agricultural employers, farm owners, and health center staff to identify the current conditions of a housing site. Completing this assessment will help to determine what action steps to take to improve or maintain the health of MSAW housing sites before their arrival and/or while they are living in the housing site.

<b>Assessment by:</b>			<b>Date of Assessment:</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Type of Housing:</b>	<b>Occupancy Number:</b>	<b>Number of Rooms:</b>

**Instructions:** Please answer each of the following questions with a “checkmark” (✓) if the answer is **YES**, an (X) if the answer is **NO**, or leave a **blank** ( ) if the question **does not apply or you don’t know**. Add notes or comments as needed for each of the questions. Please refer to the color corresponding recommendations for safe and adequate housing, starting on page 5, and follow actions steps that should be taken if any of the following questions are marked as “No.” These action steps will help improve the safety, hygiene, and living conditions for MSAWs.

## Housing Safety and Hygiene Assessment

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Comments
<b>A. Physical and Structural Areas</b>			
1. Is the housing site in a flood-free zone?			
2. Is housing site free of debris, weeds, brush, and poisonous plants?			
3. Does the housing site provide adequate space, reasonably related to the size and number of occupants?			
4. Is the housing site structurally sound?			
5. Is flooring smooth-finished, sturdy, cleanable, and located in an area to prevent ground and surface water entry?			
6. Is there a minimum ceiling height of seven feet for at least half of the floor area in each living unit?			
7. Are there windows and window doors? Are these in well-lighted areas?			
8. Are all outside openings protected with appropriate screens?			
9. Are all screen doors tight-fitting, in good condition, and equipped with self-closing lock devices?			
10. Are the physical spaces in good working condition and not in need of repair?			

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Comments
<b>B. Bedrooms and Sleeping Areas</b>			
1. Are there enough sleeping facilities for each person?			
2. Is bedding and the mattress/cot/bunk clean and sanitary?			
3. Are there at least 50 square feet per person in single beds and 40 square feet per person using bunk beds?			
4. Are adequate and separate arrangements provided for hanging clothing and storing personal effects for each person?			
5. Are the bedrooms and sleeping areas clean and in good condition?			
<b>C. Kitchen and Eating Areas</b>			
1. Is there a cookstove or hot plate with a minimum of two burners?			
2. Are there adequate food storage shelves, counters for food preparation, and an eating area with a table and chairs?			
3. Is there a refrigerator that cools at least to 45°F?			
4. Is lighting and ventilation adequate for cooking and eating?			
5. Are the kitchen and eating facilities clean and in good working condition?			
<b>D. Toilet Facilities</b>			
1. Are toilets constructed, located and maintained to prevent any nuisance or public health hazard?			
2. Is there at least one water closet or privy seat unit for every 15 occupants?			
3. With the exception Except for family units, are separate toilets provided for men and women in common-use facilities?			
4. With the exception for Except for family units, are toilets in common-use facilities clearly marked as "men" and "women" in English and in the workers' native language?			
5. Where common-use toilet facilities are provided, is there an adequate and accessible supply of toilet tissue, with holders?			
6. Are common-use toilets and privies well-lighted and ventilated?			

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Comments
7. Are toilet facilities located within 200 feet of any living unit?			
8. Are the toilet facilities clean and in good working condition?			
<b>E. Bathing, Laundry, and Washing Areas</b>			
1. Are bathing and hand washing facilities with hot and cold water under pressure provided within 200 feet of each living unit?			
2. Is there a minimum of one showerhead per fifteen people?			
3. Are there showerheads and separate showers for men and women, with a minimum separation of three feet?			
4. Are showers marked “men” and “women” in English and in the native language of the people expected to occupy the site?			
5. When located in the same building, are shower facilities for men and women separated by a nonabsorbent, solid, floor-to-ceiling wall?			
6. Are laundry facilities for all occupants supplied with hot and cold water under pressure?			
7. Are mechanical washers provided in the ratio of one per 50 people (although a minimum of one laundry tray per 100 people shall be provided in addition to the mechanical washers)?			
8. Are the bathing, laundry, and washing facilities clean and in good working condition?			
<b>F. Electricity and Lighting</b>			
1. Is electricity provided in all housing sites?			
2. Does each room have a ceiling or wall light?			
3. Does each room have a wall outlet?			
4. Does the site have adequate outside lighting for the yard area and pathways to community-used facilities?			
5. Are wiring and lighting fixtures installed and maintained in safe conditions?			
6. Are the electricity, lightning facilities, and appliances clean and in good working conditions?			
<b>G. Heating and Cooling</b>			
1. Do living quarters have properly installed, operable heating and cooling equipment to maintain at least 68°F?			

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Comments
2. Are stoves and other sources of heat using combustible fuel installed and so vented to prevent hazards and a dangerous connection of gases?			
3. Are portable heaters other than electric ones provided?			
4. Is there a fuel cutoff installed for heating systems?			
5. Are the heating facilities and appliances clean and in good working condition?			
<b>H. Water Supply</b>			
1. Has the water been tested this year by the US EPA?			
2. Is cold water tap available within 100 feet of each living unit?			
3. Are individual drinking cups shared?			
4. Are the water supply facilities clean and in good working condition?			
<b>I. Waste Disposal and Sewage</b>			
1. Do the facilities provide and maintain effective disposal of human solid and liquid waste?			
2. Are waste disposal facilities connected to public sewer systems, where available? If not available, is there a septic tank or other treatment and disposal system, privies, or portable toilets in place?			
3. Are the waste disposal facilities in good working condition?			
<b>J. Garbage</b>			
1. Are durable, fly-tight, clean containers in good condition and of a minimum of twenty gallons capacity provided adjacent to each housing unit?			
2. Are garbage containers provided in a ratio of at least one per fifteen people?			
3. Is garbage collected at least twice a week?			
4. Are the garbage disposal facilities clean and in good working condition?			
<b>K. Fire, Safety, and First Aid</b>			
1. Are all buildings in which people eat or sleep constructed and maintained in accordance with applicable state or local fire and safety laws?			
2. Are there two means of fire escape provided in one-story housing units, for families of less than ten people?			
3. If one of the two required escapes is a readily accessible window, does it open to a space of not less than 24 x 24 inches?			

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Comments
4. For areas intended for ten or more people, (such as In sleeping quarters, dining facilities and common assembly rooms) , intended for use by ten or more people, are there at least two separate doors to provide alternative routes of escape to the outside or to an interior hall?			
5. Are sleeping quarters and common assembly rooms on the second story constructed with a stairway, and a permanent, affixed exterior ladder or a second stairway?			
6. Are fire extinguishers readily accessible, within 100 feet of each housing unit?			
7. Are always first aid facilities readily accessible?			
8. Are agricultural pesticides or toxic chemicals stored in the housing area?			
9. Are fire, safety, and first aid equipment and facilities clean and in good working condition?			

Adapted from US Department of Labor, Migrant Housing Inspection Checklist: <https://www.vec.virginia.gov/pdf/etahousingcheck.pdf> and National Dairy Farm Program, FARM Human Resources Reference Manual: <https://nationaldairyfarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018HousingBooklet-Web.pdf>

## Recommendations for Safe and Adequate Housing

The following recommendations can be used by agricultural employers, farm owners, and other farmworker-serving organizations including health centers, as guidelines to address housing and health issues identified in the MSAW Housing Safety and Hygiene Assessment:

### Physical and Structural Areas

- Housing sites must not be in proximity to conditions such as offensive odors, pests, flies, noise contamination, heavy traffic, flood zones, or similar hazards.
- Sites should be free from debris, uncontrolled vegetation, or poisonous plants.
- The site must provide a reasonable recreational space related to the size of the facility and occupancy.
- At least half of the unit must have a seven feet high ceiling. No ceilings should be less than five feet tall.
- All outside openings, such as windows and doors must be protected with a mesh covering, be tight fitting, and must have closing devices.
- Housing sites should be drained and free of flood zones where water may accumulate.
- All housing sites must be structurally sound and must protect occupants against environmental elements.



### **Bedrooms and Sleeping Areas**

- For sleeping purposes, no less than 50 square feet of floor space should be used per occupant in single-bed family units and no less than 40 square feet of floor space should be used per occupant in double bunk bed dormitories.
- Separate sleeping accommodation must be provided for each gender or each family.
- Adequate and separate arrangements must be provided for clothing and storage.
- Each room must contain at least one window, window door, or skylight opening directly to the outdoors.

### **Kitchen and Eating Areas**

- No less than 60 square feet of combined floor space should be used for cooking, eating, and sleeping purposes.
- When cooking is permitted or required, one cook stove or hot plate with a minimum of two burners must be provided per ten people or two families.
- Adequate food storage shelves and counters for food preparation are needed in each unit.

### **Toilet Facilities**

- Toilets must be constructed, located, and maintained to prevent nuisance or public health hazards.
- Separated toilet accommodations for men and women must be provided, except for family units.
- Toilet facilities must be provided within 200 feet of each living unit if not inside the unit.

### **Bathing, Laundry, and Washing Areas**

- Laundry facilities with hot and cold water under pressure must be provided for all occupants.
- 1 Mechanical washer per 50 occupants and one laundry tray per 100 occupants must be provided.
- Bathing and hand washing facilities, with hot and cold water under pressure, must be provided for all occupants within 200 feet of each living unit if it's not inside each unit.
- There must be a minimum of one showerhead per 15 people. Each showerhead must be spaced at least three feet apart, with a minimum of nine square feet of floor space per unit.

### **Heating and Cooling**

- All living quarters and rooms must be provided with heating and cooling equipment capable of maintaining temperatures of at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit (°F).
- Any stoves or other sources of heat using combustible fuel must be installed and vented in a manner that prevents fire hazards and concentration of gases.
- Only portable heaters operated by electricity should be used inside any housing site.

### **Water Supply**

- An adequate water supply that meets the standards of the State health authority must be provided.
- Tap water must be available inside the unit or within 100 feet of each unit.

### **Waste Disposal and Sewage**

- Housing must be located where proper disposal of sewage is provided and does not represent a nuisance or hazard.
- Facilities must be provided and maintained for the disposal of solid and liquid human waste.
- If available, all housing facilities should be connected to public sewer systems.
- No waste or discharges should be accumulated in the surrounding ground surface.
- Subsurface septic tank systems, privies, or portable toilets must be provided if no sewer system is available.

### **Garbage**

- One garbage container per fifteen people, with a minimum of 20 gallons, must be provided adjacent to each housing unit.
- Garbage must be collected at least twice a week, following State and local laws.

## Fire, Safety, and First Aid

- In family housing and units for less than ten people, two means of escape must be provided. One of the two exits may be an accessible window no less than 24 x 24 inches in size.
- All housing and units for more than ten people must have at least two doors separate so it provides two routes of escape to the outside.
- Sleeping spaces or rooms located on a second story must have a stairway and a fixated exterior ladder.
- A fire extinguisher must be provided no more than 100 feet from each housing unit.
- Pesticides and toxic chemicals may not be stored inside the housing area.
- All farm-provided housing must include smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- First aid facilities must be provided and accessible for use. One 16-unit first aid kit must be provided per 50 occupants.
- Housing facilities should have a person trained to administer first aid or a telephone service available to call 911 for an emergency at any time.

## Additional Recommendations When Partnering with Community-based Organizations or Health Centers:

- Provide health education and outreach for farmworkers and employers.
- Support farmworkers by providing recommendations and healthy practices to improve living environments.
- Provide a housing and hygiene orientation for the farmworkers and their families.
- Identify infectious diseases prevention and treatment services for farmworkers and their families.
- When addressing risks for communicable diseases:
  - i. Provide personal protective equipment (PPE), such as N-95 or surgical face masks, gloves, potable water and soap, hand sanitizer, face shields, and testing kits.
  - ii. Coordinate vaccination efforts before the workers arrive or provide anytime during their stay in the housing site.
  - iii. Designate isolation rooms or units for workers who get infected with any communicable diseases.

\*Adapted from US Department of Labor, Migrant Housing Inspection Checklist: <https://www.vec.virginia.gov/pdf/etahousingcheck.pdf> and National Dairy Farm Program, FARM Human Resources Reference Manual: <https://nationaldairyfarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018HousingBooklet-Web.pdf>

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## Appendix B: Hygiene Tips for Agricultural Worker Housing

The following tips will help Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers (MSAW) and their families to create and maintain a clean and adequate housing site.

### Community Areas

- Clean bathrooms, toilets, and handwashing areas regularly with water and an all-purpose cleaner.
- Scrub bathrooms and shower tiles, walls, and other areas that have mold or mildew with a mix of bleach and water, then rinse with water.
- Clean air conditioners and fans regularly with an all-purpose cleaner and water, since these can spread mold, mildew, and other harmful particles.

### Bedrooms or Sleeping Areas

- Use a personal mattress, pillows, and pillow cover for each bed. Wash bed clothes with water and laundry detergent at least once a week.
- Sweep, mop, and vacuum bedrooms and sleeping areas regularly.
- Clean and organize personal beds or bunker beds every day.
- Leave used or dirty clothes and shoes outside the bedroom or sleeping areas.
- Store all dirty clothes in a laundry basket or laundry facility.

### Kitchen and Food Preparation Areas

- Have individual eating utensils and drinking cups for each worker.
- Clean any food spills with water and all-purpose cleaner.
- Check for spoiled food and throw away any expired products. Never consume expired food or drinks.
- Clean the refrigerator and freezer with water and dishwashing liquid soap every three to four months. Disinfect with a mix of bleach and water. Keep all food in a cooler with ice, while cleaning the refrigerator and freezer.
- Maintain the refrigerator's temperature to forty degrees Fahrenheit (40°F) or lower, and the freezer to zero degrees Fahrenheit (0°F) or lower.
- Clean sinks, countertops and cutting boards daily with water and dishwashing liquid soap. Disinfect with a mix of bleach and water.
- Clean ovens or microwave ovens with an all-purpose cleaner every week or as needed.

## Managing Pesticides and Chemical Exposure

- Keep shoes and clothing that could have been exposed to pesticides and chemicals outside the housing site. These items can be placed in a plastic bag, separate from other clothing, and washed separately using laundry detergent or water and soap.

## Prevention of Infectious Diseases

- All workers should get the vaccines against communicable diseases, like COVID-19, the flu, or others before arriving to or while at the housing site.
- Talk with the employer or farm owner about your interest in getting vaccinated or look for the closest pharmacy or health center for information.
- All workers with active symptoms should stay in a separate room or housing site until the symptoms go away or after they receive treatment.
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), such as face masks, face covers, gloves, etc., must be provided to prevent the spread of airborne diseases.

\*Adapted from US Department of Labor, Migrant, Seasonal and H-2A Farmworker Housing Guide: [https://wsd.dli.mt.gov/\\_docs/farmer-guide.pdf](https://wsd.dli.mt.gov/_docs/farmer-guide.pdf)



Una Voz Para La Salud  
Call for Health

If you need help or would like to know your nearest health center or health provider, contact [Call For Health](#), The National Center for Farmworker Health's helpline, at **1 (800) 377-9968** or through WhatsApp at **1 (737) 414-5121**.

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