

# APPRENTICESHIP

## How Has COVID Affected the Construction Industry?

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Construction continues during the COVID-19 pandemic as an essential industry and contractors have been effective in implementing safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while continuing to build critical infrastructure in the San Diego region.

In March, the Associated General Contractors (AGC) San Diego, along with eight other trade and labor organizations, created the Construction Industry COVID-19 Exposure Response and Prevention Plan, which is a consolidation of best practices based on direction from health experts and boots-on-the-ground experiences from construction safety professionals.

The plan outlines an effective response to a potential exposure event, and promotes preventative workplace habits in order to prevent transmission of the virus between employees, contractors and other personnel. It provides direction to implement safety requirements and achieve compliance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local guidance for COVID-19 response and prevention.

Although each job site is different, and contractors adapt to each situation, the plan provides some uniformity for contractors, workers, and owners to work together to protect construction personnel and the public. With greater consistency, these safety measures will become more effective. The rules can change, but some form of enhanced safety measures will be in place for the long haul of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan is updated regularly to comply with the latest mandates in San Diego County.



AGC headquarters in San Diego.

## Apprenticeship

When the stay-at-home orders were first implemented, AGC canceled its class session that ran through March/April 2020. We then implemented a combination of in-person and hands-on craft classes with limited class size and strict safety protocols, along with online instruction for core classes such as safety, math and blueprint reading. AGC is now back at full capacity with the combination of in-person and online courses. Getting here required working closely with our LEA and ETP to ensure online courses met all requirements. While we are still a strong proponent of live in-person classes, the pandemic dictates that programs adapt and change.

## A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats

In the earliest stages of the pandemic, parties from throughout the industry lobbied the governor in Sacramento and it goes to show what good can come when the entire industry works on a common goal. Moreover, as the pandemic continues, we will keep on working together to ensure our apprentices and workers in this essential industry are safe as they build the infrastructure that is critical to improving the San Diego region.