

WORKPLACE INSTRUCTIONS

SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN YOUR WORKPLACE

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Employers should start doing these things now, even if COVID-19 has not arrived in the communities where they operate. They can already reduce working days lost due to illness and stop or slow the spread of COVID-19 if it arrives at one of your workplaces.

MAKE SURE YOUR WORKPLACES ARE CLEAN AND HYGIENIC

- Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly.

PROMOTE REGULAR AND THOROUGH HAND-WASHING BY EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS AND CUSTOMERS

- Put sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace. Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled.
- Display posters promoting hand-washing.
- Combine this with other communication measures such as offering guidance from occupational health and safety officers, briefings at meetings and information on the internet to promote hand-washing.
- Make sure that staff, contractors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water.

PROMOTE GOOD RESPIRATORY HYGIENE IN THE WORKPLACE

- Display posters promoting respiratory hygiene. Combine this with other communication measures such as offering guidance from occupational health and safety officers, briefing at meetings and information on the intranet etc.
- Ensure that face masks¹ and / or paper tissues are available at your workplaces, for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work, along with closed bins for hygienically disposing of them.

ADVISE EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS TO CONSULT NATIONAL TRAVEL ADVICE BEFORE GOING ON BUSINESS TRIPS.

BRIEF YOUR EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS AND CUSTOMERS THAT IF COVID-19 STARTS SPREADING IN YOUR COMMUNITY ANYONE WITH EVEN A MILD COUGH OR LOW-GRADE FEVER (37.3 C OR MORE) NEEDS TO STAY AT HOME. THEY SHOULD ALSO STAY HOME (OR WORK FROM HOME) IF THEY HAVE HAD TO TAKE SIMPLE MEDICATIONS, SUCH AS PARACETAMOL/ACETAMINOPHEN, IBUPROFEN OR ASPIRIN, WHICH MAY MASK SYMPTOMS OF INFECTION

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS READY IN CASE COVID-19 ARRIVES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

DEVELOP A PLAN OF WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE BECOMES ILL WITH SUSPECTED COVID-19 AT ONE OF YOUR WORKPLACES

- The plan should cover putting the ill person in a room or area where they are isolated from others in the workplace, limiting the number of people who have contact with the sick person and contacting the local health authorities.
- Consider how to identify persons who may be at risk, and support them, without inviting stigma and discrimination into your workplace. This could include persons who have recently travelled to an area reporting cases, or other personnel who have conditions that put them at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. diabetes, heart and lung disease, older age).
- Tell your local public health authority you are developing the plan and seek their input.

PROMOTE REGULAR TELEWORKING ACROSS YOUR ORGANIZATION. IF THERE IS AN OUTBREAK OF COVID-19 IN YOUR COMMUNITY THE HEALTH AUTHORITIES MAY ADVISE PEOPLE TO AVOID PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CROWDED PLACES. TELEWORKING WILL HELP YOUR BUSINESS KEEP OPERATING WHILE YOUR EMPLOYEES STAY SAFE.

DEVELOP A CONTINGENCY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN FOR AN OUTBREAK IN THE COMMUNITIES WHERE YOUR BUSINESS OPERATES

- The plan will help prepare your organization for the possibility of an outbreak of COVID-19 in its workplaces or community. It may also be valid for other health emergencies
- The plan should address how to keep your business running even if a significant number of employees, contractors and suppliers cannot come to your place of business - either due to local restrictions on travel or because they are ill.
- Communicate to your employees and contractors about the plan and make sure they are aware of what they need to do – or not do – under the plan. Emphasize key points such as the importance of staying away from work even if they have only mild symptoms or have had to take simple medications (e.g. paracetamol, ibuprofen) which may mask the symptoms.
- Be sure your plan addresses the mental health and social consequences of a case of COVID-19 in the workplace or in the community and offer information and support.
- For small and medium-sized businesses without in-house staff health and welfare support, develop partnerships and plans with your local health and social service providers in advance of any emergency.
- Your local or national public health authority may be able to offer support and guidance in developing your plan.

REMEMBER

NOW IS THE TIME TO PREPARE FOR COVID-19. SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS AND PLANNING CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE. ACTION NOW WILL HELP PROTECT YOUR EMPLOYEES AND YOUR BUSINESS.

Reference:

- <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf>