

6 March 2020

Source of information: World Health Organisation

SAFETY ALERT

EMPLOYER INFORMATION

Preventing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) at work

When someone who has COVID-19 coughs or exhales they release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets fall on nearby surfaces and objects - such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. If they are standing within one metre of a person with COVID-19 they can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. In other words, COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to flu. Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age: people over 40 seem to be more vulnerable than those under 40. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

Simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace

Make sure your workplace is clean and hygienic:

- Wipe surfaces and objects regularly with disinfectant
- Put sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace.
- Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled
- Display posters promoting hand-washing
- Make sure that staff, contractors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands

Promote good respiratory hygiene:

- Ensure that face masks and/or tissues are available for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work, along with bins for hygienically disposing of them
- Brief your worker, contractors and customers, encouraging them to stay at home if they have even a mild cough or low grade fever (>37.3C)
- Display messages reminding workers to stay at home even with mild symptoms

Before travelling

- Advise workers to consult national travel advice before going on business trips
- Assess the benefits and risks relating to business related travel plans
- Avoid sending workers who may be at higher risk of serious illness (e.g., older workers and those with medical conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease) to areas where COVID-19 is spreading

During travel

- Issue workers traveling with alcohol-based hand rub to facilitate hand hygiene
- Encourage workers to wash their hands regularly and to stay at least one meter away from people who are coughing and sneezing
- Ensure workers know what to do and who to contact if they develop illness while traveling.

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WORKERS

Preventing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) at work

Symptoms of coronavirus

- Runny nose
- Sneeze
- Cough
- Fever (temp > 37.3c)

Do not come to work if you are unwell.

Handwashing

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand run or soap and water.

Social distancing

Maintain a social distance of at least 1 metre from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

Respiratory hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.

If you develop symptoms

Seek medical care early and call in advance.

Stay informed

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

SAFETY ALERT

Wash your hands

Wash your hands with soap and running water when **hands are visibly dirty**



If your **hands are not visibly dirty**, frequently clean them by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water



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Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing
cover mouth and nose with
flexed elbow or tissue



Throw tissue into closed bin
immediately after use

Clean hands with alcohol-based
hand rub or soap and water
after coughing or sneezing and
when caring for the sick



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