

COVID-19: MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR WORKPLACES

Within the implementation of the Conditional and recovery Movement Control Orders (CMCO and RMCO) industries have been allowed to function however with the need to adhere to precautionary measures required at the workplace. It is imperative for industries to take the relevant measures to ensure the continuous compliance to the new norms to ensure sustainability of service.

(A) Be updated on the management, prevention and policies related to COVID-19

Symptoms:

Common symptoms include fever, dry cough and fatigue. Other symptoms include loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion, sore throat, muscle or joint pains.

Transmission:

Droplets from someone with COVID-19 who coughs or sneezes within a distance of 1 meter

Droplet contaminated surfaces and objects: by touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth

Incubation Period

Incubation period is currently estimated to range between 1-14 days

Vulnerable Employees:

- Older persons aged 60 and above
- Those with pre-existing medical conditions e.g. high blood pressure, heart and lung problems, diabetes or cancer

However, anyone may get COVID-19 at any age.

(B) Take appropriate steps to ensure maximum protection of staff to ensure continuation of business.

I. Action by Employers

- a) Communicate regularly to employees about COVID-19;
 - i. Advise employees on preventive methods:
 - physical distancing (keep 1 metre away from others)
 - practicing personal hygiene and respiratory etiquette. (Refer Appendix 1)
 - practicing hand hygiene (Refer Appendix 2)
 - using a mask in areas required and where distancing cannot be maintained (Refer Appendix 3)
 - ii. Remind employees regularly about preventive methods e.g. via e mail, social media, gamification etc.
 - iii. Provide regular updates on COVID-19 to employees
 - iv. Provide appropriate health education and promotion materials regarding COVID-19 to all employees
- b) Instruct supervisors to monitor
 - i. for symptoms among employees at workplace

- ii. employee compliance to preventive measures
- c) Encourage employees to take temperature regularly and monitor for respiratory symptoms
- d) Register premise with MySejahtera and generate and print QR code to be displayed at the premise for registration of employees and visitors upon entry (refer Annex 42).
- e) Consider obtaining travel declaration from employees on travel history.
- f) When an employee develops symptoms;
 - i. if at home:
 - Wear a surgical mask and seek medical attention at the nearest health facility immediately.
 - Avoid contact with family members
 - Accompanying person should also wear a surgical mask.
 - ii. if at workplace:
 - Supervisor to relieve staff member from work
 - Wear a surgical mask and seek medical attention at the nearest health facility immediately
 - Avoid contact with fellow employees
 - Any accompanying person should also wear a surgical mask
- g) Conduct mental health assessment among employees and carry out appropriate measures to reduce stress among employees.
- h) Monitor sick leave and absenteeism among employees. Keep a record of staff sick leave including reasons for leave, duration of leave and current status.

II. Action by Employees

- a. Keep updated on COVID-19
- b. Scan MySejahtera QR code upon entering work premise

- c. Always maintain good personal hygiene;
 - i. Frequent hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitizer
 - ii. Practice respiratory etiquette
- d. To practice physical distancing at work, during breaks and meals
- e. Limit food handling and sharing of food in the workplace

- f. If they develop symptoms;
 - i. To alert supervisor immediately
 - ii. Wear a surgical mask
 - iii. Seek medical treatment immediately
 - iv. Avoid contact with fellow employees
- g. Employees are also advised to practice all preventive measures out of work

III. Action at the Workplace

- a. Screening of all employees entering the workplace
 - i. Temperature: those with temperature $>37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ should be asked to seek assessment at a medical facility
 - ii. Symptom screening: those with cough, sore throat or difficulty breathing should be asked to seek assessment at a medical facility
 - iii. History of returning from overseas (taken when necessary)
 - iv. History of close contact to a positive or suspected COVID-19 case (taken when necessary)
- b. Enforce hand sanitization at entrance for visitors
- c. Ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of the workplace including equipment and focusing on high touch areas (Refer Appendix 4)
- d. Practice a no handshaking policy
- e. Provide easy access to frequent hand washing for employees. If not possible, provide hand sanitizers for frequent hand cleaning

- f. Proper maintenance of toilet facilities with adequate supply of liquid soap and disposable towels.
- g. Provision of lidded rubbish bins with regular refuse disposal
- h. Consider alternate communication methods e.g. virtual meetings in place of face to face meetings, group chats etc.
- i. Consider deferring large meetings or events
- j. Consider having meetings outside in open air if possible
- k. In case of indoor meetings or events, ensure all precautions are taken:
 - i. Informing participants not to attend if they are unwell and to join the meeting using a virtual platform
 - ii. Ensuring all relevant information is given to the participants such as the practice of hand hygiene and the use of surgical masks for those who develop respiratory symptoms
 - iii. Providing:
 - Hand sanitizers where necessary or ensuring availability of soap and water
 - Surgical masks and tissues for those who develop respiratory symptoms
 - iv. Consider opening windows for natural lighting and better ventilation
 - v. Ensuring limited participants and distancing is maintained at all times
 - vi. Monitor participants daily and provide support for isolating those with symptoms and transporting them to a health facility.
 - vii. Keep in touch with participant on their health status after seeing the doctor.
 - viii. Keep contact details of all participants and organizers in case there is a need to contact them. Records should be kept for at least one month for the date of completion of the event.

- i) When situation calls for working from home
 - i. Ensure employees are well versed with handling virtual sessions
 - ii. Employees are given work targets accordingly

- j) In the setting of **public transport** e.g. taxis, ride-hail services, trains and buses, drivers should ensure the following measures;
 - i. Frequent hand washing using soap and water, or hand sanitizer and practice respiratory etiquette at all times.
 - ii. Wear a mask while carrying out the duty
 - iii. Seek medical attention if symptoms develop
 - iv. Ensure passengers wear masks while in the vehicle.
 - v. Regularly disinfect the interior of the vehicle after alighting passengers or after each trip including door handles (both outside and inside).

IV. Travel Considerations for the workplace

- a. Before traveling:
 - i. Follow the latest advisory on traveling from MKN and MOH
 - ii. Assess the benefits, risks and needs of travel
 - iii. If travelling overseas, obtain all relevant information of travel to that particular country
 - iv. Ensure high risk employees do not travel
 - v. Consider issuing employees who are about to travel with face masks and hand sanitizers if possible

- b. While traveling:
 - i. Always bring along surgical masks and hand sanitizer for use when required
 - ii. Avoid crowded places and closed contact with people especially those showing symptoms
 - iii. Avoid eating raw foods
 - iv. Seek prompt medical treatment if developing symptoms

- c. On returning back:
 - i. Observe home surveillance or quarantine procedures as per MOH directives
 - ii. Immediately seek medical attention if you have symptoms of respiratory tract infections such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing within 14 days after returning from the visit

V. If An Employee Has Been Found To Be COVID-19 Positive

If a person is determined to be COVID-19 positive by the medical facility or screening process, the results will be informed to the relevant District Health Office (DHO). An officer from the DHO will investigate the person to determine household, family and workplace contacts. The DHO will carry out investigations at the workplace to determine the actual workplace close contacts who need home surveillance. Those identified will be issued with a Home Surveillance Order and be given a wrist band to wear for a period of 14 days after which they will be given a release order by the DHO. The DHO will also advise the workplace on the cleaning and disinfection procedures that may be followed.

The organization should wait for the officer from the DHO to come to the workplace. In the event the officer has not come;

- a. the workplace may contact the nearest DHO.
- b. The organization may try to identify which employees may be actual close contacts to assist the DHO.
- c. Those at risk may be allowed to practice self-isolation at home.

The relevant exposed areas require cleaning and disinfection after which work may proceed with other staff who are not exposed. There is NO requirement for any workplace to be closed for 14 days. The workplace may be closed by the organization for the required time to conduct cleaning and disinfection.

This guideline may be used as a basis for managing employees during this period of time. Employers and employees are advised to keep up to date with the latest developments and advice issued by the Ministry of health.

Personal Hygiene

- Good personal hygiene should be observed at all times. Regular hand hygiene by washing with soap and water or use hand sanitizer
- Maintain at least 1 meter (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Respiratory Etiquette

- Cover mouth and nose with bend of elbow or tissue if coughing or sneezing.
- Throw tissue in the trash after using it
- Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer
- If no tissue available, use upper sleeve or elbow instead of hands while sneezing and coughing.
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Guidelines for Hand Hygiene

- Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer after any contact with respiratory secretions
- Remove jewelry before any hand wash procedure
- Rinse hands under warm running water
- Lather with soap; cover all surfaces of the hands and fingers using friction.
- Rinse under warm running water
- Dry hands thoroughly with a disposable towel
- Turn off faucet without recontaminating hands
- Keep fingernails short and do not use fingernail polish or artificial nails.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used to decontaminate hands that are not visibly soiled
 - Apply alcohol-based hand sanitizer to palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and finger, until hands are dry.

Guidelines on wearing surgical masks (3 Ply)

1. If you have running nose or flu like symptoms, you are advised to stay at home. If you need to go out, make sure you wear a surgical mask.
2. Avoid crowded places. Wear a surgical mask if you cannot avoid them
3. Wash hands before wearing a surgical mask and after taking one off.
4. When wearing surgical mask, the following should be noted:
 - 4.1. The facemask should fit snugly over the face
 - 4.2. The coloured side of the mask should face outside
 - 4.3. Tie all the strings that keep the mask in place
 - 4.4. The mask should fully cover the nose, mouth as well as the chin.
 - 4.5. The metallic wire part of the mask should be fixed securely over the bridge of the nose to prevent leakage
 - 4.6. The surgical mask should not be used more than a day but if it is wet, damaged or soiled by secretions or body fluid at any time, change the mask immediately.
 - 4.7. Discard all used surgical masks into a plastic bag which should then be tied properly before disposing it into a rubbish bin.

DISINFECTION PROCEDURES

Surfaces

- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol should be effective.
 - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water* or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water **
 - For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely.

* 1 Gallon = 3.8 Liters

** 1 Quart = 0.95 Liters

Refer Annex 36 Tatacara Pembersihan Dan Disinfeksi Di Tempat Awam (Garis Panduan Pengurusan COVID-19 di Malaysia No.5/2020) at www.moh.gov.my

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