COVID-19 at the workplace; public health and social measures for prevention and mitigation

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How COVID-19 transmits in non-healthcare workplaces?

COVID-19
Know The Facts

COVID-19 spreads primarily from person to person

- Droplets released when someone sick sneezes or coughs can land on the mouths or noses of people nearby
- Close contact with someone sick – like hugging or shaking hands

COVID-19 mainly spreads from person to person
But it can also be left on objects and surfaces...

- so if you touch something contaminated and then touch your face or another’s face, you might all fall ill.

Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19:
implications for IPC precaution recommendations

Scientific brief
29 March 2020

This version updates the 27 March publication by providing definitions of droplets by particle size and adding three relevant publications.

Modes of transmission of the COVID-19 virus

Workplace risk assessment

Low exposure risk
jobs or work tasks without frequent, close contact with the general public and other co-workers, visitors, clients or customers, or contractors, and that do not require contact with people known to be or suspected of being infected with COVID-19.

Medium exposure risk
jobs or work tasks with close (< 1 m) frequent contact with the general public, or other co-workers, visitors, clients or customers, or contractors, but that do not require contact with people known to be or suspected of being infected with COVID-19.

High exposure risk
jobs or work tasks with high potential for close contact with people who are known or suspected of having COVID-19, as well as contact with objects and surfaces possibly contaminated with the virus.

Carry out in consultation with workers, don’t impose your decision

Engage occupational health services, consult with public health authorities
Personal hygiene

Promote regular and thorough hand washing. Put sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace and provide access to places where staff, contractors and customers can wash their hands with soap and water.

#Coronavirus

Promote good respiratory hygiene. Ensure that surgical face masks 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 hygienic disposal of them.

#Coronavirus

Promote and lead by example - walk the talk!
Social measures - physical distancing

- At least 1 meter between people (or more as required by national regulations)
- Discourage direct physical contact with other persons
- Reduce density of people in the building (no more than 1 person per every 10 square metres)
- At least 1 meter between for work stations and in common spaces - entrances/exits, lifts, canteens, stairs, changing rooms.
- Replace face-to-face meetings with teleconferencing
- Staggered working hours, shifts, split-teams, teleworking
- Suspend workplace events with close contact among participants
- Reduce density in transport to the workplace and dormitories
Stay home if unwell, reconsider travel and meetings

Brief your employees, contractors and customers that if coronavirus starts spreading in your community, anyone with even a mild cough or fever needs to stay at home.

Do not rely only on thermal scanners!

Your employees should comply with any local restrictions on travel, movement or large gatherings.

Reconsider travels and meetings, plan well if essential
Regular environmental cleaning and disinfection

👍 Regular environmental cleaning and disinfection

👎 No fogging/misting or spraying of people with disinfectants!

Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephone, keyboards) should be wiped with disinfectant regularly.

#Coronavirus

No fogging/misting or spraying of people with disinfectants!
Additional measures for workplaces and jobs at higher risk

**Medium exposure risk**
Where the physical distancing of at least 1 metre **cannot** be implemented in full:

1. **Consider suspending the activity.**
2. If not possible, provide:
   - engineering and environmental controls – ventilation, disinfection, barriers, screens
   - modified work organization
   - personal protective equipment – masks, face protection
   - enhanced hand hygiene

**High exposure risk**
Where, contact with people known or suspected of having COVID-19 (e.g. in isolation)

1. **Consider suspending the activity.**
2. If not possible, provide:
   - training of workers in infection prevention and control
   - strict hand hygiene - before and after contact with people with COVID-19, before and after using PPE;
   - personal protective equipment - medical mask, disposable gown, gloves, and eye/face protection.
   - avoid assigning tasks with high risk to workers who have pre-existing medical conditions, are pregnant, or >60 years of age.
Plan of action for prevention and mitigation of COVID-19

- Consultation with workers and their representatives, ensure acceptance
- Plan well in advance return to premises, assess all risks for safety and health
- Monitor compliance and update regularly
- Address other occupational health and safety risks
- Occupational health services to strengthen their capacity for infection prevention and control, contact tracing, medical surveillance, and psychosocial support.
- No discrimination in the access of workers to protective measures
- No social stigma at the workplace
- Respect for labour rights

Chemical leak in India kills 11, sickens about 1,000 as panicked people flee area

Amazon’s Showdown in France Tests Its Ability to Sidestep Labor
Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19
https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1275007/retrieve

Annex 1. Considerations for public health and social measures in the workplace in the context of COVID-19
https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1277575/retrieve

Thank you/Merci beaucoup