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National Focal Point for IHR



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Workplace Guidelines /Instructions for COVID-19

These set of instructions and guidelines are interim as on what is presently known about novel **Coronavirus Disease COVID-19**. National Institute of Health is continuously updating all type of information on regularly basis as up to date information become available on COVID-19.

What is COVID-19: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. It is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation later converted into an outbreak in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

Spread of Disease: This virus probably emerged from an animal source but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the most common way the virus spread.

Recommendations for the organization or employers:

- **Coronavirus Help/information/Surveillance Desk:**
 - NIH recommends for each organization to establish or notify focal person, help desk or surveillance desk for COVID-19 where they can process latest information or instruction for the employees
- **Encourage sick employees to stay home:**
 - Employees who have symptoms of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), cough and/or acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not encourage come to workplace until they are free of fever.
 - Develop the policies that permit employees to stay at home to care for a confirmed COVID-19 affected family member(s).
 - **During outbreak of the disease**, the employees who appear acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) with fever upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees immediately. All such type of employees must be transferred to the hospital according to SOPs.
 - Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue or mask when coughing or sneezing (or inside of elbow, if no tissue is available).
- **Behavioral and structural interventions within organization**
 - Place health education material and preventive information poster that encourage hygiene practices, cough and sneez etiquettes and how-to self-quarantine at home at entrance and common places of the official buildings.
 - In case of outbreak in the area, separate the visiting center/area /room with designated staff with mouth and hand cover PPEs who may disinfect the area.

- Make necessary arrangements of washing or disinfection of the commonly used doorknobs, reception tables, shelves, library table, canteen tables.
- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees at their workplaces.
- Instruct and circulate the information for the employees to clean their hands often with hand or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Provide soap and water and hand rubs sanitizer in the workplace. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.
- **Guidelines for Sanitation and Environmental cleaning:**
 - Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs.
 - No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.
 - Use the disposable wipes/clothes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use. Use sodium hypo chloride (NaOCl, household bleach) chlorine or bleach 5% to disinfect the surfaces or objects.

Waste Management and Disinfection Policies:

- Waste disposal SOPs for your organization so that the sanitary staff may properly dispose/burn the tissues or other consumable items within dustbins.
- Provide hand and mouth care PPEs to the sanitary staff and rostering for waste disposal and cleanliness/disinfection of the
- Use 5% bleach for disinfection of common washrooms and common official gathering places after use or each activity.
- **Traveling advise for the employees:**
 - Develop your own travelling advise for your employees with following recommendations;
 - Take record of each employee's travel to the different areas inside and outside of country.
 - Conduct surveillance about the areas where disease outbreak is going on and prohibit the employees not to travel to the areas of outbreak.
 - If someone seeks close connection with the people who travelled from the infected area with COVID-19, must inform the surveillance/administrative desk of the organization.
 - Advise employees who travel outside the area to check themselves for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before and end of travel and notify their official focal person and stay home if they are sick.
- **Additional Measures for COVID-19:**
 - Employees who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their official focal person or supervisor and follow NIH health education material to evaluate their symptoms of potential exposure.
- If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employer should transfer him to the designated isolation facility, to minimize the exposure of COVID-19 with other fellow employees at workplace
- The employer can leapfrog virtual meetings if conditions get worse.
- During **outreach situation**, consider cancelling large work-related meetings or events.