



Directorate of Environmental Health, Occupational health and Food safety

Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services

Addendum to

**INTERIM OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSE FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK FOR WORK SETTINGS**

Building and Construction Industry

This guideline is an addendum to the “INTERIM OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK FOR WORK SETTINGS” (Herein after called the main guideline) published on 17th of April 2020 by the Ministry of Health and can be downloaded from the following link.

http://eohfs.health.gov.lk/occupational/images/2020/Workplace_COVID_guideline_for_web_20200320.pdf

Construction industry should follow the measures described under chapter 3 of the said main guideline and the following measures are in addition to those measures.

1. Workforce arrangements

1.1 Management should take every effort to run the worksite with only the resident workers and not to employ workers from outside as this will promote transmission of the disease.

1.2 All workers residing inside shall not to go out unnecessarily and if they go out they should always wear a mask and keep the distance of 1 meter with anyone and upon return to follow the instructions in section 3.8 of the main guidelines.

1.3 If workers are brought from outside in unavoidable circumstances management shall adhere to the following procedure.

Following categories of workers should not report for work.

- Those having fever, with or without acute onset respiratory symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat and/or shortness of breath.
- Those who have had contact with suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 for the last 14 days.
- Those who are quarantined for COVID-19.

1.4 The employer should ensure that if a sick person reports for work, he/she is sent back home immediately. Follow the steps mentioned in section 3.6 below if that individual is suspected of having COVID-19 infection.

1.5 Anyone entering the premises (both visitors and workers) should wash their hands with soap and water before entering. (Foot operated tap is the best for the wash basin). Alternatively hand rubbing with alcohol based hand rub (minimum 70% v/v Alcohol) can be adopted. Disinfecting chambers are not recommended. Use the hand sanitizer after using the finger print scanner. Finger print scanner shall be disinfected before and after each shift.

Additional optional measures are to **have a foot bath (with 0.1% Sodium hypochlorite solution) at the entrance** or **remove shoes** at the entrance and provide a separate set of shoes to be used inside the premises.

1.6 Check temperatures of all the staff at the time of entrance to the workplace and any person recording a temperature above 98.4 °F or 37 °C should be re-checked after 10-15 minutes of rest and if positive for second time sent him/her back. Thermal scanner has to be of Medical grade.

2. Physical distancing

2.1 Ensure keeping everyone at the worksite at least 1 meter physically apart. This will be challenging for many, however, it is a key measure to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

2.2 Limit physical interactions between workers, workers and staff, and workers and any other persons at the site (e.g. deliveries) and use other methods of communication such as mobile phone or radio transmitters.

2.3 Limit the number of workers to the minimum required as much as possible.

2.4 Arrange shifts to reduce the number of workers onsite at any given time.

2.5 Establish specific walkways through the construction site to maintain physical separation.

2.6 Lunch breaks and tea breaks to be given in a batch-wise manner to prevent overcrowding in the canteen/meal room.

2.7 The minimum distance of one meter is to be maintained among persons in the canteen and the furniture should be arranged to encourage this.

2.8 Avoid sharing glasses, plates and other utensils during meals. Meals/food/ beverages served in buffet style must be served by dedicated person(s).

2.9 Conduct toolbox and other meetings online if possible. If not, conduct such meetings in wide open spaces to enable workers to keep the required physical distance of at least one meter.

2.10 Limit the number of workers in the hoist/lift at any one time. Promote the use of stairs.

2.11 Postpone non-essential training.

2.12 Place signage about physical distancing and other special measures in place around the worksite.

2.13 Ensure the strict supervision and monitoring of adherence to physical distancing and other special measures at the worksite.

Note: physical distancing is not required for persons who are accommodated in the same room among themselves provided that they do not mix with others.

3. Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces

3.1 Maintain regular housekeeping practices, including routine wiping/cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other items in the work environment.

3.2 After cleaning by damp dusting/wet mopping or washing with soap and water or a general-purpose detergent,

- All metal surfaces shall be disinfected with minimum of 70% v/v alcohol solution.
- All non-metal surfaces be disinfected with 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution.

3.3 Frequently touched surfaces on a construction site, including any plant, equipment, lifts, hoists, handrails and doors, should be cleaned and disinfected regularly using appropriate disinfectant.

3.4 Workers tools, shall be disinfected using isopropyl alcohol solution before the day/shift begins and each time they are shared between workers.

3.5 Ensure that site amenities, including meal rooms, site offices, changing rooms, toilets, wash rooms be cleaned as per routine schedule.(Please ref to the main guideline)

3.6 The door knobs/handles shall be cleaned and disinfected before every shift and every three hours. Floors, office equipment and furniture shall be cleaned with disinfectant a minimum of twice a day. (Or after every shift in places where there are shift duties.)

3.7 Leave access doors open so that contact surfaces are minimized.

3.8 Workers should be provided with cleaning agents and be trained to clean and disinfect contact surfaces of plant or equipment immediately after use. Each worker should be provided with their own equipment whenever possible to prevent cross contamination.

3.9 Cleaning staff should wear gloves and wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before wearing gloves. Washing points, gloves and alcohol-based hand sanitizers should be made available throughout the construction site.

3.10 The worksite should be provided with closed bins for workers where appropriate to hygienically dispose of waste such as used tissues. They need to be educated to wash their hands

properly.

4. Adequate and accessible facilities

4.1 Washroom facilities must be provided with adequate supplies of soap, water and hand sanitizers. Washrooms must be kept clean and in good working order.

4.2 Number of washrooms should be adequate (at least one for 20 workers) and separate toilets for males and females. Ensure adequate number of hand washing stations.

4.3 If creating a new eating or common area to enable physical distancing, ensure these areas are adequately equipped (Eg: drinking water, waste bins).

4.4 Ensure maintaining meal rooms and changing rooms in hygienic manner.(Refer to relevant sections in the main guidelines).

4.5 Ensure proper and safe waste disposal in the worksite.

5. Deliveries and visitors attending the workplace.

5.1 Non-essential visits to the workplace should be cancelled or postponed.

5.2 Deliveries and visitors who need to come to the worksite should be given clear instructions of the health requirements while they are in the site and monitor them.

5.3 Minimize the number of workers attending to deliveries and sub-contractors as much as possible.

5.4 Visiting truck drivers and cleaners shall not be allowed to freely roam in the site and restrict them only to the vehicle as much as possible and use contactless methods such as mobile phones to communicate with them wherever possible.

For further details please refer, OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES ON PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK FOR WORK

SETTINGS”, Interim guidance dated 17th April 2020 document published by the Environmental and Occupational Health and Food Safety Directorate of the Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services.

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