
**TO ALL
PROVINCIAL TOP MANAGEMENT
SMS MEMBERS
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CIRCULAR H 70 OF 2020: PREVENTING AND MANAGING CORONAVIRUS INFECTION IN THE WORKPLACE

Purpose

This document provides guidance on the prevention of coronavirus spread in the workplace and the issues to address when dealing with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infected employees.

The document contains three sections:

- The **first section** provides background on how the coronavirus is spread and what can be done to prevent the spread of the virus.
- The **second section** provides advice on what to do, should someone in the workplace become infected with the coronavirus.
- The **third section** provides additional guidance to specific sectors with regards to preventing coronavirus infection.

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Yours sincerely



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Preventing and Managing Coronavirus Infection in the Workplace

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OVERVIEW

This document provides guidance on the prevention of coronavirus spread in the workplace and the issues to address when dealing with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) infected employees. The document contains three sections.

The **first section** provides background on how the coronavirus is spread and what can be done to prevent the spread of the virus.

The **second section** provides advice on what to do, should someone in the workplace become infected with the coronavirus.

The **third section** provides additional guidance to specific sectors with regards to preventing coronavirus infection.

A. PREVENTING CORONAVIRUS INFECTION IN THE WORKPLACE

A. 1. HOW THE CORONAVIRUS SPREADS

The coronavirus can be passed on from fluid droplets when coughing, sneezing, shouting and talking. When people cough and sneeze then fluid droplets get onto their hands and the objects or surfaces around them. The coronavirus is then spread by their hands touching the hands of others and touching objects such as equipment, money, door handles and counters. When someone touches their eyes, nose and/or mouth after they have touched other people's hands and objects with the coronavirus on it, then they can get infected. The coronavirus can survive on surfaces for several days.

A. 2. FIVE GOLDEN RULES TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

The following are the 5 Golden Rules to prevent the spread of the coronavirus:

1. Separate yourself physically from other people:
 - By working from home where possible
 - By staying home if unwell
2. Physical distancing when around other people:
 - Keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres (2 arm lengths) from others, when you have to work with them or serve them.
 - Do NOT shake hands, or hug, or fist bump, or elbow bump. Keep your distance.
3. Hand washing/sanitising:
 - Regular hand-washing with soap and water for 20 seconds
 - Or rub hands with alcohol-based hand sanitiser
 - Wash hands after touching people, surfaces and objects
4. Practising good hygiene measures:
 - Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and then put the tissue in a bin and wash your hands immediately.
 - Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
5. Using cloth face masks:
 - Use a cloth face mask to cover your nose and mouth
 - Don't touch the mask after you put it on
 - Leave the mask on all the time except when you need to eat/drink. For eating/drinking take it off carefully by the strings and place it in a clean paper or plastic bag.

A. 3. PRACTICAL STEPS FOR PREPARATION OF THE WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEES

3.1. Perform a risk assessment of the work site

- Enlist the assistance of the company occupational health and safety staff where available. ; if not available, then consider designating a staff member to act in this capacity to ensure clear lines of communication and responsibility.
- Determine likely points where people would interact with each other and points /places where contact between people and objects would occur.
- For each of these points devise practical measures to limit contact and to disinfect after contact.
- Consider the following key areas:
 - Employee Entrances
 - Change rooms, Locker rooms
 - Customer Entrances
 - Work stations
 - Aisles
 - Shelving
 - Customer service areas
 - Pay points
 - Employee canteen/break room
 - Employee toilet
 - Customer toilet
 - Goods receiving areas
 - Waste storage areas
- Consider the following key measures:
 - Re-arranging work stations (surfaces, desks, chairs, equipment)
 - Placing floor markings with tape or paint to delineate 1.5 metre intervals
 - Placing hand sanitiser and wash stations
 - Placing signage
 - Stagger lunch / tea breaks of employees to enable social distancing

3.2. Perform an employee risk assessment and work procedure plan

- Enlist the support of company occupational health staff to perform an employee risk assessment which will identify employees at increased risk for developing severe disease (e.g. elderly (>60 years old, diabetic, chest disease, heart disease, other chronic disease or on immunosuppressive treatment) and make arrangements for these employees to either work from home, or work in a low risk area, or be placed on special leave.
- Identify which employees can work from home and let them do so.
- Structure work processes and workspace layout to minimise contact between employees and contact between customers and employees
- Place employees in teams/shifts and minimise contact with other teams/shifts
- Don't move employees between teams and shifts
- Designate supervisors/managers to screen all staff when they arrive to start work for symptoms and exposure to the coronavirus.

3.3. Train employees

- Train employees on (at least) the following:
 - How coronavirus is spread

- Symptoms of Coronavirus
- What to do if they suspect they have Coronavirus and encourage them to inform the workplace if they have symptoms or have been exposed to someone who has it
- What measures must be taken to prevent spread
- How to put on, take off, store and clean their cloth face mask and any other PPE that may be in use
- Never share PPE
- Reiterate training by frequent messaging and displaying appropriate signage and posters.
- Coronavirus prevention communications materials should be put up in multiple locations and should be easily visible. If you do not have such materials, they may be downloaded and printed from here: <https://coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za/resources>
- The website provides materials on many prevention activities, from using masks, to cleaning of areas, what to do when sick, isolation, social distancing, stickers for lines, handwashing and much more. Much of the material is available in English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans and most of it is in PDF or JPEG format for easy printing and use.
- The use of government branded materials is encouraged, even along-side company branded materials.
- If you have a public announcement, speaker or other audio system installed at the workplace (e.g. an in-store radio / loud speaker system), make use of it to remind staff and customers of safety measures.
- Regular messaging such as these recommended above, serve both as a reminder to staff and customers/clients, and enable them to be aware of and help with the compliance with safety measures.
- Actively encourage a caring and compassionate approach to reduce the risk of stigma in the workplace

3.4. Ensure that the following is available:

- Alcohol based hand sanitiser at designated points
- Consider providing alcohol based hand sanitiser for each employee if they have to move around within the workplace or have to leave the workplace (e.g. drivers)
- At least 2 cloth face masks per employee.
- Sufficient supply of hand sanitiser, soap, paper towels, waste paper bins and other cleaning materials.
- Additional uniforms or work clothes for employees
- An adequate size changing room for employees to remove work clothes and store separately from each other.

A. 4. PREVENTING CORONAVIRUS INFECTION DURING WORKPLACE OPERATIONS

4.1. Screening employees every day

- Employees should be encouraged to stay away from work and attend a coronavirus testing centre if they develop any of the following symptoms. **Symptoms suggestive of possible coronavirus infection are:**

Fever

Cough

Sore throat

Shortness of breath

- Advice on which testing centre to attend is available from the provincial COVID-19 hotline number on 021 928 4102.
- Ideally staff should screen themselves at home before they leave for work and if they have symptoms they should call to inform their manager/supervisor.
- On arrival at the work site, all employees should be screened by the company daily to identify other employees that may have developed any of the symptoms above.
- Anyone with any of these symptoms should not be allowed to commence work. They should be provided with a surgical mask or a cloth mask, should wash their hands, and should be transported to a coronavirus testing centre.

4.2. Staff travelling to work

- When employees travel in public or designated employee vehicles such as a minibus taxi or bus, they should sit as far from other passengers as possible.
- The vehicle should not be filled to more than 50% of its loading capacity, and all windows of the vehicle must be open to maximise ventilation.
- Employees should wear cloth masks at all times when travelling in public transport.
- They should rub their hands with alcohol based sanitiser before getting in the vehicle and after leaving the vehicle
- Employees can be encouraged to take a 'no touch' approach when getting into and out of vehicles by clasping their hands in front of them

4.3. Workplace entrances for staff

- Use a single entrance/exit as far as possible.
- Don't allow staff to congregate at the staff entrance/exit
- If doors are not automated, keep the door open where possible to minimise multiple people touching the door handles. Where this is not possible, consider positioning an employee (e.g. security guard) at the door and instruct the employee to open the door for all staff/visitors to ensure that multiple people do not touch the door handles.
- Staff and visitors entering the workplace must sanitise their hands on entering and again on exiting, especially if they touched the door handles.
- Biometric access requirements should be disabled.

4.4. Physical distancing in the workplace

- Limit the number of people in the workplace (including employees and customers) to one person per 6 square metres (i.e. the floor meterage divided by 6). This number makes an allowance for the floor area which may be covered with shelves, equipment and shop-fittings.
- Once the number is reached (one person per 6 square metres), people can only be allowed to enter as others leave.
- Rearrange work spaces so that each employee can maintain a distance of 1,5 metres from others (employees/customers).
- If not possible to rearrange work spaces, limit the number of employees in a workspace at a time by allowing all employees who can do so to work from home and/or rearranging work patterns so that employees can work in shifts/on alternate days.
- Where possible employees should not share work surfaces or use the same equipment. Please remember that shared workstations and equipment must be cleaned between shifts/between use.

- Prevent employees from contact with many other employees by keeping them working in the same small team and not shifting between teams.
- Avoid handshakes, hugs and any physical contact with people. Greet people with a smile, or a nod, or a bow, or a wave.
- Reduce movement of managers and supervisors between work sites where possible. When they are required to visit a workplace they should avoid touching surfaces.

4.5. Workplace entrances for customers

- Use a single entrance/exit as far as possible to facilitate access control
If doors are not automated, keep the door open where possible
- Anyone entering the premises must wear a cloth mask.
- Anyone entering the premises (customers/visitors) must sanitise their hands at the entrance and again on exiting.
- An employee placed at the entrance can spray the sanitiser onto the hands of people entering/exiting the premises rather than multiple people handling the sanitiser bottle.
- Prevent people from entering the premises if there are too many people inside already. Allow one person (including employees and customers) per 6 square metres

4.6. Queues or waiting areas for customers

- Minimise queuing by implementing appointment systems where possible.
- Where queuing is necessary, ensure that customers adhere to physical distancing by placing markers on the floor to delineate 1.5m intervals. Reiterate this by displaying appropriate signage and allocating an employee to monitor that this is being applied.
- If a seated waiting area is used, seat people away from each other and limit the number that can be accommodated in the waiting room. If the waiting capacity is reached, encourage clients to either make an appointment or return later rather than queuing outside the waiting area.
- Wipe the seats in the waiting area with a 70% alcohol solution after it has been used.
- At shopping centres and malls engage with shopping centre/mall management and/or neighbouring retail outlets, should queues be forming outside other stores, to ensure adequate spacing between queues.

4.7. Aisles and walkways between work spaces

- Prevent congestion of employees and or customers (e.g. in shops or warehouses) by placing floor markers 1.5m apart in aisles and walkways which are typically busy.
- Designate a direction of travel in aisles and walkways (i.e. make aisles "one-way") by placing arrows on the floor, if possible.
- Prevent bottlenecks in aisles by limiting restocking of shelves during trading hours or closing aisles while restocking to prevent bottlenecks.
- Don't block aisles and walkways with boxes or equipment.

4.8. Regular hand-washing and hygiene measures

- Ensure that facilities are available for all employees and customers/visitors to wash their hands regularly or to use alcohol based hand sanitiser frequently.

- Encourage employees to carry their own sanitiser dispenser or provide them with one in order to minimise multiple people handling the same dispenser.
- When employees are in a situation where they have to touch people and/or take things from them, such as money or credit cards, then they should offer them alcohol-based hand sanitiser to clean their hands before assisting them. Spray the hand sanitiser on their hands. Do not give them the hand sanitiser container.
- Employees must also wash their hands after they have touched people and/or surfaces and objects.

4.9. Use of cloth face masks

- Cloth face masks are now required to be used by anyone going out in public (including workplaces)
- Cloth masks must be used properly to be effective. See below.
- Each employee must be provided with 2 cloth face masks. This allows one to be available for use while the other is being washed and ironed.
- Despite wearing a mask, you must still make sure to follow the other measures to prevent spread – keep a 1.5 metre distance from other people and wash your hands regularly.
- You must also make sure that you know the proper way to put on, wear and take off your mask.
- Take note of the following advice for wearing cloth face masks:
 - Wash your hands before putting on the mask
 - Place the mask with the correct side facing your nose and mouth. Make sure both are covered well.
 - Tie the strings behind your head or if the mask has elastic bands, make sure they are tight.
 - Once you have put on the cloth face mask and you are comfortable with the fit of the mask, **DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE OR THE MASK** until you take off the mask
 - Leave the mask on all the time except when you need to eat/drink
 - Take off the mask by untying the strings or elastic bands and holding it by the strings only, place it into a container ready to be washed.
 - Do not touch the actual mask itself when you are taking it off
 - Do not store the mask around your neck when not in use.
 - Wash your hands thoroughly after taking off the mask.
 - Wash it in warm water and iron your cloth mask everyday
 - If an employee needs to take off their mask during the work day (e.g. during tea/lunch break) and is then required to put it on again, care must be taken to only handle the masks by the strings of the mask. The mask must be stored in a clean paper or plastic bag (clearly labelled with the person's name) when not in use.

4.10. Use of face shields or visors

- There is currently no evidence to support the use of face shields in a work environment as they are bulky and impractical and employees would probably frequently touch them and potentially contaminate their hands.
- However, they theoretically provide some protection and so if employees wish to use them, then they should be allowed to do so, **BUT** they must use them properly.
- **Even when using a visor staff should still use a mask** as well, to stop secretions coming from their own nose and mouth.

- The same precautions apply as for cloth face masks:
 - Wash your hands before putting on the visor
 - Once you have put on the visor and you are comfortable with the fit of the visor, DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE OR THE VISOR until you take off the visor
 - Take off the visor by the forehead band.
 - Do not touch the actual visor when you are taking it off.
 - Do not store the visor flipped up on your head when not in use.
 - Wash your hands thoroughly after taking off the visor.
 - Clean the visor by wiping both sides with alcohol based sanitiser
 - If an employee needs to take off their visor during the work day (e.g. during tea/lunch break) and is then required to put it on again, care must be taken to only handle the visor by the headband.
 - The visor must be stored in a designated area (clearly labelled with the person's name) when not in use and should be wiped with alcohol based sanitiser before using again.

4.11. Use of gloves

- Gloves are NOT recommended for regular use outside of the healthcare environment.
- If gloves are required as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) under normal circumstances i.e. depending on the nature of work carried out at the work site, they should continue to be worn.
- All other employees that do not require gloves as PPE under normal circumstances must wash their hands frequently, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser instead.

4.12. Customer service points

- Employees should sanitise their hands before and after assisting each customer.
- Customers should also sanitise their hands before and after the interaction with the employee.
- It is preferable for the employee to spray the sanitiser on the customer's hands rather than handing over the sanitiser bottle.
- Perspex or glass guards may be used at customer service points to create a barrier between the customer and the employee. This should be accompanied by signage instructing that neither surface of the guard should be touched. Additionally, both sides of the guard must be cleaned regularly using soap, water and disinfectant.
- Counters, credit card machines and any other objects that customers come into contact with must be cleaned after each customer.
- Customers should where possible conduct the card payment themselves thereby minimising contact between cashier and customer.
- For payment points, contactless systems should be encouraged.
- Electronic payments should not require further signing of paper receipts.
- For till points, consider having only a cashier at the till point who then also does the packing. Alternatively, arrange the till point so that cashiers and packers are separated from each other.

4.13. Employee canteens or break rooms

- Work shifts and break times should be staggered so as to minimise the number of employees in the "break room" or canteen at a time.
- Markings should be made in the break room to ensure physical distancing of at least 1,5 metres can be maintained even during tea breaks.

- Separate tables and chairs so that they are spaced at least 1,5 metres apart.
- Where possible (depending on the specific work site and weather) encourage employees to spend their breaks outdoors and remind them to continue to practice physical distancing.
- Display signage encouraging employees to wash their hands thoroughly before and after eating and to maintain physical distancing.
- Ensure that there is a wash basin and soap available in the break room for employees to use.
- Clean all surfaces thoroughly and frequently.

4.14. Employee and customer bathroom facilities

- Encourage employees/customers to wash their hands by displaying appropriate signage.
- Ensure that there is water and soap available for hand washing. Contactless tap systems or taps that can be operated with elbows are preferred.
- Do **not** use cloth towels in the bathroom. Rather make use of paper towels that can be disposed of into sealed bins (operated by a foot step).
- Ensure that bins are large enough to hold multiple paper towels and/or empty the bins frequently.
- Line the bins with a plastic bag to allow easy emptying.
- Cleaning staff emptying the bins should wear gloves and wash their hands afterwards
- Toilets and bathrooms should be cleaned on a regular basis throughout the day – use a record system to indicate the frequency that it is being done

4.15. Work clothing

- Where practical, work clothes should be left at the work site and laundered in bulk using standard safety precautions during laundering.
- If it is not feasible to leave work clothes at the work site for laundering, then advise employees to remove their work clothes at the work site and place in a plastic bag. They should wash their hands after taking off the work clothes. They should then clean the work clothes by washing it in warm water at home.
- If it is not even feasible to change their clothes at work, then employees should remove their work clothes immediately when they get home and place them in a washing basket. They should wash their hands after removal of the work clothes.
- Please note that clothes must not be shaken out as this can release the virus.
- The upper part of shoes should be wiped with alcohol sanitiser.
- The underside of the shoes should not be touched. If the underside of the shoes need to be cleaned then wear gloves and wash hands thoroughly after removing and discarding the gloves.
- Employees would need sufficient work clothes/uniforms to allow a daily change of work clothes.

4.16. Ventilation

- Maximise natural ventilation at the work site. This can be done, for example, by leaving a back door open with a security gate on, or opening windows.
- If air conditioners are used then there should be a minimum of 12 air changes per hour and there should be no re-circulation.

4.17. Daily cleaning routines and waste management

- Frequently interacted with and touched surfaces and objects should be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Use soap and water to clean areas where possible. Then disinfect with a dilute bleach solution. Dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water.
- If the area cannot be cleaned with soap and water, then wipe down the area carefully with a 70% alcohol solution.
- Common disinfectants that could be used include:
 - Bleach i.e. Sodium hypochlorite (0.1%)
 - Alcohols i.e. Ethanol (70%)
 - Quaternary ammonium compounds
 - Hydrogen peroxide (3%)
 - Peroxyacetic acid (0.5%)
 - Phenolic i.e. carbolic soap
 - Iodophors i.e. iodines (1%)
- Any equipment which is shared by employees should be cleaned before each use.
- Waste from waste containers should be disposed of into plastic bags and sealed before discarding into the general waste for refuse collection.
- Employees handling waste must wear utility gloves when emptying the waste containers.
- Waste handlers and cleaners should wear closed shoes.
- Clean the waste storage area daily.

4.18. Receiving goods from suppliers

- Drivers should remain in their vehicle as far as possible.
- Drivers and assistants must wear a cloth mask.
- Physical distance should be maintained when receiving goods.
- Drivers and assistants must use hand sanitiser before handing any delivery documents or packages to employees.
- Ensure regular hand washing/use of sanitiser.

B. MANAGING EMPLOYEES INFECTED OR POSSIBLY INFECTED WITH CORONAVIRUS

If an employee at your workplace has become infected with the coronavirus then it is very important to assist that employee, as well as other employees, and re-evaluate what can be done to stop the further spread of the coronavirus, whether at the workplace or at the homes of everyone connected with the employee.

To do this effectively each of the following issues needs to be addressed:

1. Provide support to that employee and assist with isolation,
2. Provide support to other employees and prepare for counselling
3. Inform the Health Department that you have an employee with coronavirus infection 2019 (COVID-19)
4. Attempt to establish how that employee got infected,
5. Identify who the employee might in turn have infected,
6. Assist with contacting all these people and help with quarantining
7. Continue to screen employees to detect signs of possible coronavirus infection
8. Take steps to prevent any further infections
9. Possible temporary closure of the work site
10. Re-opening of the work site
11. Cleaning of the contaminated area

Each of these 11 issues are discussed below.

B. 1. SUPPORT TO COVID-19 INFECTED EMPLOYEE

Since he/she tested for the coronavirus your employee is likely to be in quarantine and would have been notified by a doctor or nurse that they are infected and need to be isolated for 14 days. However, sometimes there are miscommunications around this and your employee might still be at work.

If the employee is at work then:

- a) Immediately separate him/her from other employees preferably by placing in a well-ventilated room
- b) Ask him/her to wash hands thoroughly
- c) Provide him/her with a surgical mask if you have one. If not then continue using a cloth mask
- d) Ensure that your employee is counselled and in a reasonable mental state to follow other instructions.
- e) Assist the employee to follow the advice from the health department regarding isolation.
- f) Assist with establishing if the employee is able to effectively self-isolate or if isolation at a public facility would be required. If a public facility is required make sure to mention this when contacting the Department of Health.
- g) Determine whether the employee is able to travel home or travel to a public isolation facility without the risk of infecting other members of the public; e.g. they should not be using public transport. If not, assist the employee to be safely transported home.

If the employee is at home or at a quarantine facility, then:

- a) Assist the employee to follow the advice from the health department regarding isolation required to protect their family, friends, colleagues
- b) Assist with establishing if the employee is able to effectively self-isolate at home or if isolation at a public facility would be required. If a public facility is required make sure to mention this when contacting the Department of Health
- c) Provide suitable sick leave arrangements for the 14 days that the employee will be away from work. Note that 14 days is the minimum time of isolation and that it might be longer depending on how ill the employee becomes and the treatment required.

Additionally:

- a) Provide supportive counselling via your workplace employee assistance programme (EAP) or employee wellness programme or via a trusted colleague
- b) If the likelihood is high that the infection was occupationally acquired (in other words it arose out of or in the course of work duties), then a workers' compensation claim needs to be completed.

B.2. SUPPORT TO OTHER EMPLOYEES:

- Reassure staff that you are handling the situation following advice from the Health Department (see below) and that that you are supporting the infected employee.
- Inform staff that the Health Department and other Government departments, assisted by your health and wellness division or occupational health service, (if you have either of these), will be screening employees to determine possible exposure to the virus and will advise on what further steps to take.
- Contact your organisation's employee assistance programme (EAP)/health and wellness division (or occupational health service) and alert them to rapidly assist with and increase screening, counselling and psychological support efforts already in place for employees at the affected store. Alternatively appoint a trusted colleague to provide support and counselling to employees.
- Keep an eye on the mental health and stress levels of all employees, be kind and thoughtful about the potential stress employees will experience with the infection of a colleague and the possibility that they may be exposed.
- Have a communication plan in place to ensure that employees receive correct information.

B. 3. INFORM THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

- The department of health is aware of all individuals that test positive for COVID-19 through laboratory reporting mechanisms. However, due to delays in reporting, the employee may be aware of the diagnosis before the health department
- The employer should contact the **provincial COVID-19 hotline number on 021 928 4102**.
- After contacting the hotline, the relevant health department team or a partner government department team, will be in contact to assist you.
- The department of Employment and Labour should also be contacted

B. 4. ESTABLISH HOW THAT EMPLOYEE GOT INFECTED

- The employee could have been infected by fellow workers/managers, customers, or by someone within their home or social circle. Therefore, it is important to:
- Assist the employee to identify if he/she came into contact with anyone who had symptoms of a throat and chest infection. These symptoms are:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Shortness of breath
- Similarly, it is important for management to directly identify amongst the employees and frequent visitors to the work site, which people have any of the symptoms listed above. Amongst these could be the person or persons who originally infected the employee and

may still be unknowingly spreading the infection amongst other employees, visitors and customers.

- Enlist the support of company occupational health staff where possible to assist with the identification of contacts. Make a list of all these employees and other people who have symptoms as they would need to be assessed, to decide if they should be tested for the coronavirus. Include the name, surname, contact number and address of these individuals where possible.
- Depending on how many employees are involved it may be necessary to temporarily close the work site while these investigations are underway.

B. 5. IDENTIFY WHO THE EMPLOYEE CAME INTO CLOSE CONTACT WITH

- Any individuals the employee came into contact with since he/she became ill could also develop the disease and need to be separated from other employees and customers (if applicable), by going into quarantine.
- Ask the employee who he/she was in close contact with (i.e. face-to-face contact within 1 metre, or shared an enclosed space with the affected employee in the 48 hours before symptom onset) or worked closely with. These could be:
 - Other employees
 - Visitors to the work site
 - Regular customers
 - Suppliers
 - People in their neighbourhood
 - People they travel with
 - People at social gatherings
 - Family members
- Similarly ask all the employees at the company whether they recall being in close contact with or working closely with the employee since the date that he/she became ill.
- Enlist the support of Company occupational health staff or a designated human resources person where possible to assist with contact tracing and management of contacts. Make a list of all these employees and other contacts as they may have to be quarantined to prevent further spread. Include the name, surname, contact number and address of these individuals where possible.
- Depending on how many employees are involved it may be necessary to temporarily close the work site while these investigations are underway.

B. 6. ASSIST WITH TRACING AND QUARANTINING PEOPLE WHO MAY HAVE BEEN INFECTED

- The health department assisted by partner government departments will interview all these contacts to determine whether the level of exposure is sufficient for them to have become infected, and hence whether they need to be quarantined or not. Please contact the Health Department immediately.
- However, if the company has an employee wellness service or an occupational health service then it would be expected of them to assist with this process under the guidance of the health department.
- Please provide the list of contacts to the health department. (Do not delay the initial contact to the health department while you prepare this list).
- Please allow the health department access to employees via a quiet room or via the telephone.
- For those employees who need to be quarantined please provide suitable special leave arrangements for the up to 14 days that they will be in quarantine.

- Quarantine means that people who are at high risk of being infected with coronavirus are separated from other people for 14 days from the date that they were exposed to their infected colleague, so that they cannot infect others.
- Depending on their home circumstance they can be quarantined either at home or at a specially prepared quarantine facility.
- To be allowed to quarantine at home they need to have a room in which they can stay alone, separate from the rest of the household.
- Depending on how many employees are involved it may become necessary to temporarily close the work site while they are in quarantine.

B. 7. CONTINUE TO SCREEN EMPLOYEES TO DETECT SIGNS OF POSSIBLE CORONAVIRUS INFECTION

- It is possible that some of the people who were in contact with the employee were not identified during the processes described above and hence may still be working and at risk of becoming infected. Also, some people can be infected with coronavirus and yet be completely well, only becoming ill later. It is possible that such people could still be working and that they may even be the original source of the coronavirus at the work site.
- Therefore, all employees should be monitored by the company daily (see section A for further details on daily screening of staff) to identify other employees that may develop symptoms.
- If an employee develops symptoms they should not come to work, but should instead report this to their supervisor and to the health department (**call the provincial COVID-19 hotline number on 021 928 4102**), who will advise them which testing centre to attend, so that the test for coronavirus can be done.
- However, some employees might come to work even if they have symptoms and therefore supervisors need to ask all employees about any symptoms they may have, every day before they start work. Should the employee feel unwell during the working day, they should be screened again for symptoms and managed accordingly.

B. 8. STEPS TO TAKE TO PREVENT ANY FUTURE INFECTIONS AMONGST EMPLOYEES

- All areas where the employee worked or visited in the work site should be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water and wiped down with a diluted bleach solution (dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water to give a 0.1% mixture). If the area cannot be cleaned with soap and water then it should be wiped down carefully with a bleach solution, or a 70% alcohol solution.
- Common disinfectants that could be used include:
 - Bleach i.e. Sodium hypochlorite (0.1%)
 - Alcohols i.e. Ethanol (70%)
 - Quaternary ammonium compounds
 - Hydrogen peroxide (3%)
 - Peroxyacetic acid (0.5%)
 - Phenolic i.e. carbolic soap
 - Iodophors i.e. iodines (1%)
- The area to be cleaned will be specific to each case and includes the kitchen, staff room, canteen, toilet facilities, trolleys, baskets, door handles, work stations, computers and counters among others.
- If large surface areas and large numbers of objects need to be cleaned and disinfected then the work site may need to close temporarily while this is being done.
- Strictly follow the guidelines listed above on preventing coronavirus infection.

B. 9. POSSIBLE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE WORK SITE

- The Health Department may need to advise to close the work site temporarily due to the public health risk posed by remaining open.
- This will be done in consultation with the company managers and will depend upon a number of factors including the following:

The workplace or a section of the workplace may need to be temporarily closed depending on the following factors:

- If the number of employees who have symptoms is considerably large, because of the time needed to investigate and determine if they should be tested for coronavirus infection or not.
- If the number of employees who are contacts of the employee/s with coronavirus infection is large, because of the time needed to investigate and determine if they need to be in quarantine or not.
- If the area in the work site and the volume of items that need to be cleaned is large, because of the time required to complete this important task.
- If the number of employees diagnosed with coronavirus infection and therefore needing isolation is large, since there may be insufficient employees for the work site to continue its operations.
- If the staff complement that are identified as contacts of the infected employee and therefore need to be placed in quarantine is large, since there may then be insufficient employees for the work site to continue its operations.
- The definition of 'large' will be business nature and space specific and should be discussed in conjunction with the Department of Health team.

Note that should a company refuse to close a workplace voluntarily upon advice to do so, then the inspectors from the Department of Employment and Labour are empowered to close the premises.

Temporary closure of the work site can be prevented by:

- Rapidly cleaning and disinfecting the surfaces and items that were contaminated.
- Completing the screening of other as yet unaffected workers timeously.
- Once decontamination is completed, seconding staff from other branches to replace those placed in isolation and quarantine, but avoid staff working at multiple branches in the short-term i.e. the seconded employees would have to then work only at one branch at a time for the medium term.
- Temporarily employing suitably skilled staff to replace those placed in isolation and quarantine.
- Preventing infection of employees with coronavirus by following the prudent steps outlined in the first section of this document.
- Training employees on how to prevent coronavirus infection.

B. 10. RE-OPENING OF THE WORK SITE

In order for the work site to be re-opened, the following minimum requirements should be in place:

1. An assessment of the circumstances which resulted in the exposure of the employee/s to the coronavirus.
2. A description of steps that will be taken to remedy any shortcomings in prevention activities uncovered during the assessment.
3. Full training (and refresher training) of employees on coronavirus prevention activities has been achieved.
4. Cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and objects that have been contaminated has been done.

5. The assessment and description of any steps taken should be compiled into a report and kept on record, as well as made available to the Health Department and the Department of Employment and Labour.
6. Procedures are in place to implement all the prevention activities listed above.
7. If a workplace was closed upon instructions from an inspector of the Department of Employment and Labour, then formal compliance needs to be demonstrated before it will be permitted to re-open.

B. 11. CLEANING OF THE CONTAMINATED AREA

- Clean all surfaces/objects that the infected person/s may have come into contact with.
- PPE must be worn during cleaning and cleaning staff must wash their hands thoroughly before and after cleaning.
- The following PPE should be worn during cleaning:
 - Heavy duty rubber Gloves
 - Face mask
 - Visor or goggles
 - Apron
 - Closed shoes
- The following materials should be used for cleaning and disinfecting:
 - Green household soap should be used to clean all equipment and environmental surfaces that can tolerate it (e.g. walls, floors, blinds, surfaces) prior to disinfecting.
 - Disinfectant (6 teaspoons i.e. 30ml of bleach per litre of water) should be used after cleaning to disinfect all equipment and surfaces.
 - If the area/surface cannot be cleaned with soap and water, wipe down with a 70% alcohol solution.

C. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR VARIOUS SECTORS

This section of the document provides additional guidance to specific sectors with regards to preventing coronavirus infection. It attempts to draw attention to some specific things to attend to within the sector. There will be some overlap with advice in the general section of the prevention guidelines but that is intentional and is because that issue is being highlighted as being important to the sector.

Sectors covered here are:

1. Office Workplaces without Public Access
2. Banks, Post offices and Government Offices serving the Public
3. Public Transport
4. eHailing Transport (Uber, Bolt, etc) and Private Taxis
5. Petrol filling stations
6. Large Retail Stores
7. Clothing Stores
8. Informal trading and small stores
9. Services with prolonged contact (hairdresser, spa, manicure, massage, etc.)
10. Construction
11. Manufacturing
12. Agriculture
13. Schools and Crèches

C. 1. OFFICE WORKPLACES WITHOUT PUBLIC ACCESS

- Where possible work from home.
- Wear a cloth mask when around other people. Don't touch the mask. Take off mask by the strings. Wash hands after taking off the mask.
- Leave main doors to the building open if they are not sensor controlled.
- Move turnstiles with your body and not your hands.
- Usually staff have to touch biometric sensor pads, lift buttons and door handles to access their offices and hence it is very important to wash your hands before you commence work and touch surfaces and equipment.
- Separate desks and work surfaces.
- Don't share equipment, if possible or wipe clean with bleach solution.
- Stagger tea breaks.
- Sit widely separated when having meetings.
- Have teleconference and video conference meetings.
- Sanitise your hands with alcohol sanitiser after you have left the building.
- Change your clothes and wash your hands when you get home.

C. 2. BANKS, POST OFFICES AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC

- Where possible allow clients to arrive with timed appointments.
- Staff and clients must wear cloth masks.
- Spray alcohol hand sanitiser onto hands of clients when they arrive and exit.
- Have staff member stationed at ticket number dispensing device to operate it. Clients then just take the clean paper with the number or get the number sent to their cellphone.
- Space queues 1,5 metres apart by using tape on the floor.
- Clients to sit far apart (>1,5 metres) in waiting area.

- Put clear glass or perspex barriers between clients and staff.
- Spray alcohol hand sanitiser onto hands of clients before and after use of biometric sensor pads.
- Clients should bring their own pen.
- Provide alcohol wipes to clean communal pens before and after use.
- Use contactless payment systems where possible.
- Clients and staff to use alcohol hand sanitiser before and after exchanging money and using cards.
- Wipe all equipment touched by client with alcohol wipes.

C. 3. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Clean the bus and taxi rank with soap and water or your usual cleaning materials during the closure time in the middle of the day and every evening after operations have ceased.
- Wipe down the surfaces at the bus and taxi rank with dilute bleach solution (30ml bleach per litre water) each hour, while the rank is in use.
- Passengers, drivers, guards and rank attendants must wear cloth masks.
- Separate passengers in the queue at the bus and minibus taxi rank by a distance of 1,5 metres. Put 1,5 metre marker lines on the floor and inform passengers to stand behind each marker.
- Do not let passengers open the doors of the minibus taxi. Leave doors open while waiting for passengers. Open the doors for passengers when picking them up along the route.
- Offer passengers alcohol-based hand sanitiser to clean their hands before they enter the minibus taxi and as they approach the driver's cubicle in the bus. Spray the hand sanitiser on their hands. Do not give the passengers the hand sanitiser container.
- Rub your hands for 20 seconds with alcohol-based sanitiser after taking money from each customer.
- Do not fully fill the bus or minibus taxi with passengers. Keep it half full.
- Let passengers sit as far from each other as possible.
- Keep the windows open to allow fluid droplets to escape in case a passenger coughs or sneezes during the trip.
- Wipe down the door handles, window ledges and seats with hand sanitiser after each trip.
- Clean with soap and water and disinfect the outside of the vehicle twice per day with a bleach and water solution. Dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water. Clean it after each operating shift (e.g. after the morning shift and again after the evening shift).
- Wipe down the entire inside of the vehicle with alcohol-based sanitiser twice per day.

C. 4. EHAILING TRANSPORT (UBER, BOLT, ETC) AND PRIVATE TAXIS

- Drivers and passengers must wear a cloth mask.
- Transport only one person at a time. In large size vehicles you may transport a maximum of 3 passengers.
- When transporting more than one passenger then let passengers sit as far from each other as possible.
- Do not let passengers open the doors of the vehicle. Open it for them.
- As a passenger one should not open doors and should try not to touch surfaces in the vehicle.
- Spray alcohol-based hand sanitiser on passengers' hands before they enter the vehicle.
- Rub your hands with alcohol-based sanitiser after taking money from each customer.
- If you use or a credit card machine, then first wipe the credit card machine with hand sanitiser and then rub your hands with alcohol-based sanitiser.
- Spray alcohol-based hand sanitiser on passengers' hands after exchange of money or use of credit card.

- Keep the windows open.
- Wipe down the door handle/s, window ledge/s and seat/s with hand sanitiser after each trip.
- Clean with soap and water and disinfect the outside of the vehicle twice per day with a bleach and water solution. Dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water. Clean it after each operating shift (e.g. after the morning shift and again after the evening shift).
- Wipe down the entire inside of the vehicle with alcohol-based sanitiser twice per day.

C. 5. PETROL FILLING STATIONS

- Staff and customers must wear cloth masks.
- Petrol attendants should not switch between pumps during a shift if possible.
- Encourage customers to remain in their vehicle unless they need to go to the shop at the petrol station
- Keep a distance of 1,5 metres from the window of the vehicle.
- Do not touch the door, window or door handle
- Offer customers alcohol-based hand sanitiser to clean their hands before they give you money or a card.
- Spray the hand sanitiser on their hands. Do not give the customers the hand sanitiser container.
- Also, offer alcohol-based hand sanitiser to customers when you are finished assisting them.
- Before processing payment via card or cash the attendant should sanitise hands
- Wipe the credit card machine with hand sanitiser before and after assisting each customer.
- Do not touch the customer's hands when handing over the credit card machine.
- The customer should insert/swipe their own loyalty and credit cards.
- Rub hands with alcohol-based sanitiser after you have wiped the credit card machine.
- When making cash payments customers should try and have the exact amount ready.
- Cash payments should preferably be placed in a container and taken to the cashier. Avoid hand-to-hand transfer of cash.
- After handing the container to the cashier, the cashier should place the change in the container – and then sanitise hands.
- Tips should be left in the container. Do not touch tips. Tip them from the container into a separate tip container.
- After emptying the container, the attendant should sanitise hands. Customers should also sanitise their hands at this point.
- At the end of each day clean the pumps and surrounding equipment by wiping with a dilute solution of bleach. Dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water.

C. 6. LARGE RETAIL STORES

6.1 Online electronic shopping

- Provide and encourage customers to shift to online shopping.
- Ideally online shopping should be paired with a delivery service.
- If a delivery service is not available provide a separate section of the shop for collection of online orders.
- Physical collection of online orders by the customer should then ideally be done on an appointment system basis.
- A separate section of the shop should be designated for collection of online orders.

- The access and queuing system for collecting online orders should be organised on the same basis as below.

6.2. Store entrance

- Use only a single entrance/exit as far as possible.
- Keep doors open to minimise touching door handles.
- The number of people in the store (including staff and customers should be limited to one person per 6 square metres (i.e. floor meterage divided by 6).
- Position staff at the entrance to the store to direct entry/exit and monitor queuing. The staff placed at the entrance of the store should keep track of the number of people in the store at any time.
- When the store is full customers should queue outside or be given a time to return. Once full then do not allow anyone to enter until someone has left.
- Use 1,5 metre floor markings to indicate where customers should queue and encourage customers to use shopping trolleys as a means of physically distancing from others.
- Direct customers to leave a space between their trolley and the next person and direct them to stand behind the floor markings while they wait outside the shop.
- Sanitise shopping trolleys and basket handles before and after use by each customer.
- Provide customers with sanitising wipes at trolley/basket points.
- If possible, remove shopping baskets and only allow the use of trolleys as this helps with physical distancing.
- Anyone entering the store must wear a cloth mask and must first sanitise their hands.
- Only a single member of each household should be allowed into the store and any other person accompanying the customer must remain outside the store. (Please use discretion for exceptional circumstances e.g. single parent with young children).

6.3. Aisles and products

- Designate a direction of travel for aisles (i.e. make aisles "one-way") by placing arrows on the floor.
- Prevent bottlenecks in aisles by limiting restocking of shelves during trading hours or closing aisles while restocking to prevent bottlenecks.
- Space out items on shelves to minimise people crowding together.
- Place signage encouraging customers to make a selection before touching the item so that they do not touch multiple items.

6.4. Till points

- Maintain physical distancing between customers at till points using floor markings spaced at 1.5metre intervals to indicate where it is safe to queue.
- Perspex guards can be installed at till points to create a barrier between cashiers and customers. If installed these guards must be cleaned regularly using soap, water and disinfectant (dilute bleach or alcohol solution).
- Signage should be present instructing staff and customers not to touch the Perspex guards.
- Consider only placing a cashier at the till point instead of both a cashier and a packer. If this is not possible, arrange the till workspace to ensure distancing between the cashier and packer.
- Consider using only alternate tills if the till points are close to each other and no physical barrier is possible.
- Cashiers and packers must sanitise their hands before and after assisting each customer.
- Additionally, the customer should also sanitise their hands before being assisted. The cashier should spray the hand sanitiser onto the customer's hands rather than handing the customer the bottle.

- Digital payment options must be encouraged. However, where card machines are used, ask customers to swipe their own loyalty/credit cards instead of handing over to the cashier.
- If customers use their own shopping bags, encourage them to wash the bags after each use.
- The surface area, till and card machine must be sanitised between customers. Cashiers should sanitise their hands after they have wiped down the surface area, till and credit card machine.

6.5. Self-service food stations:

- Self-service food stations in which food items such as salads, and cooked food are left partially covered or uncovered so that customers can help themselves, should be closed.
- These food points should be converted to ones where staff serve the customers by dishing the food into containers.
- Where fresh produce is sold, signage should be displayed encouraging customers to make a selection before they touch the item, so that customers do not touch multiple items which may then spread infection.

C. 7. INFORMAL TRADING AND SMALL STORES

- All people working at the stall and store must wear a cloth mask.
- Ask staff and people assisting you about symptoms of coronavirus infection and if they have then refer them to a testing centre.
- Don't touch the mask. Take off the mask by the strings. Wash your hands after taking off the mask.
- Ask customers should wear a mask.
- It is very important for you and all staff to wash your hands or use alcohol based hand sanitiser before you set up your stall or store.
- If you have an inside store then make sure that people are more than 1,5 metres apart inside the store. You might not want to let more than 2 people in at a time, depending on the size of the store.
- Put markers on the ground to show customers where to stand to be 1,5 metres away from each other. This can be by drawing lines on the ground or by placing coloured sticks on the ground.
- Ask customers not to touch the goods.
- Place a clear glass or perspex barrier at the till point of an inside store and place signs and ask people not to touch the clear barrier.
- If you have unused clean packets then place items in the packet before passing it to the customer.
- Don't touch the customer's hands when passing the packet. Keep a distance by placing the packet down and then the customer takes the packet.
- If customers bring their own packets then pass items to the customers without touching their hands.
- Ask customers to pay with the exact amount where possible
- If safe to do so then ask customer to place money in an open box and spread it out so that you can check the amount. They should not touch the box.
- Decant the money into a safer container after the sale without touching the money.
- Provide change from a 'clean money' container if safe to do so. Clean money is money that you have previously cleaned with an alcohol sanitiser beforehand or which has been left untouched for 7 days.
- If the above is not possible then spray alcohol based hand sanitiser on customers' hands before they give you money.
- Rub your hands with alcohol based hand sanitiser after each time you receive money and hand over change.
- Spray alcohol based hand sanitiser on the customer's hands.

- Where possible use contactless electronic payments such as 'Snapscan' and 'tap'.
- Wipe the table top, or till counter area regularly with alcohol based sanitiser.
- Ensure that communal kitchen areas and toilets are kept clean by arranging cleaning routines including a cleaning roster if many businesses use the same facilities.

C. 8. CLOTHING STORES

- Manage store entrance and till points as described for large retail stores.
- Display items widely enough dispersed so that customers and staff do not brush up against them when walking past.
- Display clothing items appropriately so that customers can easily identify the correct size without searching through and touching multiple items.
- Similarly, display the prices of items clearly so that customers do not touch and search through the item to find the price.
- Encourage customers not to touch multiple items before selecting one.
- Do NOT have "mixed articles in reduced price boxes" which customers have to scratch through.
- Fitting rooms should NOT be used.
- Ensure that your store has a clear policy for clothing returns.
- Returned clothing should be stored separately from other clothing in a designated area and should not be sold for at least 1 week after being returned, as any viruses would then have expired.

C. 9. SERVICES WITH PROLONGED CONTACT (HAIRDRESSER, SPA, MANICURE, MASSAGE)

- Minimise queuing by implementing appointment systems as far as possible
- Where queuing is necessary, ensure that customers adhere to physical distancing by placing markers on the floor to delineate 1.5m intervals. Reiterate this by displaying appropriate signage and allocating a staff member to monitor that this is being applied.
- If a seated waiting area is used, seat people away from each other and limit the number that can be accommodated. If the waiting capacity is reached, encourage clients to either make an appointment or return later rather than queuing outside the waiting area.
- Staff should sanitise their hands before and after any customer interaction that will involve physical contact.
- Customers should also sanitise their hands before and after the interaction with the staff member.
- Consider the use of perspex screens or guards to create a barrier between customers and staff and also between individual customers.
- Discourage customers from touching products. They should ask a staff member for help instead.
- Do not provide customers with magazines or newspapers.
- Do not serve refreshments to customers.
- Counters, credit card machines and other objects that customers come into contact with must be cleaned after each customer.
- Gloves are not recommended unless they can be used only for a single interaction and then disposed of. If this is not possible then staff should rather wash or sanitise their hands between each customer interaction.
- Both clients and staff who will come into close contact with each other must wear a cloth face mask at all times.
- Objects/equipment that have come into contact with the client must be cleaned before the next use.
- Where possible use disposable items or ask customers to purchase their own e.g. nail file.

C. 10. CONSTRUCTION

- A risk assessment must be conducted at each new site prior to construction beginning. As far as possible this must be done with the assistance of occupational health and safety practitioners.
- Continue to use safety PPE that is required for each construction activity.
- Where possible to be used with other safety equipment, cloth face masks must be used by all workers.
- There must be no sharing of PPE
- Where possible don't share equipment.
- If equipment must be shared, then clean it with alcohol-based hand sanitiser before the next person uses it.
- Travel to work and to construction sites must adhere to physical distancing measures and all windows in the vehicle to be open for the duration of the trip. Only 50% occupancy of the vehicle allowed and all occupants to wear cloth face masks. Upon entering and exiting the vehicle all occupants should sanitise their hands. The vehicle must be cleaned daily.
- Site supervisors must design work patterns to allow for physical distancing of 1.5 metres between workers and limit the number of workers on site accordingly
- Tools are not to be shared or if not possible then tools must be cleaned between use
- Employers must ensure that there is access to soap and water, hand sanitiser and bins for disposing of waste at various points around the site
- Avoid portable toilets where possible, however, if these cannot be avoided then clean them more frequently (4 times per day) with a bleach solution. Use 30 ml bleach with a litre of water. Wear disposable gloves. Wash hands afterwards.

C. 11. MANUFACTURING

- Staff and visitors to wear cloth masks.
- Leave main doors to the building open if they are not sensor controlled.
- It is very important for staff to wash their hands before they commence work and touch surfaces and equipment.
- Work areas/surfaces of employees should be separated by at least 1,5 metres.
- Where not possible to separate work areas/surfaces then clear glass/perspex screens should be placed between them.
- Where possible don't share equipment.
- If equipment must be shared, then clean it with alcohol-based hand sanitiser before the next person uses it.
- If items need to be touched by many people (e.g. on conveyor belt) then disposable gloves should be worn.
- Gloves should be removed and discarded in a bin whenever breaks in the activity is taken and staff should immediately wash their hands.
- Clean and disinfect communally used surfaces (e.g. conveyor belts) after each shift.
- Where practical, work clothes should be left at the work site and laundered in bulk using standard safety precautions during laundering.
- Follow general rules of staggered breaks, keeping staff in separate teams, screening staff before they start a shift, cleaning kitchen, staff room and toilets.

C. 12. AGRICULTURE

- Staff and visitors to wear cloth masks during inside activities and during group transport.
- Do not fully fill the worker transport vehicle with passengers. Keep it half full.
- Let passengers sit as far from each other as possible and keep the windows open.

- Wipe down the door handles, window ledges, seats and back of 'bakkie' with alcohol sanitiser after each trip.
- Clean with soap and water and disinfect the outside of the vehicle and the back of the 'bakkie' twice per day with a bleach and water solution. Dilute 30ml of bleach per litre of water. Clean it after each operating shift (e.g. after the morning shift and again after the evening shift).
- Where possible don't share equipment.
- If equipment must be shared, then clean it with alcohol-based hand sanitiser before the next person uses it.
- For seasonal workers acquire the proper documentation for them to travel to the workplace and back home, before and after the seasonal work. Transport should be done in a safe manner as outlined above.
- Staff should be advised that good hand hygiene and surface hygiene does not end when the workday ceases but should extend to their homes.
- Adequate provision of water access, bleach and alcohol sanitiser for home use, should be provided to staff.
- Follow general rules of staggered breaks, keeping staff in separate teams, screening staff before they start a shift, cleaning communal areas and toilets.

C. 13. CARE FACILITIES AND OLD AGE HOMES

13.1 Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission

- Education/Training:
 - Educate staff, volunteers, patients/residents and visitors on COVID-19
 - Provide regular communication to families of patients/residents regarding the measures you are taking to prevent COVID-19 transmission and/or manage COVID-19 cases.
- Screening:
 - Screen staff daily for symptoms of COVID-19 (See detail in Part A above)
 - Screen patients/residents (including temperature check) daily for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Screen new patients/residents to the facility at the time of admission.
 - Ensure that the facility designates an isolated space to care for a resident/patient that becomes a PUI/is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Physical distancing:
 - Restrict visitations to compassionate care or end of life situations only. Inform families that you will consider visitation requests outside of these situations on a case by case basis.
 - When visits are allowed, screen visitors before allowing entrance to the facility and ensure that visitors wear cloth face masks.
 - If the resident/patient being visited has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and visitors will be in close contact with the resident/patient, then visitors must wear a face mask, goggles, apron and gloves.
 - If the resident/patient being visited is not suspected of having COVID-19, then visitors may wear a cloth face mask and apron.
 - Consider virtual visitations where possible e.g. using video conferencing.
 - Ensure physical distancing of 1.5 metres between residents/patients.
 - Cancel group activities and limit the use of shared spaces/communal areas as far as possible.
 - If a dining hall is used, consider staggered meal times. Alternatively, consider serving residents/patients meals in their rooms.

- Where medical consultation is required (e.g. with an off-site medical specialist), consider telehealth consultation.
- In the absence of regular social interaction, strengthen mental health/psychosocial support to residents/patients.
- Use of PPE:
 - Residents/patients should wear cloth face masks except when in their own private room.
 - Residents/patients with intellectual disability or who may have difficulty wearing a cloth face mask should be isolated from other residents/patients as far as possible.
 - Staff should wear appropriate PPE as indicated in the *Provincial Guidelines for PPE Use*.

13.2 Management of a resident/patient diagnosed with COVID-19:

- If a resident/patient has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they should be isolated immediately in a designated room.
- Arrange for the resident/patient to be tested and continue to care for the patient/resident in the designated room while awaiting test results.
- Limit the number of staff entering the room to one staff member per shift.
- In the case of a resident that is intellectually disabled and cannot be isolated, consider quarantining them in the designated room together with a designated staff member or one staff member per shift. The staff member should wear appropriate PPE (Refer to *Provincial Guidelines for PPE Use*.)
- Quarantine any other residents/patients and staff members who came into close contact with the ill resident.
- If the resident/patient tests positive for COVID-19, continue to isolate them and monitor their clinical condition to evaluate whether further care (e.g. hospital admission) is required.
- If hospital admission is required then contact the nearest hospital and arrange transport with the ambulance services.
- If there are multiple residents/patients diagnosed with COVID-19 at the facility, each resident/patient should as far as possible be isolated in single rooms.
- Where isolation in single rooms is not possible, consider cohorting several COVID-19 patients within a larger room.
- Do not cohort PUI's with confirmed positive COVID-19 residents/patients.
- As far as possible keep PUI's separate from each other as among these some residents/patients will be COVID-19 positive and others will be negative.
- As far as possible, keep staff in these areas separate i.e. ensure that staff who work in COVID-19 areas within your facility do not also work in non-COVID-19 areas.
- Catering:
 - Catering staff should use appropriate PPE (Refer to *Provincial Guidelines for PPE Use*.)
 - Used crockery, cutlery and trays from PUIs/COVID-19 residents/patients should be treated as infectious and catering staff should wear gloves when handling these.
- Laundry:
 - Treat linen from PUIs/COVID-19 residents/patients as contaminated linen.
 - Routine procedures for the packaging and sealing, collection and laundering of contaminated linen apply.
- Waste Management:
 - Routine procedures for the collection and disposal of red bags with infectious waste applies.
 - For waste from PUIs/COVID-19 resident/patient rooms:
 - Waste should be discarded into designated healthcare risk waste boxes fitted with 2 red liners (double bagged)
 - The inner bag is to be sealed with a cable tie when three quarters full.

- The outer liner must be cable tied and the box closed and sealed with tape.
- The health care risk waste (HCRW) box must be clearly marked "COVID-19" and is to be taken to the facility's HCRW central storage area.

C. 14. SCHOOLS AND CRÈCHES

14.1 Practical Steps for Preparation of the School, Educators and Learners

- Risk Assessments for learners and school staff
 - Enlist the support of parents and caregivers to identify learners and school staff who are at increased risk of severe disease (e.g. immunocompromised, chronic illness) and work with them to make arrangements for remote learning where possible.
- Training teachers and support staff

Train teachers and support staff on the following (at a minimum):

 - How COVID-19 is spread
 - What the symptoms of COVID-19 are
 - What measures they must put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19
 - How to put on, take off, store and clean a cloth face mask
 - What to do if they have any symptoms consistent of COVID-19
 - What to do if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19
 - What to do if they have come into close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
 - How to wash and sanitise their hands correctly
 - How to communicate with learners about COVID-19 in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner
- Educating learners
 - Educate learners on the items listed above.
 - Try to incorporate coronavirus/infection prevention/healthy habits into the learning material to reiterate the messaging.
 - Use videos, games and songs to best communicate the message to learners.
- Communication with parents/caregivers
 - Strengthen communication channels with parents/caregivers.
 - Ensure that the school has the updated contact information (contact numbers and home addresses) for each parent/caregiver. This will be very important if cases are identified at the school and quarantining learners is necessary.
 - Ensure that the school has updated information on who is authorised to collect learners from school.
 - Ensure that parents/caregivers are aware of the school's policies and protocols relating to COVID-19.
 - Engage with parents/caregivers who have concerns about the safety of their child.

14.2 Practical Measures to Prevent Coronavirus Infection in Schools and Crèches

- Staying home when unwell
 - Anyone (educators, support staff, learners) must stay home if unwell and contact the **provincial COVID-19 hotline on 021 928 4102** for guidance on testing if symptoms are suggestive of COVID-19.
 - The school should strictly enforce rules about learners staying home when they are unwell and communicate this to parents/caregivers.
- Screening teachers and support staff

- All teachers and support staff must be screened for symptoms of coronavirus infection daily upon arrival at the school. Where available, a non-contact thermometer (thermal scanner) can be used for temperature checks. A temperature above 38 degrees is suggestive of possible coronavirus infection.
- Any employee with **any** of the symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 should not be allowed to commence work. They should be provided with a surgical mask or a cloth mask, should wash their hands, and should be transported to a coronavirus testing centre.
- Screening learners
 - Learners should be screened for symptoms of coronavirus infection daily upon arrival at the school.
 - Each school must decide how best to screen learners within the resources available to them. Schools may make use of an electronic screening tool or a paper-based tool. Screening should be done at the entrance to the school and can be done by a designated educator/staff member.
 - For crèches/younger learners who cannot communicate their symptoms or lack thereof, consider placing a symptom screening sheet in a communication book that is used between the school and parents/caregivers. Ask parents to sign the sheet daily to record whether their child has the listed symptoms or not. If a thermometer is available in the home, parents can also check and record their child's temperature daily. As with all objects, handling the book must be minimised and hands must be sanitised after handling.
 - Educators, parents/caregivers and learners must be aware of the procedures that will follow in the event of a learner screening positive i.e. having one of the symptoms suggestive of coronavirus infection.
 - **If a learner has any of the symptoms suggestive of coronavirus infection:**
 - The learner will not be allowed to enter the school. The learner must be isolated in a designated section of the school/area within a classroom (e.g. sick bay) and provided with a face mask if they do not already have one. The parent/caregiver must be contacted and asked to collect the learner immediately. Only allow a single educator/staff member to have contact with the learner while waiting for the parent/caregiver.
 - The learner may return to school once they have been assessed by a healthcare professional either in the private sector or at public sector coronavirus testing centres, if it is determined that they are unlikely to be infected with coronavirus. (Proof of assessment may be required.)
 - If they are likely to have coronavirus infection and have been tested, then they will need to be isolated at home or at an isolation facility. Should this occur then a mechanism for ongoing learning for the learner should be implemented by the school.
 - **If a learner becomes unwell during the course of the school day**
 - Immediately isolate the learner from others in a designated area (e.g. sick bay) and follow the advice provided above in the case of a learner with a positive symptom screen.
 - In the case of a learner that has a positive symptom screen or becomes ill during the course of the day, there is no requirement for people who came in close contact with the learner to quarantine while the learner is awaiting the test results.
 - Quarantine will only become necessary for close contacts if COVID-19 is confirmed by a positive test.
- Pick-up and drop-off:
 - Consider staggering pick-up and drop-off times to limit the number of people (parents and learners) at the school at these times.

- Instead of allowing parents/caregivers to come into the school building, have each class educator meet learners at the school entrance at the start of the day and escort them to the exit at pick-up times. Position a staff member at the entrance to coordinate this process and ensure that educators are fully aware of who is authorised to collect learners.
- Where possible grandparents and elderly caregivers should not pick-up or drop-off learners at school because they would be at increased risk for contracting severe disease.
- School transport services
 - School transport vehicles must follow the guidance for public transport services i.e. the number of passengers should not exceed 50% of the vehicle occupancy, passengers must sit as far from each other as possible, all windows must be opened and the vehicle must be cleaned regularly. All passengers must wear cloth face masks for the duration of the trip.
 - As far as possible, the driver should remain in the vehicle during drop-off and pick-up.
 - Transporting learners at 50% capacity of the vehicle would mean an increase in trips and hence either more vehicles would need to be deployed or pick-up times are stretched out with similar class time then also commencing later (synchronised platooning of transport and classes).
- School schedule
 - Educators should move from class to class for lessons rather than requiring learners to move about the school to different classrooms.
- In the classroom
 - Place a hand sanitiser station at the door of each classroom and ensure that any person entering or leaving the classroom sanitises their hands.
 - Desks should be arranged in rows with the desks facing forwards to minimise learners being in face to face contact with each other.
 - There should only be one learner at each desk as far as possible.
 - Learners should sit at the same desk each day.
 - Space desks as far as possible from each other as the room will allow.
 - Open all windows and keep the doors open as far as possible to allow for maximum ventilation.
 - Rearrange lesson plans and activities to minimise sharing of books/materials and passing items back and forth.
 - Learners should not share items such as pens, rulers, calculators etc.
- School bathroom facilities
 - Place a hand wash/sanitiser station at the entrance to the bathrooms.
 - Limit the number of people in the bathroom at any time and monitor that the number allowed is not being exceeded.
 - Ensure that all bathroom facilities are in working order and expedite repairs.
 - Ensure that bathrooms have water and soap available at all times.
 - Hands must be washed with soap and water after using the bathroom.
 - Do not use shared towels in the bathroom, use paper towels that can be disposed of in a sealed bin after use.
- Break times
 - Stagger break times so that fewer learners are on break at a time and to limit the mixing of learners from different classes.
 - Learners should sanitise their hands before leaving the classroom and again upon returning to the classroom.
 - Learners should not sit close to each other in groups. If there are tables at which learners sit during the break times, these tables must be cleaned regularly and between uses.

- Don't allow learners to play games that require physical contact during the break times.
- School feeding schemes
 - Food preparation must adhere to strict hygiene standards.
 - Staff involved in food preparation must also be screened daily.
 - These staff members must make use of appropriate safety wear (i.e. gloves, hairnet, apron) when preparing food and adhere to strict handwashing practices.
 - Consider preparing meals that can be eaten from disposable containers.
 - All eating utensils and food containers must be washed thoroughly before and after each use. Consider storing each learner's food container and utensil in a separate labelled bag if possible so that each learner uses the same items daily.
 - Learners must wash their hands with soap and water at the entrance to the dining area.
 - Rather than handing the food to the learner, consider minimising the touching of hands by placing the food on a table from which the learner can collect the food.
 - The dining area must be cleaned before and after each use. This includes all tables, chairs and other surfaces.
 - As far as possible, learners must be seated away from each other (e.g. only occupy alternate seats).
 - Learners must wash their hands again with soap and water when exiting the dining area.
- School tuck shops and vendors outside school property
 - School tuck shops and vendors outside the school property should not be opened
 - Learners should not be allowed to congregate in groups while awaiting collection by parents or transport services.
- Extra-curricular activities including sports
 - Extra-curricular activities and sports as well as any group gathering should be cancelled.
- Cleaning Routines
 - Follow the guidance related to cleaning routines, materials and the use of PPE for cleaning presented above.
 - Ensure that you store cleaning materials e.g. bleach solution outside of the reach of children. Store in clearly labelled bottles and do not re-use beverage bottles/containers for storage.
- Staff rooms
 - Educator's break times should be staggered (as with those of the learners) and the number of people in the staff room at any time should be limited.
 - Anyone entering the room should first sanitise their hands.
 - Arrange seating in the staff room to allow for physical distancing as far as possible.
 - Staff should, as far as possible, carry a packed lunch in labelled bags/containers and take these containers home daily to be cleaned.
 - Kitchen appliances which are handled by multiple people e.g. microwaves and kettles should be avoided as far as possible. Where they are used, these appliances must be sanitised after each use.
 - All tables, chairs, counters and other surfaces that come into contact with people should be cleaned regularly.
 - Staff meetings should be kept to a minimum and only key staff members should be present at the meetings.
 - Staff should explore other ways of communicating with each other e.g. mobile chats, emails and tele or video conferencing.
- Face masks:
 - Teachers, support staff and students must wear cloth face masks.
 - See advice above regarding how to put on, take off, store and clean a cloth face mask.

- Educators who have difficulty projecting their voice through the mask may remove the mask when speaking but should wear a face shield/visor and must keep a physical distance from the students.
- Schools with hostels:
 - Ensure that learners and staff practice physical distancing at all times.
 - Limit the use of communal areas as far as possible and restrict the number of people allowed in these areas. Place a hand sanitiser station at the entrance of each of these areas.
 - For meal times and dining areas, follow the advice provided above under “School Feeding Schemes.”
 - Limit the number of people using the bath/shower facilities at any time by using bathroom rosters and cleaning the bathrooms frequently between uses.
 - Do not allow learners to visit each other's rooms
 - Designate an isolation room in the case of an ill learner that cannot be immediately collected by parents/caregiver.
- Specific Advice for Crèches
 - Routinely clean and sanitise all surfaces and objects including toys and other learning materials/objects. If the material cannot be sanitised and will need to be used by multiple children, do not use the object.
 - Do not share objects/toys/pens etc. between children unless they are sanitised between each use.
 - Children should not be allowed to bring any toys from home.
 - Keep class groups consistent and limit the mixing of children between classes.
 - Stagger break times to limit the mixing of children from different classes.
 - Wash/sanitise hands with supervision from teachers:
 - On arrival at school
 - Before and after eating
 - Before and after using the bathroom
 - Before leaving the classroom for break
 - On entering the classroom after break
 - When leaving the school
 - Nap times
 - Space out sleeping mats at the furthest distance possible from each other.
 - Place children head to toe so that their faces are not in close contact.
 - Consider staggering nap times if possible.
 - Keep each child's bedding separate from others and store them in individually labelled bags/bins. Bedding must be washed weekly.
 - Changing diapers
 - Only change diapers in a designated area on a surface that can be wiped clean. A diaper bin should be placed in this designated area.
 - Wash your hands before changing the diaper.
 - Change the diaper and clean the child.
 - Throw the soiled diaper and wipes into the bin.
 - Put on a new diaper.
 - Clean the surface area.
 - Wash the child's hands.
 - Wash your own hands.
 - Bathing, feeding and holding children
 - Childcare providers should wear long-sleeved clothing and may wear an apron over their clothes if possible. Long hair should be tied up and kept away from the face.

- In addition to washing their hands, childcare providers should wash their face, neck and any other area that may have come into contact with a child's secretions (e.g. snot, tears, saliva)
- If the child's clothes are soiled with secretions, the childcare provider should change the child's clothes.
- If the childcare provider's clothing/apron is soiled with secretions, the childcare provider should change his/her clothes and/or apron.
- Parents/caregivers should provide multiple changes of clothes per day for children in crèches and childcare providers should also have multiple changes of clothing available per day.