

SOP

SANITISING OF THE WORKPLACE PREMISES AFTER AN EMPLOYEE TESTED COVID – 19 POSITIVE

17 June 2020

INTRODUCTION:

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

When an employee indicates that he or she suspects that they have symptoms or suspects that they were in close contact with someone that tested positive, the following steps deems necessary:

- If the employee has symptoms, send for testing (either to a private or public facility) and send for QUARANTINE for 14 days or till test result returning is negative. The person can return to work and is not infectious any more
- If the employee has been in close contact with someone that tested positive, send for QUARANTINE for 14 days. Test only needed when symptoms develop. If symptoms develop, send for testing and begin 14 days QUARANTINE from date of onset of symptoms or till test result returning is negative
- When the test result is positive, the person must be immediately put in self ISOLATION or in an ISOLATION FACILITY, depending on the circumstances of the person, for 14 days
- All the close contacts of that person must be identified: 'Close contact' is defined as being within 1 m of the case for more than 15 minutes.
- If the close contacts, after 14 days, are asymptomatic, they can return to work
- If test result is negative, the person could de-quarantine and return to work
- People returning from a full period of isolation do not need to be retested to 'prove' they are negative. They will no longer be infectious after the isolation period.

All workplace cases should be reported to the email address WorkplaceCovidReporting@westerncape.gov.za . Sending an email to this address will generate an auto response, with further links, including a link to the

following site where the details of individuals who are infected should be reported:

<https://coronavirus.westerncape.gov.za/reporting-covid-19-workplace>

PREVENTABLE PRECAUTIONS

All workplaces must have preventable precaution activities in place to prevent on-going infections. This is the most important effort to comply with, because there is little value in extra sanitizing later.

- Daily screening of employees must be in place. Where shifts are worked, every new shift must be screened
- Screening of customers and provision of hand sanitizer to customers
- Ensure social distancing
- If possible put environmental controls in place such as screens
- Ensure all persons entering the premises, must at all-time wear a mask (customers and employees)
- Continue with appropriate PPE if work require it
- A daily cleaning/sanitizing program in place.
 - Western Cape Government Department of Health: Circular H 77 of 2020 (DOH) PREVENTING AND MANAGING CORONAVIRUS INFECTION IN THE WORKPLACE
 - 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 1 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. iodine's (1%)
 - All 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.

CLEANING/SANITIZING OF A WORKPLACE PREMISES IN A CASE OF A POSITIVE TESTED CASE:

When a workplace experiences a positive case, a special sanitizing effort must be activated immediately amongst others

If under different circumstances, an employee tested positive without informing the employer and **after 3 or more days** it become known that an employee was tested positive, a special sanitizing effort has very few values, however it can strengthen the trust in the employer for caring for employees.

- It is not necessary to shut down a workplace every time someone in that workplace is found to be infected.
- What is needed, is for the workplace to be properly cleaned.
 - The extent of cleaning will depend on the number of people that could have been infected and the extent to which the case/s moved around the workplace.
 - If the case 'passed through' the workplace without touching anything and without spending much time in face-to-face communication with other employees, then simple cleaning measures are appropriate.

- However, if they spent a lot of time in the workplace, touched and handled many objects and surfaces and had close contact with many people, then more comprehensive cleaning of the environment would be warranted, and it will take more time to interview contacts and determine if they had close contact.
- If the extent of cleaning, or the number of people needing to be interviewed, is substantial, it may be necessary to close the premises to allow the cleaning and contact follow up to be completed. But otherwise there is no need to close the premises.
- Remember, all cleaning should be focused on disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (such as door handles, key pads, keyboards, etc).
- Consider the following key areas:
 - Employee Entrances
 - Change rooms, Locker rooms
 - Customer Entrances
 - Work stations and aisles
 - Shelving and customer service areas
 - Pay points
 - Employee canteen/break room
 - Employee toilet and customer toilet
 - Goods receiving areas
 - Waste storage areas
- There is no place for the use of fumigation, demisting or fogging in most workplaces. The Department of Health does not endorse or require cleaning that involves fumigation, fogging or demisting, nor does the Department of Health require a 'certificate of cleaning'. For further details on cleaning please refer circular H70 of 2020 [Preventing and managing CORONAVIRUS infection in the workplace]

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 1 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.

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 several factors

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 yet unaffected workers timeously.
- Complete decontamination/ thorough cleaning of area(s)
- Preventing infection of employees with coronavirus
- Training employees on how to prevent coronavirus infection.