



Prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 outbreaks in the workplace

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COVID-19 clusters at workplaces

Occupations most at risk

- Healthcare professionals
- Drivers and transport workers
- Service and sales workers, cleaning and domestic workers
- Production workers
- Education occupations
- Community and social services
- Construction and extraction workers
- Public safety workers

Risk factors

- Close contact with others – business meetings, interaction with colleagues or clients, close proximity to others for long duration
- Lack of hygiene
- Poor ventilation
- Crowded working and transportation conditions
- Crowded dormitories

Common features of workplace clusters



- Low or middle-skilled occupations with **frequent contact** with clients, work on customer premises or public places
- Most clusters are traced to **asymptomatic and very mild symptomatic** index case
- **Prolonged contact** with index case in an enclosed environment – meeting room, processing facility
- **Poor ventilation**, individual air conditioners and fans
- **Inadequate workplace policies** for stay home if unwell – no social protection for self isolation and quarantine
- In cases of community transmission **difficult to distinguish** between community and workplace transmission
- Some clusters linked to **social events** among co-workers outside the workplace

Prevention

- **Physical distancing** at least 1 meter from anyone all the time, ensure compliance through engineering and administrative controls
 - If physical distancing not possible consider suspending the activity, or wear face coverings (cloth mask 6 layers)
- Provide facilities for **hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene**
- Environmental clean up and **disinfection** of commonly touched surfaces
- Regular **risk assessment** and update for safety protocols
 - Interventions to reduce social mixing – staggering work and rest hours, split teams
- **Risk communication** and engagement of workers
 - Stimulate safe behaviour and adherence to public health measures at work, at home, in the community
 - Create blame-free environment for expressing safety concerns
- Policies to **stay home if unwell**
 - Sick leave policy
 - Remove incentives to continue work if sick
- Facilitate **isolation** of people suspected of having COVID-19 and contact tracing
 - Keep records of people in meetings and tasks in close proximity
 - Isolate and report to public health authorities any suspected case

'Asks' to the private sector in the response to COVID-19



Protect your stakeholders

- ✓ **Protect the health of your staff, community, service providers and clients** by informing them about COVID-19 and WHO recommended protection measures at workplaces and towards external stakeholders
- ✓ **Protect jobs and livelihoods** to lower the impact of the crisis on people and the community
- ✓ **Support WHO** in managing the global infodemic and fighting mis-information



Essential supplies



Protect your business

- ✓ **Put business continuity plans into action**, in coordination with local/national authorities
- ✓ **Prioritize supply chain continuity** of essential health and non-health products (food, soap, etc.)
- ✓ **Maintain essential support infrastructures and services** (water, transports, electricity, hygiene and waste management, etc.)
- ✓ **Protect jobs** to retain skills and experience
- ✓ **Act responsibly towards your suppliers and service providers**



Financial