

**Government of Punjab**  
**Department of Health & Family Welfare**  
(NHM, Punjab)

No. MD/NHM/2020/3223(R)- 3231(R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 1st May, 2020

To

1. Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Local Government, Punjab.
2. Financial Commissioner, Department of Rural Development & Panchayat, Punjab.
3. Principal Secretary, Department of Water Supply and Sanitation, Punjab.
4. All Divisional Commissioners, Punjab
5. Chief Executive Officer, Punjab Water Supply and Sewerage Board.
6. Director, Department of Local Government, Punjab.
7. Director, Department of Rural Development, Punjab.
8. All Deputy Commissioners, Punjab
9. All Municipal Commissioners, Punjab.

**Subject: Advisory on ensuring the health and safety of sanitation workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID -19) is a systemic disease caused by a novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), transmitted in most instances through respiratory droplets, direct contact with cases and also through contaminated surfaces/objects. Though the virus survives on environmental surfaces for a varied period of time, it gets easily inactivated by chemical disinfectants. Thus, correct and timely information and knowledge about the coronavirus is the key to control the pandemic.

Sanitation workers are our frontline workers in maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene of our cities/towns and face various occupational hazards. It is, therefore, essential to prepare and practice a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for Sanitation Workers with an objective to ensure their health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SoP may, inter alia, include the following to prevent the spread of COVID-19 amongst them:

**I. General Advisory for Employer:**

1. Mandatory orientation of Sanitation Workers on COVID-19, Social Distancing norms and key precautionary measures to be taken including frequent hand-washing, wearing a mask at all time, avoids touching their face/mouth and wearing Personal Protective Equipments/Safety Gears shall be undertaken.

2. List of “Do’s and Don’ts” to be practiced while performing their duties in the form of hand/pocket pamphlets shall be distributed amongst them and necessary support required to follow to them shall be extended.
3. Providing appropriate Personal Protective Equipments/Safety Gears, which may include masks, gloves, gum boots, caps and appropriate clothing (like long sleeved shirt, long trousers and apron) etc. along with soaps or hand sanitizers for their safety.
4. The authorities should ensure that soaps or hand sanitizers are available in sufficient quantity at the cloth changing/work place. The authorities may also consider installation of foot-operated hand-washing stations at cloth changing areas for the purpose of hand-washing of workers.
5. Designate a Nodal Officer to lead and monitor the implementation of SoP at the department/ULB level.
6. Avoid using the biometric attendance system.

## II. Specific Advisory for the Sanitation Workers:

1. Obtain ID card or permission letter from the ULB and always carry them for movement during the lockdown/curfew period.
2. A worker suffering from high fever/cough/sneezing/difficulty in breathing should voluntarily report the same to employer as well as seek immediate medical advice for timely detection and treatment.
3. The worker should wear cloth masks at all times and should follow the reporting time as well as the time to leave as prescribed by the employer.



4. The workers should clean the mask with soap and water after every use.
5. The worker should not indulge in handshake/hug with fellow worker and should discharge his/her work from the place allocated by the employer.
6. Work clothes must be worn at designated changing areas before starting the day's work. The workers should always use cloth mask, gloves, footwear and appropriate clothing (like long sleeved shirt, long trousers and apron) while at work.
7. The workers should wash hands with soap and water before and after performing sanitation activities and any time he/she removes his/her gloves.
8. Wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds by applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space as well as between the finger and the thumb and the wrist wherever and whenever the opportunity to wash the hands is available. However, a two-hourly hand wash is recommended.
9. Workers should maintain at least 1 meter of distance from each other and general public. If workers are in groups, maintain smaller groups and be in the same groups day after day so that if someone falls ill with COVID-19 it will be easier to identify and quarantine others who were exposed.
10. The workers should never touch waste/garbage with bare hands. Wash hands and any surface accidentally coming in contact with waste material.
11. Frequently touched surfaces in the work place (door handles, water taps etc.) should be cleaned frequently (once every 2- 4 hours) with disinfectant.
12. The workers should avoid touching their face, eyes etc. at all times.
13. The worker should avoid roaming without purpose as also touching the surfaces, equipment etc.
14. The employee should not smoke or chew tobacco-based products such as gutka, pan masala etc. at the work place.
15. Do not miss your meals and do light exercise at your home.
16. The worker should mandatorily hand wash/sanitize in the manner prescribed before touching the refreshments.
17. The staff/workers should not share their lunches/snacks and utensils with each other in order to prevent cross-infection.

18. In case of a cough/sneeze, the worker should use the handkerchief to cover the space which shall then be kept in his/her own pocket/purse in a manner that the surface of the handkerchief exposed to the cough/sneeze shall not touch the other parts of the belongings directly.
19. In case a worker is not carrying the handkerchief he/she should cough/sneeze into the *flexed/bent elbow*.
20. In either case, the worker should immediately hand wash with soap in the manner prescribed his hands/other exposed surfaces to cough/sneeze.
21. The employee should not spit in open.
22. The workers should avoid all type of gatherings like social, religious, political etc.
23. The workers should not indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts. The employer may encourage the employee to download “COVA APP” developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.
24. After work, the workers should wash and clean the work tools and PPE with water and disinfecting cleaner. Keep them for drying under the sun.
25. The workers should remove the work cloth, take a bath using soap and put on their personal clothes at the changing area, before they exit the workplace.
26. In case where there is no bathing facility available at the work place, the workers should ensure that they take a bath using soap before entering home.
27. Use speaker phones when using mobile phone during the work-time to avoid touching face.
28. The workers should always avoid putting his/her gloves in the pockets (better to store them in a designated plastic bag).
29. The co-workers are advised to take leave if they are found to be ill

- 30. Personal Protective Equipments (PPE)/Safety Gears for Sanitation Workers and Choice of Disinfectant:** Sanitation Workers may be provided appropriate Personal Protective Equipments/Safety Gears to safeguard the health of workers by minimizing the exposure to a biological agent. Following minimum set of safety Gears/PPE to be used by them while carrying out their sanitation related activities.
- a. Cloth mask.
  - b. Gloves.
  - c. Head-band and wrist-band.
  - d. Footwear covering whole foot/ gumboots.
  - e. Apron/Jacket (long sleeved)
  - f. **Choice of disinfectant:**
    - i. Sodium hypochlorite at 1% for disinfection of surfaces and reusable gloves.
    - ii. Mildly alkaline all-purpose detergent for cleaning surfaces.
  - g. **Hand wash- preferred option**
    - i. Soap and water
    - ii. Alcohol-based hand rub with minimum 60% alcohol (if hands are not visibly dirty)
- III.** In case a co-staff/colleague is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact at work, there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104/State Control Room No. 01722920074/08872090029, detailing the exact nature of exposure so as to assist the medical facility to undertake further necessary actions.
- IV.** The employer, in case a worker is diagnosed as corona positive and such a staff/worker has attended the office/work, shall immediately inform the Helpline No. 104/State Control Room No. 01722920074/+91-8872090029 along with all the facts about the staff/worker and the contacts he/she might have during the attendance in the office/work-site. A complete and proper record of all employees attending the office on any particular day should be maintained.

All are encouraged to take proper diet, assimilate correct information and keep themselves aware and updated with the information at all times, and indulge in useful and productive activities during the free time.



**Secretary Health &  
Mission Director, NHM, Punjab**

No. MD/NHM/2020/3232(R)-3234(R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 1st April, 2020

1. A copy is forwarded to OSD to Chief Secretary, Punjab for the kind information of Worthy Chief Secretary please.
2. A copy is forwarded to PS to ACS (Home), Punjab for the kind information of Additional Chief Secretary (Home)
3. A copy is forwarded to PS to PSHFW, Punjab for the kind information of Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare.



**Secretary Health &  
Mission Director, NHM, Punjab**

No. MD/NHM/2020/3235(R)- 3242(R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 1st April, 2020

Copy forwarded to :

1. Commissioner, FDA, Punjab for information please.
2. MD, PHSC for information please.
3. Commissioner AYUSH cum PD-PSACS for information please.
4. Director Health Services, Punjab for information please.
5. Director Family Welfare, Punjab for information please.
6. Director (ESI), Punjab for information please.
7. Executive Director, SHSRC, Punjab for information please.
8. All Civil Surgeons, Punjab for information & necessary action.



**State Programme Officer (IEC)  
NHM, Punjab**