

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

No.2976(R)-2983(R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 20th April, 2020

To

1. All the Special Chief Secretary/ Additional Chief Secretary/ Financial Commissioners / Principal Secretaries/ Administrative Secretaries to the Govt. of Punjab.
2. All the Head of the Department of the Govt. of Punjab.
3. All the Commissioners of the Divisions.
4. All the Commissioners of Police.
5. All the Deputy Commissioners/ District and Session Judges of the State
6. Registrar General, Punjab and Haryana High Court
7. All Senior Superintendents of Police
8. The Secretary, Punjab Vidhan Sabha.

Subject: Advisory on maintaining the hygiene and sanitization of office spaces and the staff working therein during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Madam/Sir

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.

General Recommendations/guidelines:

1. The employer shall preferably encourage work from home and only such staff that, for essential reasons, is required to attend the office in person shall only be called to attend the office. The comprehensive plan with regard to such staff who has been specifically called be drawn up which shall include the sitting arrangement by keeping a minimum distance of 1 metre amongst the employees, flexible timings of reporting for duty, flexible timing of leaving the office, flexible timings of lunch and tea breaks in between with an objective to avoid clustering and cluttering of the staff.

2. The staff shall be advised not to indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other.
3. The staff shall further be advised not to roam unnecessarily in the office and to work from their allotted space only. Use of intercoms/electronic media for interpersonal communication of the staff be encouraged.
4. Staff should be advised to wear cloth masks at all times immediately from leaving the house till the entry back into the house.
5. The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
6. The cloth mask should be washed with soap and water daily after use.
7. Installation of thermal scanners at the entry gate of the office space is advisable to screen the staff suffering from high fever. The *normal human body temperature is 97.7 to 99.5-degree Fahrenheit or 36.5 to 37.5-degree centigrades.*
8. The employer should encourage the staff to stay at home in case of any fever or other symptoms related to the COVID-19 and seek medical advice.
9. Staff detected with high fever in the office premises does not mandatorily mean that he/she is suffering from COVID-19. It is advised to get the staff suffering from high fever medically examined by the employer only by temporarily isolating him/her from the rest of the office space before drawing any conclusion/inferences and before sending him/her back to home.
10. Alcohol-based sanitizer (minimum 70% ethyl alcohol v/v) be mounted at the entrance wall of the office for the staff to sanitize their hands before entering the premises further. The sanitizers are to be refilled/replaced frequently. Use a minimum of 3ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
11. Sanitize the hands even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
12. 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.
13. The hands should be either sanitized or washed with soap and water whichever is feasible and available.

14. In case of multi-storied offices where the elevators (commonly called lifts) are to be used, sanitizers shall be mounted near the entry door of the elevator at each and every floor. The staff may be advised to apply the sanitizer on the hands immediately after pressing the elevator's button before touching any other surface/body part. In case of self-driven lifts, the sanitizer should also be made available inside the lifts for the usage of the staff immediately after pressing the button.
15. In case the sanitizers may not be available in sufficient quantity, the sanitizers may be mounted inside the lifts ALONE for usage by the staff immediately after pressing the buttons in the manner as prescribed in point 10.

16. Disinfection of the office spaces

- a. **Indoor Areas:** Indoor areas including office spaces and conference rooms should be cleaned every evening after office hours or early in the morning before the rooms are occupied. If the contact surface is visibly dirty, it should be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. Prior to cleaning, the cleaner should wear disposable rubber boots, gloves (heavy duty), and a cloth mask.
 - Start cleaning from cleaner areas and proceed towards dirtier areas.
 - All indoor areas such as entrance lobbies, corridors and staircases, escalators, elevators, security guard booths, office rooms, meeting rooms, cafeteria should be mopped with a disinfectant with 1% sodium hypochlorite or equivalent disinfectants commercially available in the market.
 - High contact surfaces such as elevator buttons, handrails / handles and call buttons, escalator handrails, public counters, intercom systems, equipment like telephone, printers/scanners, and other office machines should be cleaned twice daily by mopping with a linen/absorbable cloth soaked in 1% sodium hypochlorite. Frequently touched areas like table tops, chair handles, pens, diary files, keyboards, mouse, mouse pad, tea/coffee dispensing machines etc. should specially be cleaned.
 - For metallic surfaces like door handles, security locks, keys etc. 70% alcohol can be used to wipe down surfaces where the use of bleach is not suitable.
 - Hand sanitizing stations should be installed in office premises and near high contact surfaces.