

**GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE**  
**Parivar Kalyan Bhawan, Sector 34-A, Chandigarh**

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No. COVID-19/NHM/Pb/20/1626-34

Date 21 July 2020 Chandigarh

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.
9. All the Civil Surgeons of Punjab.

**Subject:** Updated advisory on maintaining the hygiene and sanitization of Office spaces/Workplaces and the staff working therein during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Corona virus Disease 2019 (COVID -19) is a systemic disease caused by a novel Corona virus (SARS-CoV-2), transmitted in most instances through respiratory droplets, direct contact with cases and also through contaminated surfaces/objects. Timely and correct and timely information and knowledge about the corona virus is the key to control the pandemic.

**Heads of the Departments/Offices are expected to act as a role model and lead by example for the employees/staff working under their control in following all the guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in letter & spirit.** Advisory regarding Office Spaces was issued vide letter number No. MD/NHM/2020/2976 (R)- 2983(R) Dated, Chandigarh the 20th April, 2020, which is now updated as this advisory. With the phased reopening (Unlock-2), following recommendations are given with regard to office / workplaces and the staff working therein.

**General Recommendations/guidelines:**

1. A comprehensive plan with regard to sitting arrangement of staff by keeping a minimum distance of 1 meter 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 may be followed and it be ensured that principle of social distancing are not compromised.

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 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 mask, if cloth mask should be washed with soap and water daily after use. If using surgical mask it should be discarded as per procedure. In case an N-95 masks is being worn, it must be used as per maker guidelines/instructions.
7. Face shields, in addition to the face mask, may be used where the workspace is crowded and maintaining a physical distance of 1 meter at all times may not be feasible.
8. 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*. The temperature must be checked for every person while entering and leaving the premises and a daily record of the readings be maintained in a designated register with name and contact number of the person, wherever feasible. Anyone with higher temperature should not be allowed to enter the premises.
9. 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.
10. 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 be 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.
11. 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.

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.
13. 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.
14. Ventilation must be good inside the premises. For this purpose exhaust fans can be installed. Doors/ windows must be kept open in Air-conditioned rooms for proper ventilation of air. Please refer to the guidelines on Air-conditioning for its safe usage during COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **15. Disinfection of the Workplaces**

- 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.
- In a meeting/conference/office room, if someone is coughing, without following respiratory etiquettes or mask, the areas around his/her seat should be vacated and cleaned with 1% sodium hypochlorite.
- Carefully clean the equipment used in cleaning at the end of the cleaning process.
- Protective gear used during sanitation process should be discarded as per the requirements.

In addition, all employees should consider cleaning the work area in front of them with a disinfecting wipe prior to use and sit one seat further away from others and if possible 2 seats.

- Outdoor areas:** Outdoor Areas have less risk than indoor areas due to air currents and exposure to sunlight. These include bus stops, railway platforms, parks, roads, etc. Cleaning and disinfection efforts should be targeted to frequently touched/contaminated surfaces as already detailed above.
- Office/Public toilets:** Sanitary workers must use separate set of cleaning equipment for toilets (mops, nylon scrubber) and separate set for sink and commode. They should always wear disposable protective gloves while cleaning a toilet. All the areas of the toilet such as the sinks, commode, taps etc. should be thoroughly cleaned/scrubbed using soap and water and then wiped with 1% sodium hypochlorite solution or equivalent commercial disinfectants available in the market.

16. Pantry in the office, if any, should also be cleaned as the other inside office spaces. Special care needs to be taken while cleaning the slabs and the sinks, if any with soap/detergent and water.

- The utensils should be properly cleaned with dish wash bars /liquids and water.
- The utensils should not be shared amongst the staff.
- Consumption of raw fruits/vegetables during refreshment period should be discouraged and the same shall be washed with lukewarm water before

