Issue 01

Health and Safety Measures for Workplace Re-entry during COVID-19

May 2020

www.gov.ky/coronavirus

Health and Safety Measures for Workplace Re-entry during COVID-19

As COVID-19 testing increases and local transmission numbers come down in the Cayman Islands, employers will need to consider how to safely manage the process of returning employees to the workplace.

Whether indoors or outdoors, workplaces will be required to comply with government and health guidelines of social distancing and infection prevention practices to ensure the safety of their workers and the general public.

Prior to the phased reopening of workplaces, businesses and employers should put in place health and safety measures that employees, visitors and customers must follow.

Developed by the Ministry of Health in consultation with the Public Health Department, the following guidelines provide measures to prevent the spread of any potential community cases and facilitate a phased and safe re-entry of Cayman's workforce. These guidelines should be continuously reviewed in light of current government guidance.

Step 1 – Conduct a Risk Assessment

Research on COVID-19 continues to rapidly evolve; however, it is known that the virus can be transmitted through person-to-person spread usually after close contact with an infected person via respiratory droplets and surface transmission.

Employers will be required to first assess whether the functions of the proposed work pose a risk of transmission during work hours and, if it does, how to respond and minimize these risks. Risk should be assessed through three different measurements:

- contact intensity

- number of contacts, and;

- the degree to which the activities are considered to be modifiable (through mitigation measures such as enabling people to remain six feet apart) to reduce risk.

Contact intensity is a function of contact type (ranging from close to distant) and duration (ranging from brief to prolonged). Low contact intensity activities are interactions that are brief and fairly distant, like walking past someone in a shop. High contact intensity activities involve prolonged close contact, like sharing office space. Medium contact intensity activities fall between these two poles of contact. For instance, sharing a meal in seating separated by several feet. A business environment may have activities or spaces that range from low to medium to high contact, and that should be taken into account during the decision making process of the risk assessment. The risk to employees who may have different exposures should also be considered.

Number of contacts is the approximate number of people in the setting at the same time, on average. The higher number of contacts, the higher risk of transmission.

Modification of activities is a form of assessment of the degree to which activities can be modified to reduce risk.

NOTE: Consider what risks are posed by the features of your premises and your business operations using the above-mentioned measurement before considering re-opening of the workplace.

Social Distancing
6 Feet

Step 2 – Health Monitoring and a Safety Management System

Workplaces are encouraged to adopt a health monitoring and safe management system to ensure a safe working environment and minimise risks of COVID-19 transmission. The system should include the following:

A detailed monitoring plan to ensure compliance with Health and Safety Measures and that issues (e.g. remedy of non-compliance, risk mitigation) are resolved in a timely manner.

Designated officers (e.g. HR or health and safety officer) to assist in the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the system at the workplace. Duties would include:

- Coordinating implementation of Health and Safety measures: This includes identifying relevant risks, recommending and assisting in implementing measures to mitigate the risks, and communicating the measures to all personnel working in the workplace. Please use this document as a reference source.

- Conducting inspections and checks: designated officers must conduct inspections and checks to ensure compliance at all times. Any non-compliance found during the inspections should be reported and documented.

- Remedying non-compliance: immediate action should be taken to remedy any non-compliance found during the inspections and checks.

- Keeping records of inspections and checks: records of the inspections and checks conducted and corrective actions taken must be kept and made available upon request by the competent authority for contact tracing purposes.

Step 3 – Reduce Physical Interaction and Ensure Safe Distancing at Workplaces

Where employees can continue to perform their work by telecommuting from home, it is recommended they do so until the Cayman Islands move towards a Level 1 All Clear http://www.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/cighome/pressroom/archive/202005/friday-covid-19-update. In circumstances, where this is not possible or the employees may choose to work in the workplace, the following should be adopted:

For all work environments

Staggered physical attendance: dividing staff into groups and rotating attendance at work

Changed workplace behaviour: prohibiting physical contact e.g. handshaking

Adjusted work hours: encouraging shift works as much as possible and moving proximity of workspaces

Personal protective equipment: use of face coverings

Minimising non-essential visitors to your premises: meetings should be held through phone or teleconferencing technologies.

Indoor environment (e.g. office space)

Mandatory use of face coverings: homemade masks and face coverings should be used when speaking to others, but can be taken off when sitting down quietly and for eating.

Conduct all internal and external meetings between employees and with suppliers/contractors virtually where possible: physical meetings must be minimised as much as possible, (e.g. by using teleconferencing technologies).

2 Seats
e.g. Small Van

3 Seats
e.g. Flatbed

3 Seats
e.g. Car/Van
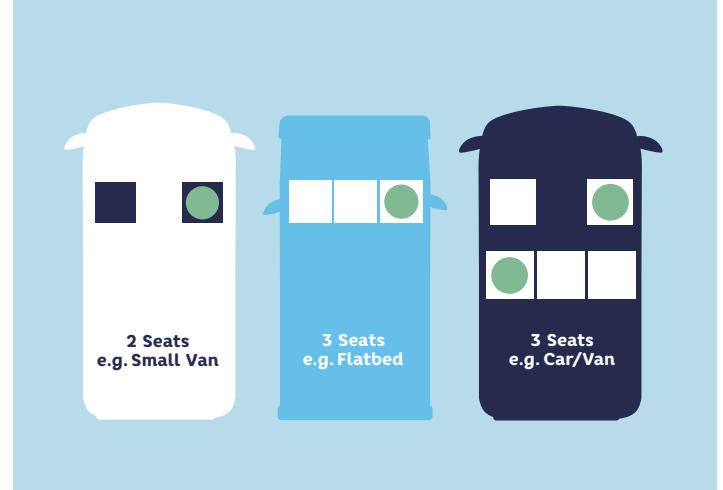
- Special attention should be paid to vulnerable employees (e.g. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions) to enable them to work from home, or temporarily redeploying these employees to another role within the company that ensures safe distancing.

- If they are necessary, implement rules so that social distancing can be maintained (seating six feet apart, and the wearing of facemasks)

No activities with close and prolonged contact: employers must cancel, defer or otherwise rearrange all events or activities that involve close and prolonged contact amongst workers.

This includes:

- Conferences

- Seminars

- Exhibitions

- Staff canteens or being in groups during meals or breaks

Use of certain facilities should be limited e.g. kitchens, fridges, beverage machines, crockery etc.

Outdoor environment (e.g. frontline operations, manufacturing production, and fieldwork at construction sites, landscape, junkyard and car services etc.)

Stagger working and break hours: Employers must implement staggered working and break hours to reduce possible congregation of employees at all common spaces, including entrances, exits, lobbies, canteens and pantries.

Implement shift or split team arrangements: For suitable

workplace settings, employers must split employees at workplace premises into teams, with each team restricted to one worksite, where applicable. No employee should work in more than one team or worksite.

- There must be no cross-deployment or interaction between employees in different shifts, teams or worksites, even outside of work. Employers will need to ensure clear separation of employees on different shifts or split teams, such as implementing human traffic management measures and stepping up cleaning of common areas during shift or split team changeovers.

- If cross-deployment cannot be avoided (e.g. due to the nature of the job), additional safeguards must be taken to minimise the risk of cross-infection (e.g. systems are in place to ensure no direct contact with the cross-deployed personnel).

Social Distancing in Vehicles and Operating mobile plants:

- When travelling in vehicles to/from work, including site vehicles and operating mobile plant, sit as far apart as the vehicle allows (empty seat apart).

- Employers should ensure reduced occupancy of shared vehicles for work.

- Single occupancy of vehicles is recommended or specific seating arrangements(see reference graphic above).

Reduce the number of times employees travel to warehouses and offices from sites to prevent movement and possible cross-contamination.

Minimise the need for physical touchpoints: Employers should reduce the occurrences of or need for common physical touchpoints in the workplace where possible (e.g. swipe

Face Masks and/or Gloves

scanners). Where physical contact is needed, additional safeguarding must be taken to minimise the risk of cross-infection such as:

- Frequent disinfection of touchpoints

- Keep doors open to minimise door handle contact

If the above cannot be avoided, such as when travelling in vehicles and operating mobile plants, employers must ensure vehicles are frequently cleaned, with special attention to the door handles, steering wheels, gear selectors, grab handles, air vents, dashboard controls. Everything you touch or interact with must be kept clean and wiped down with disinfectant cleaner after every use to stop the spread of the virus.

While constant cleaning may feel tedious, it is essential to keep you, your colleagues and your customers safe.

Step 4 – Require Personal Protective Equipment and Observe Good Personal Hygiene

Wearing of masks at the workplace: employers must ensure that all onsite personnel, including employees, visitors, suppliers and contractors, wear a mask and other necessary personal protective equipment (if applicable) at all times at the workplace, except during activities that require masks to be removed (eating or sitting quietly).

Ensure there are sufficient masks for all employees, including any need to replace masks due to workplace conditions (e.g. humidity). Where possible, employers should consider improving the working environment for employees to enable them to sustain wearing the masks.

Ensure good personal hygiene for all persons at the workplace (staff and customers) by frequent washing of hands and refraining from touching their face. More information can be found on https://www.exploregov.ky/coronavirus-resources.

Step 5 – Ensure Cleanliness of Workplace Premises

Employers must ensure enhanced sanitation protocols and hygiene supplies (e.g. disinfecting products and alcohol-based hand sanitizer) are offered in the workplace before re-entry.

The following spaces that will need to undergo regular cleaning of common spaces with high human contact, include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Counters where customers are served
- Rooms where visitors are hosted
- Elevators
- Pantries & canteen
- Toilets
- Bin/waste areas

Always disinfect supplies and frequently shared objects after use to reduce transmission.

- Do not share personal items such as phones, pens, notebooks, PPE with other people.
- If supplies are shared, remember to clean the object, avoid touching your face at all times, and frequently wash hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

For outdoor shared work (e.g. construction and landscaping etc.), enhanced sanitation measures must be followed for machinery and equipment that are shared between employees across different shifts, or alternate teams before changing hands.

Step 6 – Displaying Communications and Reminders in the Workplace

Employers must ensure that the measures above are in place, communicated and explained to employees before resuming work. Signs should be put up to remind employers and visitors to observe all measures in place and displayed in key places including:

- Hand washing points;
- Entrances and exits;
- Bathrooms; and
- Communal areas.

**COVID-19
Case Management**
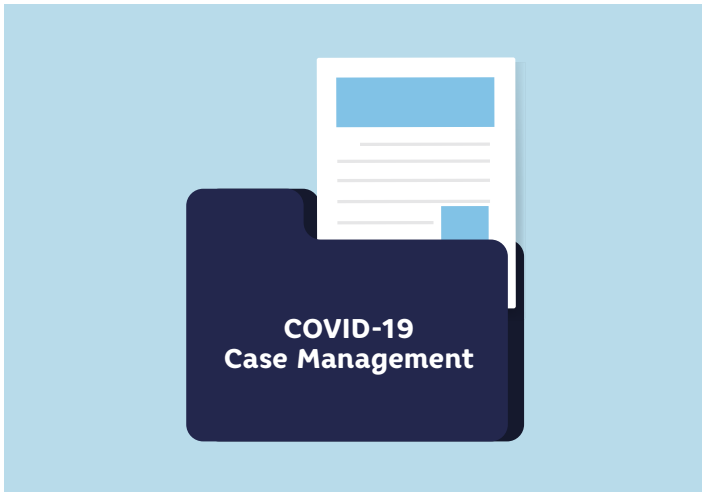
Step 7 – Perform Health Checks and Protocols to Manage Potential Cases

Regardless of business-specific considerations, supporting and enabling employees to remain at home if they are unwell or have been in close contact with someone who is sick is key to mitigate the risk of infection to others.

Conduct regular health checks: this can include informal questioning and declarations of the following:

- Travel history;

- That they have not received a quarantine or isolation order, stay-home notice, or been issued medical certificates for respiratory symptoms; and

- That they are not a close contact of confirmed cases.

NOTE: Employees who provide the above information are required to self-isolate for 14 days , or as per Public Health recommendations, and should not return to work.

Management of employees who are unwell needs to be included in the health monitoring and safe management system for the workplace. An evacuation plan must be prepared for unwell or suspected cases, as well as for other onsite personnel.

- Any employee who is feeling unwell or showing symptoms of illness should report to his employer, leave the workplace and consult the 'flu hotline on 1-800-534-8600 / 925-6327 (Flow) / 947-3077 (Digicel) or their regular GP immediately, even if symptoms may appear mild. Employers must track and record these cases as part of Safe Management Measures.

- For incapacitated or unconscious individuals, employers must clear the area of other personnel and administer aid immediately. Employers should call 911 for an emergency ambulance.

Management of confirmed cases: a follow-up plan must be put in place in the event of a confirmed case. Upon being notified of a confirmed case, employers must adopt the following precautionary measures:

- Immediately vacate and cordon-off the immediate section of the workplace premises where the confirmed case worked. There is no need to vacate the building or the whole floor if there had been no sustained and close contact with the confirmed case; and

- Carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfection of all relevant on-site areas and assets that were exposed to confirmed cases.

- For worksites with confirmed cases, businesses could be suspended if there are public health grounds.

Maintain a record to assist contact tracing. In case Public Health will need records for tracing potential contacts, it is advised to keep track of employees and visitors who may have close contacts of COVID-19 patients and reduce disease transmission.

Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the policies and procedures you have developed and adapt and revise them as necessary.

For further queries, please contact:

National Emergency Operations Centre Hotline:
1-800-534-6555
NEOC@gov.ky
https://www.exploregov.ky/coronavirus