

COVID-19: PREVENTION MEASURES AT CONSTRUCTION SITES

Prevention measures for managing COVID-19 risks on construction sites to avoid the spread of the Coronavirus

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PAHO  Pan American Health Organization  World Health Organization Americas

 **UNOPS**

In the face of the COVID-19 emergency, PAHO/WHO and UNOPS recommend implementing the following prevention measures at construction sites:



General Guidelines

- 1** The contractor will assign a focal point to implement and monitor prevention measures.
- 2** Restrict entry to all visitors during the epidemic, until further instruction.
- 3** If a worker or any other individual feels ill, they must stay home.
- 4** Hold briefings at the beginning of the workday to discuss COVID-19 regarding:
 - Raise awareness on how to prevent exposure and contagion by the virus (ways it presents, how to avoid its spread, symptoms and signs, etc.)
 - Highlight the importance of proper and frequent hand washing.
 - Promote respiratory hygiene that emphasizes on covering the face when sneezing and coughing, and properly wiping the nose; thus controlling the primary source of the contagion.
- 5** Take the temperature of all personnel and ensure that they wash their hands before entering the site or the project office.
- 6** Upon arrival at the construction site, the following preventive guidelines must be maintained:
 - Avoid handshakes, hugs and any other forms of close contact on the job.
 - Maintain a **minimum distance of 1 meter** at all times (entrance to the project, meetings, lunch, etc.)
 - Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth) without washing your hands.
 - Wash hands before eating and drinking and do not share food or drinks with colleagues.
 - Do not share or exchange your personal protection equipment (PPE).

7 Make sure of the availability of the following supplies in sufficient quantity:

- Liquid soap, disposable disinfecting towels, alcohol-based gel and/or liquid alcohol.
- Stations for hand washing at various points of the site (at the entrance, dining room, temporary offices, operating plant, etc.)
- Disposable towels and tissues.
- Closed containers or bags for the disposal of towels and tissues, identified and located at various points of the site.
- Masks¹, disposable gloves and protective glasses.
- Remote or tape thermometers.

8 The use of face masks is not mandatory at the site², except under the following circumstances:

- If an individual has chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, etc.)
- If an individual presents symptoms (cough, runny nose, etc.)
- If an individual is over 60 years of age.
- If the minimum distance between personnel cannot be met (less than 1 meter).

9 The use of disposable gloves will be mandatory depending on the nature of the tasks to be carried out, under the responsibility of the focal point designated by the contractor. For example: workers responsible for handling food and beverages, those involved in general cleaning tasks, vehicle drivers, security guards in access control, etc.

10 Follow the instructions of the local authorities.

¹ The use of masks is to avoid contact with droplets or secretions that the infected person expels when speaking, coughing or sneezing, and that are capable of transmitting the virus.

² These recommendations must be addressed in addition to any norm, regulation or directive issued by each country.



Prevention Measures

The Contractor, through its focal point for occupational safety, must carry out the following specific prevention measures:

1 Clean the following areas at least twice a day:

- Surfaces and objects such as tables, desks, telephones, keyboards, glasses, etc. with cleaners, disinfectants, alcohol and / or disposable towels.
- The dining room and other food intake areas or cafeteria (tables, chairs, etc.)
- Vehicles: contact surfaces prior to use (door, rudder, dash, handbrake, etc.)

2 Encourage frequent handwashing of all personnel in the project (workers, supervisors, visitors):

- All personnel should wash their hands when entering and leaving the site, and before and after mealtimes.
- Verify that hand washing stations have enough soap and water (twice a day at a minimum).
- Place posters about proper hand washing at different project sites (work fronts, temporary offices, and the project operations campus).

3 Promote good respiratory hygiene:

- Place posters that promote good respiratory hygiene at different project sites, mainly on the work fronts, temporary offices and the project's operations campus.
- Make sure that disposable tissues (kleenex or similar) are available for people with allergies (rhinitis) or allergic or smoking coughs, promoting the use of disposable tissues to cover your mouth, sneeze, or wipe your nose.
- Dispose of the tissues in separate and closed containers, properly labeled and placed at different points of the project, keeping them in tightly closed containers or bags until their final disposal.

4 Prepare a registry of workers suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, coronary problems, asthma, allergies, cancer, etc. The record must be submitted to the Project Manager. The record must include at least the following information:

- High-risk individuals (only yes or no criteria to maintain confidentiality)
- Exposure to risks (eg travel, people infected in the family)
- Symptoms that align with the incubation period of the virus or its development

5 Work organization:

- Analyze the work fronts and distribute the staff according to the minimum distance.
- **In cases where it is necessary to work less than a meter apart or in confined environments, masks should be used.**
- Establish working groups to minimize the movement of people in the project area to facilitate traceability and control, in case any possible contagion is identified.

6 Food intake areas (dining rooms):

- Having enough dining places in the project site.
- Define specific schedules for meal times, to avoid crowding.
- Make sure people sit within a moderate distance during meal times (you can mark the spaces to sit).

7 Dressing rooms on project site:

- Enable a defined space for men's and women's locker rooms at project sites.
- Workers will have to change their clothes when entering and leaving the project.
- Masks and gloves must be removed safely in order to bring them to their final disposal.



Screening process before entering the site

Upon arrival at the site, a person assigned by the Contractor's focal point will ask the following questions to the staff:

1. Have you had any fever, congestion, choking, or cough in the past 2 weeks?
2. Is there someone at your home who has these symptoms or is sick with COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?
3. Are there people with symptoms or diagnosis of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in your neighborhood or community?
4. Have you been abroad or in contact with people from countries, regions or cities with COVID-19 (Coronavirus)?



Preventive measures related to the use of transportation

Transportation provided by the Contractor

If transport for project workers is provided by the contracting company (bus or other), the following measures should be applied:

- Daily cleaning of transport units.
- The driver should wear gloves, wash their hands during the working day, and before and after the use of gloves.
- Place alcohol-based gel dispensers on the door and at another point in the vehicle.
- Place posters at different points of the vehicle.
- Provide containers for the disposal of disposable tissues. The waste must be handled by those in charge of the transportation unit as hazardous waste.

- Keep the windows open for sufficient ventilation as much as possible, allowing sunlight to enter the interior of the vehicle.
- Transport passengers that keep a separate space between them when seated exclusively.

Public transportation

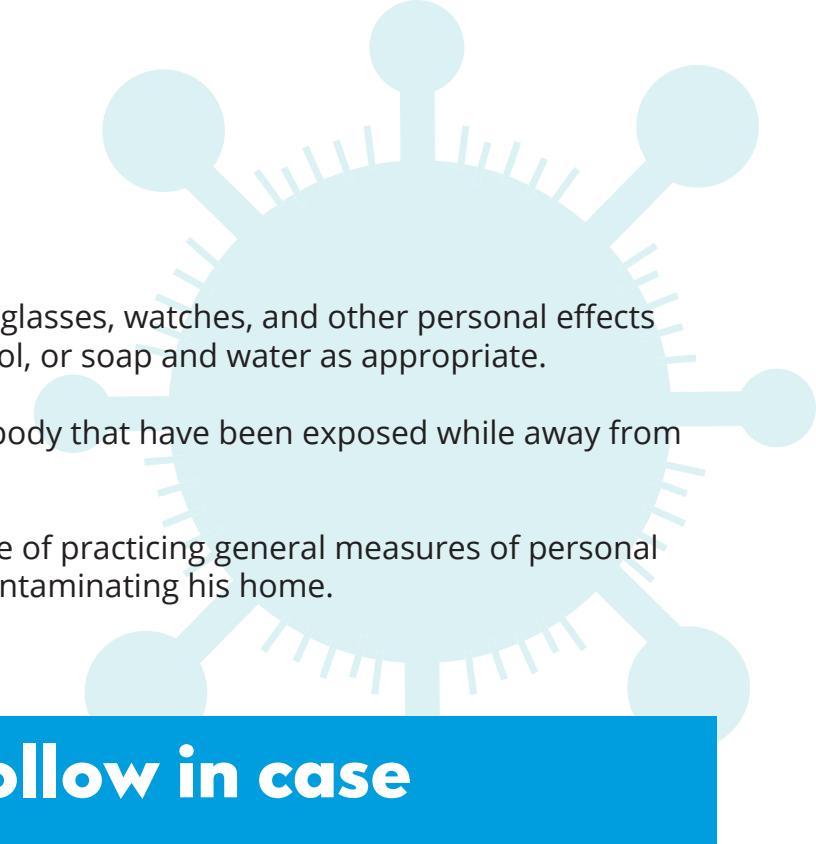
People who need to travel from their homes to project sites and vice versa using public transportation, should take the following preventive measures:

- Use disinfecting wipes after touching surfaces (doors, handles, etc.). After use, place them in available garbage cans or in a plastic bag that can be carried, close it tightly and place it in a suitable place.
- Bring alcohol-based gel with you and apply it to your hands every time you touch any surface, make a payment or take any other action.
- Avoid touching your face before, during and after being on the vehicle.
- If the transport unit does not have enough space available, take the next available vehicle, which must be considered a valid excuse for late arrival.
- Wash your hands well with enough soap and water when you reach the final destination.

Measures before entering the house after a working day

Upon arriving home from the construction site, staff should take the following steps:

- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.
- Do not touch any surface when entering the house, before washing your hands.
- Change your shoes and outer clothing, and place it in a bag to wash it. Clothes that have been used in the workplace should be washed right away, and the same procedure must be followed for every time you leave home.
- Place bags, keys or other items that you have taken with you in a box or container at the entrance of the house, and clean or disinfect them as appropriate.

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- Wear gloves for disinfecting cell phones, glasses, watches, and other personal effects with cleaning towels, disinfectants, alcohol, or soap and water as appropriate.
 - Take a shower or wash the areas of the body that have been exposed while away from home.
 - Remind the worker about the importance of practicing general measures of personal hygiene and social distancing to avoid contaminating his home.

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Procedure to follow in case of contagion

- 1** Any worker with a cold, even a mild one or a fever above 37.3 ° C, should:
 - Notify a supervisor that you are not fit to work.
 - Stay at home for at least 14 days. Once at home, the person with symptoms should follow the protocols established by the national authorities.
 - Check their temperature control twice a day.
 - Report any person in your immediate family or where you live, that has these symptoms and inform your supervisor if they have taken medications such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin that may cover the symptoms.
- 2** If you identify someone with symptoms, or someone who has been sent home because they have reported symptoms, or a close family member, or anyone with whom you live, you must notify the person in charge of Occupational Safety and Health and the Manager by completing of an incident report.



Stress Management

If personnel show signs of distress, sadness, confusion, or anxiety because of the epidemic, share with staff some of the following tips that may be helpful:

- 1** Remain well informed on the risk situation at the construction site and recognize your level of security in it. If you have any questions, ask your supervisor.
- 2** Maintain a healthy lifestyle on and off the site as much as possible, including:
 - Maintain a proper diet, and get enough rest.
 - Get daily exercise or recreational activities with your family on a daily basis.
 - Avoid the consumption of tobacco, alcohol or tranquilizers.
 - Limit exposure to news so as not to create more distress.
- 3** Call on people who have helped you in similar situations and who will always be available to you.
- 4** In case you feel overwhelmed and in need of help:
 - Identify a trusted family member or friend who listens to your concerns.
 - Contact a health professional or the company's employee support service.

FINAL NOTE

These recommendations must be implemented in addition to any norm, regulation or directive issued by each country, bearing in mind the social protection coverage in terms of health and occupational risks in each country.

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Suggested materials for visual communication on site

[Download the materials here:](#)

WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER

This process should last from **40 to 60 seconds**



Wet your hands with water



Put a sufficient amount of soap in the palm of your hand



Rub your palms together



Rub the palm of your right hand against the back of your left hand and vice versa



Rub your palms together, fingers interlocked



Rub the back of the fingers of one hand with the palm of the opposite hand, holding your fingers



Rub the left thumb in a rotary motion and vice versa



Rub your fingertips against the other hand in a rotational motion and vice versa



Rinse your hands with water



Dry yourself with a disposable towel



Use the towel to turn off the tap



Your hands are clean

LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVE GREETINGS

**AVOID
GREETING
WITH HANDS,
HUGS AND
DIRECT
CONTACT.
DON'T
TOUCH
YOUR FACE.**



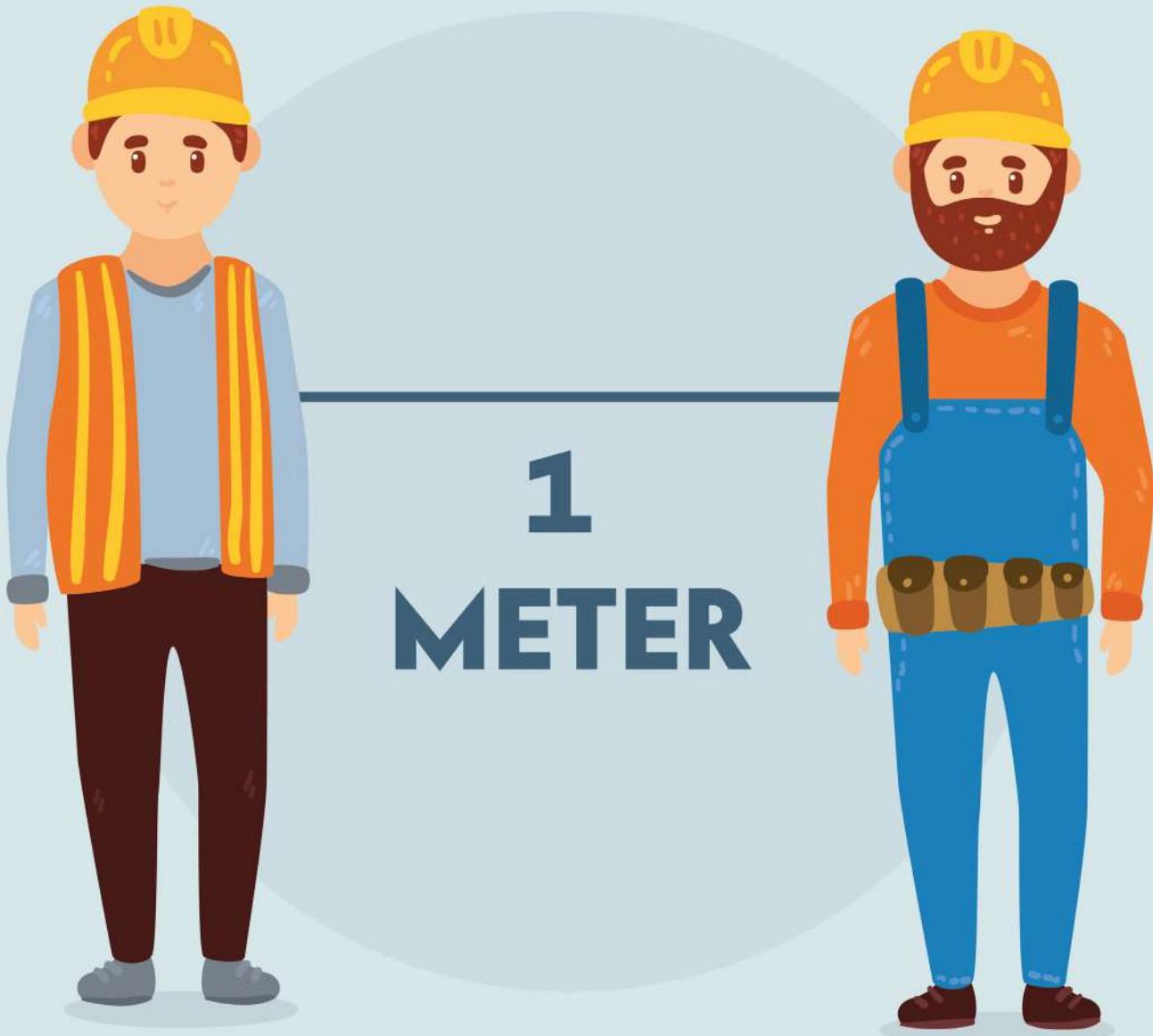
RESPIRATORY HYGIENE



**When you cough or sneeze,
cover your mouth with a
disposable tissue, then throw it
in the trash and wash your hands**



MINIMUM DISTANCE AT CONSTRUCTION SITES



HOW CAN I PROTECT MY FAMILY?



Avoid close contact without protection, do not touch your face and constantly wash your hands. Also be sure to follow the instructions of local authorities regarding movement restrictions.



Avoid sharing glasses, plates, and other items for personal use, and clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched frequently.



If you have traveled to areas where the virus circulates or have been in close contact with someone who has it and you have fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention immediately. Don't self-medicate.



ORDER AND CLEANLINESS IN WORK AREAS

**CLEAN THE FOLLOWING AREAS AND
OBJECTS AT LEAST TWICE A DAY**



Tables

Desks



**Phones and
cell phones**



**Vehicles
(steering wheel,
dash, brake, etc.)**

Glasses



**YOU CAN USE DISINFECTANTS, ALCOHOL
AND / OR DISPOSABLE TOWELS**



CORONAVIRUS | PREVENTION AT CONSTRUCTION SITES

Construction sites should be treated as offices. It is recommended to take the following measures at construction sites:



Check your temperature and make sure to wash your hands before entering the site and before eating a meal



Handshakes, hugs, and other close interactions should be prohibited on the construction site



Any staff member showing flu symptoms should be prevented from entering the construction site



Mealtime designated areas should be sanitized daily



The use of a mask is not necessary for work on the construction site, unless the minimum distance is not met or the person's state of health requires it



In the event that a worker is detected with COVID-19, the construction site will be closed and the workers in contact with the individual must be isolated for 14 days until the medical authorization is granted



Personal hygiene must be maintained at all times on construction sites. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. In case of cough, fever, or shortness of breath, seek medical attention immediately



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