

COVID19 Guidelines

1. Introduction

The COVID 19 pandemic presents Governments with unprecedented challenges. Addressing COVID 19 related issues in both existing and new operations starts with recognizing that this is not business as usual and that circumstances require a highly adaptive responsive management design to avoid, minimize and manage what may be a rapidly evolving situation.

Projects involving construction/civil works frequently involve a large work force, together with suppliers and supporting functions and services. The work force may comprise workers from international, national, regional, and local labor markets. They may need to live in on-site accommodation, lodge within communities close to work sites or return to their homes after work. There may be different contractors permanently present on site, carrying out different activities, each with their own dedicated workers. Supply chains may involve international, regional and national suppliers facilitating the regular flow of goods and services to the project (including supplies essential to the project such as fuel, food, and water). As such there will also be regular flow of parties entering and exiting the site; support services, such as catering, cleaning services, equipment, material and supply deliveries, and specialist sub-contractors, brought in to deliver specific elements of the works.

Given the complexity and the concentrated number of workers, the potential for the spread of infectious disease in projects involving construction is extremely serious, as are the implications of such a spread. Projects may experience large numbers of the work force becoming ill, which will strain the project's health facilities, have implications for local emergency and health services and may jeopardize the progress of the construction work and the schedule of the project. Such impacts will be exacerbated where a work force is large and/or the project is in remote or under-served areas. Such circumstances trigger the need of putting in place Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for safety of the workers. Under the context, the below given SOPs mainly pertains to construction/refurbishment work to take place under Health and SED components in target districts of the PHCIP. Pertinent to this, partners/contractors are advised to adhere to below set of instructions/guidelines for protection and safety of the employees/workers/laborers to ensure they don't contract the disease.

The below given SOPs are interim as on what is currently available about COVID-19. These are being regularly reviewed by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination and updated based on the **international & national recommendations** and best practices. Partners and contractors should refer to guidance issued by relevant authorities, both national and international (e.g. WHO), which is regularly updated (see sample References and links provided in the Annex).

What is COVID-19: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. It is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation later converted into an outbreak in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

Spread of Disease: This virus probably emerged from an animal source but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the most common way the virus spread.

2. Standard Operating Procedures for Construction Site

Partners/PMUs should work with contractors to confirm that projects (i) are taking adequate precautions to prevent or minimize an outbreak of COVID-19, and (ii) have identified what to do in the event of an outbreak. Pertaining this, necessary SOPs/guidelines have been provided below for site managers, workers, contractors and material dispatching vehicles.

2.1 SOPs for Site Managers/Supervisors

Below prescribed actions shall be taken at the project site, as should facilitate the health of all life present at the site.

1. Every construction project shall make proper arrangements for uninterrupted building services including but not restricted to, electricity, fuel, water supply, water disposal and sanitation, communication links, washrooms with hand hygiene and shower facility and with proper and adequate supply of soaps and disinfectants.
2. Workers should not use biometric attendance machines or crowd during attendance, entry or exit to the premises of the construction site
3. Ensure the availability of the thermal gun at the entry and exit of the construction site and no worker should be allowed without getting his/her temperature checked.
4. Site manager must maintain a register of all contact details with NIC number and addresses of all present at the site in case a follow up or tracing and tracking of contacts is required at a later stage.
5. Develop the employee roster to decrease the number of people on the site very day. Split the shifts of the workers in morning and evening with limit of each shift to 8 working hours.
6. Every worker must change into standard working attire at the time of commencement of duty and change back to their regular dress after taking shower when their duty hours end.
7. Every individual must be provided with a face mask. It must be ensured that everyone during his or her presence at the site continues to wear the mask. Face mask shall be replaced as and when soiled or otherwise removed. Outer surface of face mask must not be touched with hands.
8. Non-essential work trainings must be postponed avoiding gathering of people.
9. Ensure the physical distance by creating more than one route of entry and exit to the site.
10. All incidences of appearance of the symptoms of COVID 19 shall be immediately documented and maintained at the site and information regarding which shall be immediately communicated through e-mail or else, to the designated health facility, and the sick worker shall be transported to the health facility for further advice and action. The site manager must establish a link with a nearby healthcare facility with arrangements for quick transportation of workers in case of an emergency.
11. Persuade the workers to inform the authorities for their safety and of other if they observe any signs and symptoms in a colleague
12. Do not allow any worker at the construction site who has the symptoms.
13. Display the awareness banners about hand hygiene and physical distancing, where you can, around the work site.
14. Everyone on the construction site must observe sneezing and coughing etiquettes.
15. Workers shall be requested and required to wash their hands as frequently as practicable and shall also be advised not to touch their face with their hands during work.
16. Workers must maintain no less than two arm lengths between them before, during after work at all the times. They shall not make physical contact and shall be required to maintain separate personal gears and assets which must be clearly labelled and stored without intermix.

17. Only sanitize-able dinning surfaces shall be used, which must be cleaned before each service. Food must be heated to a temperature to no less than 70°C before consumption and shall preferably be served in disposable utensils. If reusable utensils are used, these must be washed with soap and water immediately after use and stored at a safe place.
18. The lunch breaks and stretch breaks of the workers must be staggered to avoid the clustering of workers. Workers must not sit at less than 2 meters distance while having meals and while any other activity requiring interpersonal communications.
19. Post lunch, waste should be disposed of by individuals in designated bins and the area should remain clean.
20. In the wake of current restrictions on transportations site mangers will ensure safe transport arrangements for worker which should not be crowded and should have social distancing in place during the entire process from pickups till drops at destination
21. Instruct the workers to inform the construction manager (or authorities) if
 - a. They develop any symptoms of cough, flu or fever.
 - b. They have been exposed to someone suspected or confirmed with COVID 19.
 - c. They have met someone who has a travel history of COVID 19 endemic country.
 - d. They have travelled in last couple of days or plan to travel soon.
22. In case of workers sleeping in at the site of construction, a safe distance of 2 meters must be ensured in the sleeping rooms.
23. A supply of safe drinking water must be made available at the project site and maintained.
24. There shall be a strict ban on Gutka, Tambaku, Paan etc. on site and spitting shall be strictly prohibited.
25. Appropriate signage at construction site spelling out safety practices in the language which is understood by all.



Figure 1: SOPs for Managers/Supervisors to adhere with while at site

2.2 SOPs for Construction Workers

1. All possible and prescribed measures shall be taken to ensure own as well as others health.
2. Only medically fit workers shall be deployed at site and medical assistance will be arranged for unfit workers.
3. Enter contact details in the register maintained at the site, in case a follow up or tracing and tracking of contacts is required at a later stage.
4. Follow hygiene practices at washrooms and shower facility with proper and adequate use of soaps and disinfectants.

5. Every worker must change into standard working attire at the time of commencement of duty and change back to their regular dress after taking shower when their duty hours end.
6. Every individual must use face mask. Face mask shall be replaced as and when soiled or otherwise removed. Outer surface of face mask must not be touched with hands.
7. Workers should wash their hands as frequently as practicable and shall not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth with their unwashed hands during work.
8. Workers should not share their belongings like food, water bottles, utensils, mobile phones etc. with others.
9. Everyone on the construction site must observe sneezing and coughing etiquettes.
10. Workers must maintain no less than two arm lengths between them before, during after work at all the times. They shall not make physical contact such as shaking hands or giving hug and shall be required to maintain separate personal gears and assets which must be clearly labelled and stored discretely.
11. Sick worker should immediately inform the site manager and must get medical advice from nearby health center.
12. Only sanitize able dinning surfaces shall be used. Food must be heated to a temperature to no less than 70o C before consumption and shall preferably be in disposable utensils. If reusable utensils are used, these must be washed with soap and water immediately after use and stored at a safe place.
13. Do not sit at less than 2 meters distance while having meals and while any other activity requiring interpersonal communications.
14. Do not use biometric attendance machines or crowd during attendance, entry or exit to the premises of the construction site.
15. Use safe transport arrangements which should not be crowded and should have social distancing in place during the entire process from pickups till drops at destination. Better is to reach the site either by walking or by using own individual mode of transport (bicycle, two- wheeler etc.).
16. In case sleeping at the site of construction, a safe distance of 2 meters must be ensured in the sleeping rooms.

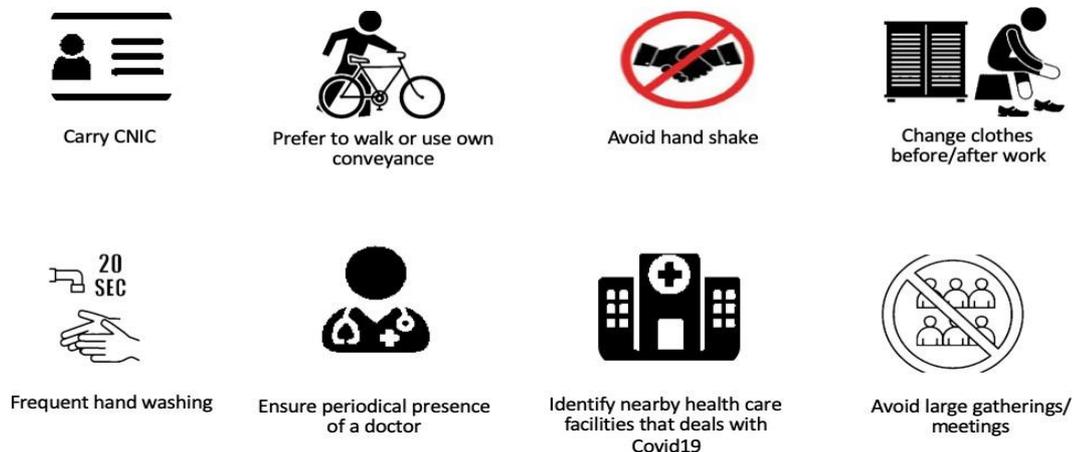


Figure 2: SOPs for workers while at site

2.3 Contractors Visiting the Site

1. Non-essential visits to the construction sites should be cancelled or postponed.

2. Designate the workers, with protective gears or at least gloved and mask, to attend to the deliveries and contractors.
3. Make alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 70%) available for the workers handling deliveries.

2.4 SOPs for Material, Tools, Machinery, Vehicles etc.

1. All vehicles and machinery entering the premises should be disinfected by spray mandatorily.
2. Delivery workers or other contractors who need to visit the construction site must go through temperature check before entering and should be given clear instructions for precautions to be taken while on site.
3. All construction material arriving at site should be left idle for 3 days before use to ensure safe usage.
4. Instruct the visiting truck drivers to remain in their vehicles and whenever possible make use of contactless methods, such as mobile phones, to communicate with your workers.
5. Wipe down interiors and door handle of machines or construction vehicles, the handles of equipment and tools that are shared, with disinfectant prior to use.
6. Non-touch garbage bins with biodegradable garbage bags should be installed for waste collection at all common access areas.
7. Hand gloves should be used by the workers who are handling material coming from outside.



Figure 3: SOPs for goods vehicles entering the site

3. Check List

The below checklists have been developed to support respective PMUs' staff and contractors' site managers/supervisors to track actual implementation of the SOPs against the planned procedures/protocols for mitigating adverse effects of Covid19 in order to be able to smoothly run the construction/refurbishment work under PHCIP targeted interventions.

Sr.	Control Measures	Yes	No	Actions Required
1.	Informative material on Covid19 is available and displayed at various points at construction site.			
2.	All workers have been trained on maintaining social distancing, hygiene, use of PPE and the importance of not coming to work if any is suffering from a cough, fever, difficulty in breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhoea.			
3.	Training to workers have been provided on how to properly wash hands and apply sanitizer.			
4.	An arrangement of a medical doctor for all construction sites have been made by the contractor to carry out regular screening/examination of workers.			
5.	Emergency contact details are displayed at site and other information on nearby clinics/health facilities is maintained.			
6.	Workers at site know when should they seek medical assistance.			
7.	A risk assessment is conducted and the measures identified to prevent the spread.			
8.	A manager/supervisor has been appointed at each construction site to control environment and provide an oversight.			
9.	A thermal gun or an alternate arrangement for examining body temperature is available at all sites.			
10.	Every staff member/worker entering to or existing from the site is being scanned.			
11.	Contact details of all workers are maintained at a register/computer.			
12.	Commonly used surfaces are being regularly disinfected.			
13.	Protective material such as disposable gloves and sanitizers, soap/hand washing liquid are made available for workers.			
14.	A mechanism for dumping construction debris and its disposal to a designated site exists and is regularly followed as per protocols defined.			
15.	A system is in place for regularly emptying and replacing garbage bags so they don't overflow.			
16.	Non-touch biodegradable garbage bags are used and placed at various locations that are frequently accessed by workers while at work.			

17.	On site workers follow protocols defined for hand wash and use of sanitizers.			
18.	Workers maintain the procedure of changing clothes before start and at close of work.			
19.	Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, facemask, safety spectacles/face shields etc. are being disinfected/sanitized at close of work by all workers.			
20.	Visitors are restricted from entering the site.			
21.	Social/physical distancing is being maintained at all times during construction as well as leisure time.			
22.	Toilets and all water systems and features at all sites are operational and safe to use.			
23.	The number of workers on any given day does not exceed a defined threshold.			
24.	Material/equipment supplied to construction sites is left aside for at-least three days before use.			
25.	Gathering and meetings without ensuring proper safety measures are avoided.			
26.	Procedures have been adopted to ensure workers maintain a safe distance of up to 1 to 2 meter(s) during work hours and/or at leisure time.			