

Last reviewed:

16 October 2020



**衛生防護中心**  
Centre for Health Protection

**Infection Control Branch**

**Health Advice on Prevention of  
Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Workplace  
(Interim)**

**I. Disease information**

Please visit the following website for disease information, affected areas and updated information related to COVID-19:

<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>

2. The Department of Health advises staff and office management should take the following precautionary measures at their workplaces to minimize the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19.

**II. Preventive measures**

**A. Maintain Good Personal Hygiene**

- (a) Avoid touching eyes, mouth and nose.
- (b) **Maintain hand hygiene**
  - i. Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching mouth, nose or eyes; after using the toilet; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
  - ii. Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds, then dry with a disposable paper towel. When the hands are cleaned,

do not touch the water tap directly again (for example, using a paper towel to wrap the faucet before turning it off). If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, hand hygiene with 70-80% alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative.

- (c) **Check body temperature** regularly. Those with fever or respiratory symptoms or sudden loss of taste/smell should refrain from work, wear a surgical mask, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
- (d) Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose the soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly.
- (e) All should wear mask as far as feasible. For safety reasons, mask-wearing is not recommended for
  - i. children below age of 2 without supervision
  - ii. people with difficulty breathing
  - iii. people need assistance to remove the mask.
- (f) N95 respirators are generally not recommended for use by the general public in community settings as surgical mask can protect against COVID-19 which is mainly transmitted by droplet and contact route. Special training is required for proper wearing and removal of N95 respirator. Otherwise the infective risk due to inadequate protection and contamination may be increased.
- (g) Staff should wear mask as far as feasible and keep appropriate social distance with others when in common facilities (e.g. resting room, changing room, conference room, pantry etc.) of the workplace. In case wearing mask is not feasible, for example when having meal or shower or performing heavy manual work, staff should keep at least 1.5 metres with others.
- (h) Special attention when having meals
  - i. Staff are advised to stagger their meal time
  - ii. Keep distancing of at least 1.5 metre and avoid sit direct face-to-face with others when having meals or having meals at designated areas with effective partitions.
  - iii. Perform hand hygiene before meal, removing or putting on mask.
  - iv. Avoid talking without mask while having meals as far as possible. Talk only after finishing meals and after putting on masks.

- (i) Special attention if staff needs to stay in overnight room
  - i. Single room is preferred
  - ii. If needs to share room, rooms should not be overcrowded and beds should be at least 1.5 metres apart.
  - iii. Staff needs to keep adequate social distance from others while using these facilities
- (j) Build up good body immunity by having a balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption.
- (k) Smoking is prohibited in most workplaces and is always discouraged from health perspective. Do not pull down the mask to smoke.
- (l) Staff are encouraged to join the Government's "COVID-19 Targeted Group Testing Scheme"

## **B. Visitors**

- (a) Visitors should check their temperature before visiting. Those with fever should cancel their visit, wear surgical mask and seek medical attention promptly.
- (b) Facility owner should consider checking temperature for visitors and deny entry of those with fever.
- (c) All visitors need to wear **mask** and perform **hand hygiene** before entering the premises; keep vigilant and maintain good personal hygiene.
- (d) Take a shower or bath and wash your hair when you return home, and wash your clothes properly.

## **C. Maintain Environment Hygiene of Workplace**

- (a) Maintain good ventilation
  - i. Keep windows open as appropriate and where possible to increase fresh air supply.
  - ii. Use of fans (e.g. wall, circulating or exhaust fan) in indoor spaces should be accompanied by means to increase outdoor air changes (e.g. opening windows or maximizing fresh air intake of air conditioners) at the same time. Minimize air blowing directly from one person (or group of people) to another.
  - iii. Ensure the air-conditioning system is functioning well with sufficient fresh air supply, clean the air filter and ducting regularly.

- (b) Keep environment clean
- i. Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, commonly shared items and floor with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water), leave for 15-30 minutes, and then rinse with water and wipe dry. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.
  - ii. If places are contaminated by respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, use absorbent disposable towels to wipe them away. Then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water), leave for 15-30 minutes and then rinse with water and wipe dry. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.
  - iii. Spraying disinfectants is not recommended as this practice could be harmful and would not reduce the risk of viral transmission.
  - iv. Rubbish should be properly wrapped up and discarded into garbage bins with lids. Empty garbage bins at least once a day.
- (c) Special attention to following areas
- i. Areas with frequent access by members of the public (e.g. lifts, escalators, lobby entrance, waiting areas, corridors and information counter and lounges): Clean and wipe at least twice daily.
  - ii. Frequently touched surfaces (e.g. buttons, handrails, handle, chairs and mailboxes): Clean and wipe at least twice daily and when visibly soiled.
  - iii. Garbage room: Properly clean up rubbish and waste stored in the garbage room every day. Clean and wipe related facilities at least twice daily.
  - iv. Clean the exhaust fan inside the lift regularly and keep it in good condition.

#### **D. Maintain Toilet Hygiene**

- (a) Keep toilets clean and dry.
- (b) Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection.

- (c) Provide liquid soap and disposable paper towels for hand washing.
- (d) Ensure the flushing system of the toilet, and hands drying machines are in proper function at all times.
- (e) After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs.
- (f) Ensure the water traps must be filled with water (including U-shaped water trap, bottled trap or anti-syphonage trap) to prevent foul odour and insects in the soil pipe from entering the premises. Pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet once a week.
- (g) Do not alter the drain and pipes without prior authorization.  
[https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/make\\_sure\\_the\\_trap\\_is\\_not\\_dry.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/make_sure_the_trap_is_not_dry.pdf)

#### **E. Maintain hygiene of overnight rooms**

- (a) Keep a list of staff residing in overnight rooms with their bed and room to facilitate contact tracing when necessary.
- (b) The overnight rooms need to have adequate hand hygiene facilities, including hand washing facilities and alcohol-based hand rubs
- (c) Keep the place clean and hygienic

### **III. Cleaning and Disinfection of Environment when a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 is Encountered**

#### **A. Cleaning staff would wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including:**

- (a) Surgical mask
- (b) Latex gloves
- (c) Disposable gown
- (d) Eye protection (goggles/face shield) and
- (e) Cap (optional)

#### **B. Staff training**

- (a) Ensure the frontline cleaning staff received training with environmental disinfection procedures and supervising staff should have read and familiar with the disinfection guidelines.

### **C. Enhanced Environmental Disinfection**

- (a) Disinfect all potentially contaminated surfaces or items by using 1 in 49 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water).

### **D. If There is Blood, Secretions, Vomitus or Excreta Spillage, Take Enhanced Measures:**

- (a) Cleaning staff should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including surgical mask, gloves, disposable gown, eye protection (goggles/face shield) and cap (optional).
- (b) Use forceps to hold the strong absorbent disposable towels to wipe away the blood, secretions, vomitus or excreta during a preliminary clean up.
- (c) Then put the forceps and used absorbent disposable towels in a garbage bag carefully without contaminating oneself/the environment.
- (d) Disinfect with 1 in 4 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 4 parts of water), wipe from the outside inward, leave for 10 minutes, rinse with water and wipe dry afterwards.
- (e) After the procedure, put all the wastes and cleaning tools (e.g. forceps, cloth, mop head) in the garbage bag.
- (f) Carefully remove PPE, put them in the garbage bag, and then perform hand hygiene.

(When hands are not visibly soiled, use 70-80% alcohol-based handrub. Wash hands with soap and water when hands are visibly dirty or visible soiled with blood, body fluid).

- (g) Wear a pair of new gloves, seal the waste bag tight and dispose it properly in covered rubbish bin. Then, label the rubbish bin and put it in a safe undisturbed place until collection.
- (h) Remove gloves carefully. Wash hands with liquid soap and water.

## **IV. Guidelines and Educational Material for Workplace**

### **A. Proper Use of Bleach**

<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/100272.html>

### **B. Proper Use of Mask**

<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/460/19731.html>

First edition: 7 January 2020

Last updated: 16 October 2020

Last reviewed: 16 October 2020

The copyright of this paper belongs to the Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Contents of the paper may be freely quoted for educational, training and non-commercial uses provided that acknowledgement be made to the Centre for Health

Protection, Department of Health, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. No part of this paper may be used, modified or reproduced for purposes other than those stated above without prior permission obtained from the Centre.