MANAGING COVID ONSITE – SNAPSHOT

July 2020

This is a snapshot of the best practices guidelines for smaller builders & construction contractors, designed to ensure that the construction industry can remain safe and open.

Details can be found at: COVID-19 Guidelines for the Building and Construction Industry Revision 5

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres between everyone on site
- If this is not possible, limit the amount of time workers are in close proximity and use PPE equipment such as gloves and face masks
- Apply the 1 person per 4 square metre rule for work indoors or in enclosed spaces
- Maintain the 1 person per 4 square metre rule in site offices and amenities,
- Allocate specific areas to each work group to eat at every day,
- Have alternate breaks or breaks outside if possible
- Spread out furniture, limit time spent in common areas and mark safe distances in work, transit and break areas (eg on floors and walls)
- Stagger start times, breaks and finish times to avoid congestion in high traffic areas
- For travelling in vehicles ensure that there is only the driver and 1 passenger (suitably distanced) for a single cab vehicle. For dual cab vehicles only the driver, 1 passenger in the front and 1 passenger in the back (suitably distanced)
- Where practical, reasonable action should be taken to minimize vulnerable workers (older workers and those with compromised immune systems) from conducting higher risk roles
- Movement between sites, or areas within large sites, should be minimised as much as possible

SCREENING WORKERS COMING ONSITE

- Implement a two phase screening process, the first phase to screen workers and visitors before they enter the site to obtain their declaration they have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been in close contact with anyone with COVID19 and the second phase to implement ongoing daily screening of workers prior to starting their shift to continually monitor their potential exposure
- Ensure the 14-day quarantine rule is applied for anyone who returns from overseas travel Ensure anyone with flu like symptoms does not attend work until cleared by a medical practitioner
- Apply the 14-day self-quarantine rule for anyone who has had close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19

PROMOTE EFFECTIVE HYGIENE PRACTICES

- Washing of hands regularly for 20 seconds
- Use of hand sanitiser where washing of hands is not possible
- Etiquette of sneezing or coughing into your arm or tissues

Please note that this is only a summary of the Guidelines. The comprehensive Guidelines for the Building and Construction Industry can be found here.

- Use of bins for used tissues and cigarettes
- Practice of not touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Use of any PPE provided, such as gloves and face masks

PROVIDE A SAFE, CLEAN AND HEALTHY SITE

- Employers should implement processes to record the schedule and work locations to enable tracing of those who have come into contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Avoid the use of shared tools where possible and provide cleaning products to wipe down tools, plant and equipment before and after use
- Provide hand washing facilities with soap and/or hand sanitiser in all site entrances and exits, hoists, amenities and all levels of the site
- Clean and disinfect common areas, hoists and amenities and meal areas between work group breaks and shifts
- Increase frequency of industrial grade cleaning/disinfecting on sites, particularly in common areas
- Implement twice daily cleaning to 'frequently touched surfaces' such as door handles, fridges, taps, microwave handles
- Provide rubbish bins for tissues and discarded PPE equipment that are regularly removed off-site
- Regularly clean vehicles that are shared to ensure adequate hygiene and protection

KEEP COMMUNICATION REGULAR, OPEN AND UP-TO-DATE

- Use toolbox meetings to reinforce the severity of the pandemic, the importance of the on-site controls and self-reporting, to minimise the risk of infection
- Display health and physical distancing information in prominent locations on site and in common areas
- Display signs regarding requirement for screening before entering sites
- Establish an effective employer and union communication and consultation structure
- Modify site inductions to identify potential risks, such as recent travel or health issues, and to educate new starters onsite controls and practices

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