

Guidance on Safe Office Use

This guidance provides employees with key considerations on actions they can apply to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 through exposure in CRS offices and buildings.

- **IMPORTANT**

Where local governments protocols are in place, you need to adhere to these requirements.

CONTROL BUILDING ACCESS

- Limit public access or restrict access to certain workplace or office areas
- Carefully consider if a visitor's presence is necessary and essential to conduct business. If not essential, then hold a remote meeting. If all parties must be physically present, hold meeting in an open, well-ventilated space that permits physical distancing
- Install a transparent plexiglass barrier at the entrance reception window
- Maintain physical distance at the office entrance
- When registering visitors:
 - visitor verbally provides their information;
 - guard/receptionist who completes the visitor log;
 - Visitor displays ID so guard/receptionist can view without touching it;
 - No visitor signature required;
 - Provide visitor with CRS visitor ID;
 - When CRS ID is returned, disinfect; and
 - Then wash hands.
- If safe to do, all persons must wash their hands before entering office grounds following [Handwashing station guidance](#) and [soapy water solution](#) guidance. Otherwise they must wash hands immediately when within the confines of the office location.
- To reduce the need to clean and disinfect surfaces, only the guard opens and closes the entrance to the office or compound. Staff must meet guests at entrance to open and close doors.

FOLLOW PREVENTIVE MEASURES

WHO Guidelines state, the most effective preventive measures in office settings include:

- Performing hand hygiene frequently with soap and water, an alcohol-based hand rub, or chlorine solution;
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth;
- Practicing respiratory hygiene by coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow or tissue and then immediately disposing of the tissue;
- Maintaining physical distance (a minimum of 1 meter) from others;
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- Use disposable, single-use paper towels to dry hands, then throw the disposable towels in the trash. If single-use towels are not available, dry hands by evaporation or when feasible a warm air dryer
- If not in place already:
 - Posting handwashing signs in prominent locations;
 - Placing soap and hand sanitizer in multiple locations; washrooms, entrances/exits, kitchens, and other shared spaces
- Discouraging employees workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. When tools and equipment need to be shared, wash hands before and after using shared tools and equipment. **Clean and disinfect shared tools and equipment after use.**

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

Remember, cleaning and disinfecting are not the same:

Cleaning consist in the removal of dirt, dust, spilled liquids, etc... on surfaces. Cleaning is an essential step before any disinfection process.

Disinfecting consist in using chemical cleaners to kill germs on surfaces or objects.

Surfaces including metal, plastic, glass, other hard and soft surfaces harbor bacteria and viruses, and by touching these surfaces, employees can transfer pathogens to their eyes, nose, and mouth, or, spread germs to other commonly touched surfaces and then to other persons. Clean and disinfect surfaces with water and commercially available detergents that remove bacteria and viruses to reduce the probability of transmission.

IDENTIFICATION AND PREPARATION

- Establish a cleaning and disinfecting plan for each building
- Identify the **locations where people will interact** and touch common surfaces (e.g. entrances/exits, toilets, kitchens, meeting rooms, generator shed, reception areas, storage rooms/closets, photocopy/printer areas)
- Identify **common surfaces that employees will touch** that need to be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
 - Hard (non-porous) surfaces: Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, elevator buttons, shared tools, etc.
 - Soft surfaces: carpets, drapes, tablecloths, towels, rugs, etc.
- If possible, remove carpets, rugs, tablecloths and other soft common surfaces
- Use no touch trash cans or trash cans without lids
- When office conditions permit, leave interior doors open
- Where and when office set-up, security context and weather conditions permit, increase air circulation by opening windows
- Ensure buildings have supplies of soap, disinfectant, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, facial tissues, and paper towels to the extent locally available

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Provide cleaning staff with instructions and training on what and how to clean
- Provide cleaning staff with rubber cleaning gloves and ensure that they are used
- Clean hard surfaces in the office with water and commercially available detergents that removes bacteria and viruses. For bathrooms and toilets increase the frequency of cleaning following the same approach
- Clean soft surfaces such as drapes, tablecloths, towels, etc. as you would wash clothing
- Clean and disinfect daily at a minimum; more frequently depending on use patterns. Special attention needs to be provided to the common, high touch surfaces such as doorknobs, stair handrails, light switches, countertops, handles, toilets, faucets, sinks, elevator buttons, and shared equipment/tools (printers, photocopiers, etc.)
- Follow local health requirements for disinfecting solutions. If there is no guidance:
 - 1st choice – use a commercially available detergent
 - 2nd option – follow guidance for mixing a [chlorine solution for disinfecting surfaces and objects](#)
 - 3rd option – 70% isopropyl alcohol solution. Does not need to be diluted, use directly from bottle

Consultant CRS' [COVID-19 Guidance on Preventive Measures for Staff-Partners-Volunteer, Use of Masks Flowchart and PPE FAQs](#) on when to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Please don't hesitate to contact your respective HRD Focal Point or Marieke Van Weerden, Director of Safety and Security, if you have questions.

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