



**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, ADMINISTRATIVE AND
INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS
MAURITIUS**

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Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms
Circular Letter No 15 of 2021
E/152/11/07/03

From: Secretary for Public Service

To : Supervising Officers in charge of Ministries/Departments

COVID-19 – Office readiness for resumption of work

Government is taking all necessary precautionary measures to contain the spread of Corona virus and protect the health of the population. There is a need to strengthen all sanitary measures at workplaces prior to resumption of work to protect the Public Officers from any risk of infection.

2. In this context, it is imperative that appropriate steps are taken at the level of each Ministry and Department to, among others, :

- (i) sanitise all workplaces;
- (ii) ensure frequent cleaning and disinfection of surfaces that are touched regularly;
- (iii) promote good hygiene practices;
- (iv) arrange for social distancing at the workplace;and
- (v) carry regular temperature checks of public officers and visitors at the entrance of the workplace.

3. A detailed guideline on the precautionary measures that need to be taken ahead of the resumption of work in the Public Sector is at Annex.

4. I rely on your collaboration and support to provide our Public Officers with a safe working environment. It would be appreciated if you could, also, convey the content of this circular to all Local authorities/Parastatal Bodies/State-Owned Enterprises falling under your purview

S.Ragen

Secretary for Public Service

Copy to: Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service

Precautionary Measures ahead of Preparation for Resumption of Work in the Public Sector

Annex

1.0 Sanitary Precautions for Resumption of Work

Supervising Officers are requested to ensure that:

- ❖ the necessary precautionary provisions are implemented in respect of all officers of their Ministry and Departments with a view to ensuring their safety and health;
- ❖ all measures are taken to protect the health of these officers at their workplaces, as conveyed in the Circular letters issued by the Secretary to Cabinet & Head of the Civil Service and the Secretary for Public Service; and
- ❖ all necessary facilities are made available to maintain acceptable level of hygiene, such as adequate supply of water, soap, alcohol-based hand rub, disinfectant, amongst others.

1.1 Workplaces

- Workplaces including all premises, sites and other locations where work takes place and facilities within these workplaces are clean and safe to use
- Arrangements are established to prevent potentially infectious people from entering the workplace [by providing information prior to visit or posters stating ‘should not enter workplace with COVID-19 symptoms’]
- Enhanced and/or more frequent cleaning and disinfection schedules are established
- Personal hygiene facilities, including hand-washing stations and/or hand sanitizer points are provided and these facilities are also accessible to workers with disabilities
- Routine operations and emergency plans are taken into account in collaboration with other organizations on shared sites including contractors, landlords and other tenants
- Further actions are taken, as applicable, including but not limited to:
 - (a) deep cleaning and disinfection of workplaces and equipment;
 - (b) disinfecting taps and other sources of water;
 - (c) maximizing the amount of outdoor air and room air changes and keeping doors and windows open to the extent possible;
 - (d) putting in place signs on floor and/or wall markings to indicate recommended physical distancing;
 - (e) putting in place physical barriers to enforce physical distancing to the extent possible, where it is safe to do so;
 - (f) creating work zones to limit the number of people in any one area;
 - (g) reorganizing moveable equipment, desks and workstations to enable physical distancing;
 - (h) keeping doors open to reduce touching of door handles other than those required for fire safety, security or privacy; and
 - (i) determine safe ways of using lifts including limiting capacity and ensuring guidance for safe use is communicated both inside and outside of lifts.

Precautionary Measures ahead of Preparation for Resumption of Work in the Public Sector

1.2 Hygiene

- ❖ Processes are implemented to keep the workplace clean to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 from contaminated surfaces, and to enable good hygiene throughout working time
- ❖ Staffs are aware of the importance of frequent and effective handwashing to limit transmission of COVID-19
- ❖ Staff are encouraged to wash their hands [or use sanitization fluid] at frequent intervals, (mainly before entering or leaving an area of the workplace, before and after breaks, before handling shared resources such as telephones, computers, tools, drink dispensers and after using common areas)
- ❖ Frequent cleaning and disinfection of surfaces that are touched regularly [e.g. Waste bins, door handles, light switches, lift controls, shared resources] are maintained;
- ❖ Provisions are made for effective, adequate and frequent waste disposal, including separate, secure waste disposal for single-use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and disposal of face-masks and face coverings; and
- ❖ Promotion of good hygiene practices, including posters and signs to remind workers of required handwashing techniques and frequency, the need to avoid touching of the face, and to cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue or into their elbow should be encouraged.

1.3 Meetings and Visits at workplaces

- ✓ Visits to the physical workplace should, as far as possible, be limited and the use of teleworking technology should be adopted to minimize both internal and external face-to-face meetings
- ✓ Where face-to-face meetings are essential, all precautionary measures should be adopted
- ✓ In cases where physical meetings are imperative, the Ministries and Departments should:
 - (i) limit participation to the minimum number of essential people and maintain physical social distancing;
 - (ii) avoid sharing of resources (e.g. pens, water or tea/sugar jugs);
 - (iii) provide hand sanitizers in the meeting room;
 - (iv) hold meetings in well ventilated rooms;
 - (v) revise schedules for essential service and other contractors visits to reduce interaction; and
 - (vi) record visitor details to enable contact tracing.

Precautionary Measures ahead of Preparation for Resumption of Work in the Public Sector

1.4 Working with the Public

- ❖ Controls are in place to maintain physical distancing and to minimize risks of infection to and from officers through interaction with the public (including customers, clients, service users and other people) in both indoor and outdoor workplaces
- ❖ There are posters, signs and other communications materials to inform members of the public of safety measures and controls and how to maintain physical distancing
- ❖ Regular announcements are made to remind members of the public to maintain physical distancing and follow other safety measures
- ❖ The number of members of the public in a building are limited so that physical distancing can be maintained
- ❖ There is adequate provide hand sanitizers at entrance and exits to buildings and outdoor spaces where there is potential risk of transmission
- ❖ There is proper cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched areas and shared resources
- ❖ There is provision of physical barriers, such as screens, in places where interaction between workers and members of the public is frequent

1.5 Work-related travel

- ✓ All unnecessary work travellings are avoided and controls are in place to keep officers safe whenever they do need to travel
- ✓ The number of people travelling together in any one vehicle is minimized
- ✓ Windows are opened to increase ventilation in motor vehicles, where applicable
- ✓ Vehicles are cleaned and disinfected after every use
- ✓ Workers avoid sitting face-to-face
- ✓ Officers wear face masks if more than one person is in a vehicle

1.6 Use of PPE, Masks and Face Coverings

There is increasing evidence that masks and face coverings provide some protection against the transmission of COVID-19 by capturing droplets released through breathing, coughing, sneezing and talking. Face coverings, used in conjunction with physical distancing, hand washing and other hygiene measures are effective measures in reducing the risks related to COVID-19.