

GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYERS TO PLAN AND RESPOND TO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Rwanda has scaled up the preparedness and response to COVID-19. We all have a role to play in suppressing and stopping any transmission by working together to maintain our collective safety and health. Businesses and employers are encouraged to do their part to keep their employees, customers, and themselves healthy.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection and transmission is to avoid being exposed to the virus. Prevention measures such as those described below should be included in the workplace.

Please ensure to inform employees or clients who present flu-like symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath, fever) to go home immediately and call our toll-free 114 to receive appropriate guidance.

Prevention at entry point

- Maintain a distance of at least 2 meters between people
- Place a hand washing station with soap and water or hand sanitizer at the entrance. Anyone entering the building **MUST** wash their hands for at least 20 seconds.
- If using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, it should contain at least 60-95% alcohol
- Remind people to avoid touching their face if their hands are not clean and avoid handshakes

Prevention in office space

- Enforcing safe distancing:
 1. Ensure enough distance between staff or clients and communication via e-mail whenever possible to minimize close contacts
 2. Spatial separation between desks and workstations as well as individuals (e.g., employees, customers) from each other, ideally a 2 meter separation should be maintained, unless there is a physical barrier (e.g., cubicle, window).
 3. We recommend to avail a hand sanitizer for staff or clients within the office space

- Employees or clients with none of the above flu-like symptoms are not recommended to wear facemasks (also known as surgical masks or respirators) to protect against the virus. Facemasks are only recommended to be worn by symptomatic individuals to reduce the risk of transmitting the infection to other people.
- RBC recommends that the best way to reduce any risk of infection is good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than 2 meters) with any potentially infected person.
- Prevention in file handling:
 1. Before touching a document to be circulated, make sure your hands are clean by washing or sanitizing them.
 2. Avoid touching your face while handling documents
 3. Remember to frequently wash your hands, especially after handling documents.
- Surface cleaning:
 1. Research shows that the virus can survive up to 2-3 days on plastic or stainless steel, up to 24hrs on cardboard, and up to 4hrs on copper.
 2. Office spaces need to be sanitized everyday, and at more frequent hours. Clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
 3. Cleaners need to strictly follow the preventative measures mentioned above to avoid contaminating surfaces.
 4. Provide employees with tissues and waste bins lined with a plastic bag so that they can be emptied without contacting the contents.
 5. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations and in common areas to encourage hand hygiene.
- All employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw them in the bin straight away. If no tissue is available, employees can use their elbow or shoulder to cover their noses/mouths.
- Ask employees who have reasons to believe they have come in contact with a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19, to go home, and call 114 to receive appropriate guidance.

Promote working remotely across your organization and allow employees to work flexible days/ hours to minimize crowding the workplace. Working remotely will help your business keep operating while your employees stay safe.

By carefully following these guidelines, every single one of us is making an invaluable contribution to protecting our country and our people.

For more information visit www.rbc.gov.rw