



# Mitigation measures – COVID-19 Transition phase.

## Mandatory conditions for retail Outlets

These following obligatory conditions are issued under the Public Health Act Chapter 465 of the Laws of Malta and require strict adherence. Failure to adhere to these conditions will result in enforcement procedures as provided by the Act.

### Mandatory conditions to be observed in retail outlets

The Superintendent of Public Health hereby orders that all retail outlets shall implement the following measures:

- (a) exercise the right of refusal of entry into the shop of customers if they are visibly unwell or have respiratory symptoms;
- (b) ensure that inside the shop every person keeps a minimum of 2 metres from others;
- (c) ensure that maximum capacity of customers that the shop can hold at any one time inside the shop (retail area) is one person per 10 square metres, excluding staff;
- (d) allow only one (1) customer and one (1) member of staff at any one time inside a shop with a total area less than 10 square metres;
- (e) affix visible signage at the entrance of the shop indicating the maximum capacity that the shop can hold at any one time;
- (f) indicate with visible markings outside and inside the shop two (2) metre distances that customers shall respect whilst queuing for services;
- (g) ensure that vulnerable persons as defined by the Protection of Vulnerable Persons Order, 2020 do not enter the non-essential retail outlets;
- (h) provide an appropriate 70% alcohol hand-rub at the entrance of the shop and ensure that all persons sanitise their hands prior to entrance;
- (i) ensure that customers and staff always wear a face mask or face visor whilst inside the shop;
- (j) keep changing rooms closed;
- (k) ensure that no items which come into direct contact either with the body or with underwear are tried at the shop prior to purchase;
- (l) refuse exchanges of any purchased underwear items; and

- (m) if exchanges of purchased items (except underwear items) are accepted, ensure that any returned items are left untouched and safely stored for at least 72 hours, prior to being offered again for purchase by costumers.

### Mandatory conditions applicable to shopping malls.

The Superintendent of Public Health hereby orders that, shopping mall operators, with respect to retail outlets within shopping malls, shall, until further notice, be obliged to implement the following additional measures:

- a. ensure that the general measures listed above are being implemented by every shop in the shopping mall;
- b. regulate entrance into the shopping mall adopting crowd management techniques as necessary;
- c. ensure that the maximum number of customers inside the shopping mall at any one time does not exceed the sum total of the maximum capacity of each shop inside the mall, excluding staff, as determined by Articles (2)(c) and (2)(d) above.
- d. affix visible signage at the entrance of the shopping mall indicating the maximum capacity that the shopping mall can hold at any one time;
- e. indicate with visible markings outside the entrance of the shopping mall 2 metre distances that customers shall respect whilst queueing at the entrance. The collaboration of Local Councils shall be sought, where applicable;
- f. customers shall be subject to temperature checks at entrance for the presence of fever and those with a temperature of 37.2° Celsius or higher shall be denied entrance;
- g. provide an appropriate 70% alcohol hand-rub at the entrance of the shopping mall and ensure that all persons sanitise their hands prior to entrance;
- h. ensure that customers and staff always wear a face mask or visor whilst inside the shopping mall;
- i. ensure that any restaurants, cafes, children play areas remain closed;
- j. ensure that no events are held inside the shopping mall or any of its shops; and
- k. provide ongoing sterilisation operations of all the common areas inside the shopping mall.
- l. Ensure that measures are taken so that seating is not permitted in common areas.

### Guidelines for the application of COVID-19 mitigation measures in retail shops

All retail shops are being advised to operate in accordance with the conditions for good practice included in this document.

Retail outlets usually involve the sale of goods or services to the public. These outlets include both areas where workers interact with customers and closed areas such as



warehouses or distribution centres that may involve only minimal face-to-face contact with customers, supply chain delivery persons or fellow workers.

## Principles for business continuity

Recognising that the COVID-19 pandemic is a public health emergency and that business continuity in respect of COVID-19 should be founded on expert public health advice and on social dialogue, the following principles shall apply:

- ✓ All workers, regardless of their occupation or how they are engaged, have the right to a healthy and safe working environment.
- ✓ The COVID-19 pandemic requires a focused approach to work health and safety as it applies to non-essential retail shops.
- ✓ To keep retail shops healthy and safe, employers must, in consultation with workers and their representatives, assess the way they work to identify, understand and quantify risks and implement and review control measures that address those risks.
- ✓ As COVID-19 restrictions are gradually relaxed, employers and workers must work together to adapt and promote safe work practices consistent with advice from public health authorities and to ensure that retail shops are ready for the social distancing and exemplary hygiene measures that are critical to the success of the transition.
- ✓ Employers and workers must actively control against the transmission of COVID-19 while at work, consistent with the updated advice from the public health authorities.
- ✓ Employers and workers must prepare for the possibility that there will be cases of COVID-19 in the workplace and be ready to respond immediately, appropriately, effectively and efficiently, and consistent with specific recommendations from public health authorities.

## How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 presents with coughing or sneezing which release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets can fall on nearby surfaces and objects - such as counters, display items, desks, tables, machinery or telephones. Other frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, shopping trolleys, intercoms, lift buttons are other surfaces which are frequently touched by customers and employees and can become contaminated. People can catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Standing within two metres of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period, one can catch the disease by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. In other words, COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to flu. Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some go on to experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

## Duties of the employers and workers

Employers are expected to take care of the health, safety and welfare of workers, including themselves, and all other staff, including contractors and delivery persons, clients and customers to their shops. This includes providing and maintaining a work environment that is without risk to health and safety, providing adequate and accessible facilities for the welfare of workers to carry out their work and monitoring the health of workers and the conditions of the workplace for the purpose of preventing illness or injury. Employers must minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19 of workers and customers by taking reasonable and practical measures to mitigate risk.

Protection of workers from the risk of exposure to COVID-19 may include, for example:

- ✓ Requiring workers to practice social distancing
- ✓ Requiring workers to practice good hygiene (e.g., through workplace policies and ensuring access to adequate and well stocked hygiene facilities)
- ✓ Requiring workers to stay home when sick
- ✓ Cleaning the workplace regularly and thoroughly
- ✓ Implementing working from home arrangements for those aspects of the business where such arrangements can be applied

Employers must take actions to ensure that non-essential retail shops do not put the health and safety of clients, customers, contractors and delivery persons at risk of contracting COVID-19. Such protection from the risk of exposure to COVID-19 may include, for example:

- ✓ Requiring them to practice social distancing, including through contactless deliveries and payments
- ✓ Requiring them to practice good hygiene, and
- ✓ Requiring others to stay away from the workplace, unless essential, e.g., such as family, friends and visitors.

Employers must maintain a safe work environment in shops and facilities by, for example:

- ✓ Cleaning the workplace regularly and thoroughly,
- ✓ Restructuring the layout of the workplace to allow for social distancing,
- ✓ Limiting the number of people inside non-essential retail shops at any given time,
- ✓ Providing adequate facilities to protect workers, as much as possible from contracting COVID-19 such as:
  - Toilet facilities including adequate supply of soap, water and paper towels
  - Hand sanitisers around the workplace, where it is not possible for workers to wash their hands,
  - Staff rooms (where applicable) that are regularly cleaned and that allow for social distancing,
- ✓ Providing workers with regular breaks to use sanitizing facilities, particularly to allow workers to wash their hands, or to access hand sanitiser where this is not possible,
- ✓ Providing information, training, instruction and supervision which may include:
  - guidance on how to properly wash hands
  - training on how to fit and use any necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)



- training on adequate cleaning practices throughout the day
- instructions on how to set up a safe home workplace for those working from home, and
- ✓ Providing workers with instructions on staying home from work if sick.

Employers have the duty to consult with workers on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19. Employers must give workers the opportunity to express their views and raise their concerns. Workers are most likely to know about the risks of their work. Involving them will help build commitment to any changes that employers need to implement. Employers must advise workers of the outcome of consultation. Adapting retail shops to manage and mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 requires a thorough risk assessment. These guidelines provide considerations that employers must make when deciding on control measures such as restrictions within shops to allow for social distancing, the adequacy of facilities for proper personal hygiene, cleaning arrangements, working from home arrangements, and other changes that may affect the health and safety of workers. Consultation does not require consensus or agreement, but employers are strongly advised to allow workers to be part of the decision-making process for COVID-19 related matters.

### Obligatory practices at retail shops

Certain practices in retail shops are being re-visited in order to minimise risks to workers and shoppers during the COVID-19 emergency. Until further notice, the following general obligatory conditions shall apply to all shops:

- ✓ Operators shall exercise the right of refusal of entry into the shop of customers if they are ill.
- ✓ Operators shall ensure that inside the shop every person keeps at least 2 metres from others.
- ✓ Operators shall ensure that inside the shop there are 10 square metres of space per person, excluding staff.

*To achieve this 10 square metre 'rule':*

- (i) calculate the area of the shop (e.g. length of shop in metres x width of shop in metres = area of shop in square metres),*
- (ii) divide the area of the shop by 10, and*
- (iii) the answer of that division (ignoring any remainder) is the maximum capacity that the shop can hold at any one time.*

*By way of example, if a shop is 25 square metres in size,  $25 \div 10 = 2.5$ , ignoring 0.5, the shop should allow only two (2) customers at any time inside the shop, excluding staff.*

- ✓ Shops that are less than 10 square metres shall allow only one (1) customer and one (1) member of staff at any time inside the shop.
- ✓ Visible signage shall be affixed at the entrance of the shop indicating the maximum capacity that the shop can hold at any one time.

- ✓ Visible markings outside and inside the shop shall indicate 2 metre distances that customers shall respect whilst queueing for services. The collaboration of Local Councils shall be sought, where applicable.
- ✓ Vulnerable persons as defined by the Protection of Vulnerable Persons Order, 2020 in Legal Notice 111 of 2020 shall not be allowed to enter non-essential retail shops.
- ✓ An appropriate 70% alcohol hand-rub shall be placed at the entrance of the shop and all persons shall sanitise their hands prior to entrance.
- ✓ Customers and staff shall always wear a face mask or visor whilst inside the shop.
- ✓ Changing rooms shall be kept closed.
- ✓ No items which come into direct contact either with the body or with underwear shall be tried at the shop prior to purchase.
- ✓ No exchanges of any purchased underwear items shall be accepted.
- ✓ If a retail shop accepts exchanges of purchased items (except underwear items), any returned items shall be stored where they will not be touched for at least 72 hours, prior to being placed again for purchase by costumers.

Furthermore, the following additional obligatory conditions shall apply to shopping malls:

- ✓ The general obligatory conditions shall apply to every shop in the shopping mall.
- ✓ Entrance into the shopping mall shall be regulated and crowd management techniques shall be adopted as necessary.
- ✓ The maximum number of customers inside the shopping mall at any one time shall not exceed the sum total of the maximum capacity of each shop inside the mall, excluding staff.
- ✓ Visible signage shall be affixed at the entrance of the shopping mall indicating the maximum capacity that the shopping mall can hold at any one time.
- ✓ Visible markings outside the entrance of the shopping mall shall indicate 2 metre distances that customers shall respect whilst queueing at the entrance. The collaboration of Local Councils shall be sought, where applicable.
- ✓ Customers shall be subject to temperature checks at entrances for the presence of fever and those with a temperature of 37.2°C or higher shall be denied entrance.
- ✓ An appropriate 70% alcohol hand-rub shall be placed at the entrance of the shopping mall and all persons shall sanitise their hands prior to entrance.
- ✓ Customers and staff shall always wear a face mask or visor whilst inside the shopping mall.
- ✓ Restaurants, cafes, children play areas and all shops that do not provide services included in this document shall remain closed.
- ✓ No events shall be allowed to avoid congestion and crowding.
- ✓ There shall be ongoing sterilisation operations of all the common areas inside the shopping mall.

### Promoting good hand and respiratory hygiene

Employers must direct workers and customers to practice good hygiene inside retail shops. Good hygiene requires regular washing of hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and drying them with a clean paper towel. Workers must wash their hands before and after eating, after coughing or sneezing, after going to the toilet, when changing tasks and after touching potentially contaminated surfaces. When it is not



possible to wash hands, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% alcohol as the active ingredient must be used as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Good respiratory hygiene requires everyone at the shop to, at all times:

- ✓ cover their coughs and sneezes with their elbow or a clean tissue (and no spitting)
- ✓ avoid touching their face, eyes, nose and mouth
- ✓ dispose of used tissues and cigarette butts hygienically, e.g. in closed bins
- ✓ wash their hands before and after smoking a cigarette
- ✓ clean and disinfect shared equipment and machinery after use
- ✓ wash body, hair (including facial hair) and clothes thoroughly every day, and
- ✓ have no intentional physical contact, for example, shaking hands and patting backs.

To enhance good hygiene outcomes:

- ✓ train workers on the importance of washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and drying them correctly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser, before entering and exiting a common area
- ✓ place posters near hand washing facilities showing how to correctly wash and dry hands and clean hands with sanitizer,
- ✓ inform workers of hygiene standards expected when utilising common areas (cleaning up after use, placing rubbish in bins provided, avoiding putting items such as phones on work surfaces, etc.).
- ✓ keep communicating and promoting the message that people need to stay at home even if they have just mild symptoms and to return to work 24 hours only after they are symptom free.
- ✓ persons who develop a mild cough, fever (i.e. a temperature of 37.2°C or higher), shortness of breath, headaches, tiredness, loss of taste, loss of smell or diarrhoea, should call the public health helpline on 111 giving details of their symptoms.
- ✓ Provide alcohol wipe dispenser for customers to wipe shopping bag handles before and after use.
- ✓ Provide more bins for people to dispose of any used tissues / items.
- ✓ Encourage the use of contactless payments, without disadvantaging older or vulnerable customers. Ask for the exact payment and provide workers with disposable gloves if they must collect money from customers. One pair of gloves per customer is to be used and used gloves are to be thrown away safely after use.
- ✓ Display posters with these messages in retail shops. Please contact the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate on 2326600 or visit [www.covid19health.gov.mt](http://www.covid19health.gov.mt). Combine this with other channels commonly used for communication in your business.



# 10 STEPS TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS

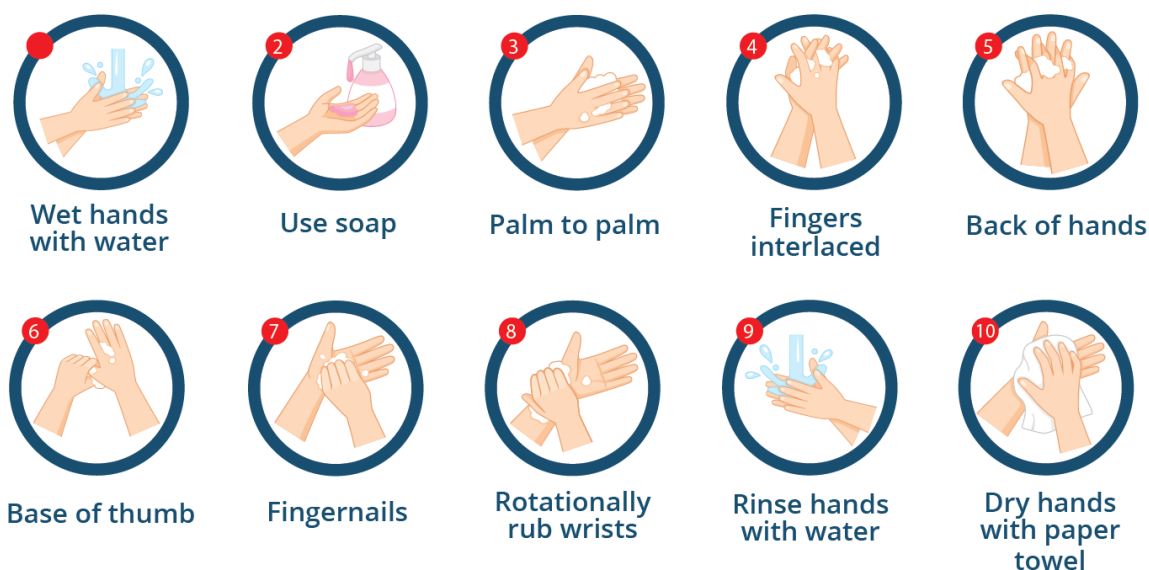


Fig. 1: 10 steps to wash your hands properly

## Hygiene facilities

Employers must ensure there are adequate and accessible facilities to achieve good hygiene and that facilities are in good working order, clean and safe. Employers must also consider whether there are an adequate number of hand washing stations, in convenient locations, to sustain the increase in good hygiene practices of workers and customers. Washroom facilities must be properly stocked and have adequate supplies of toilet paper, soap, water, and drying facilities (paper towels). Employers may also need to provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer in appropriate locations, if there are limited hand washing facilities available.

When determining what facilities are needed, employers must consider the number of workers on site, the shift arrangements and when access to these facilities is required. If employers have temporarily down-sized worker numbers in response to COVID-19 and these will now be increased, employers must take this into account to determine the facilities needed before workers return to work.

In providing drinking water, employers should favour individual bottles of water to common drinking fountains. Rubbish bins must be cleared regularly and as often as necessary.

Employers should consider opening windows or adjusting air-conditioning for more ventilation in common areas. Avoid or reduce recirculated air-conditioning where possible.





## Social distancing

Social distancing refers to the requirement that people distance themselves from others. **Public Health Authorities have determined that everyone must keep at least 2 metres from others and that in any given closed space, there must be 10 square metres of space per customer.**

Employers should consider and adjust the layout of the shop and workflows to enable workers and customers to keep at least 2 metres apart and that '10 square metres of space per person' rule excluding staff is respected. This can be achieved by, spreading out furniture or plant to increase distancing.

Put signs and markings outside the entrance of the shop to identify 2 metres distance. Inside the shop create wall or floor markings to identify 2 metres distance, focusing particularly where customers queue such as at checkout counters or service points.

Employers should also review tasks and processes that usually require close interaction and identify ways to modify these to increase social distancing between workers themselves and between workers and customers (e.g. payment counters).

## My workers cannot maintain a social distance of 2 metres when performing work. Does this mean they cannot perform work?

Working in close contact increases the risk of workers being exposed to COVID-19. If the task must be completed and workers will be in close contact, undertake a risk assessment to determine what control measures are reasonably practicable in the circumstances to eliminate or minimise health and safety risks from COVID-19. For example, if close contact with others is unavoidable, implement other control measures such as:

- ✓ minimising the number of people within an area at any time.
- ✓ staggering start, finish and break times where appropriate.
- ✓ moving work tasks to different areas of the shop or off-site if possible.
- ✓ if necessary, separating workers into dedicated teams and have them work in shifts.
- ✓ ensuring each worker has their own equipment or tools.

## What other social distancing measures can be implemented in retail shops?

Apart from restricting customer numbers within the store and setting wall / floor markings outside and inside the shop to identify 2 metres distances, businesses can take the following additional measures:

- ✓ split or stagger workers' in shifts to reduce the number of workers in the shop at any given time.
- ✓ if adopting a shift system, do not rotate workers between teams. Keep team members fixed so that if a team member develops COVID-19, the number of exposed workers is minimised.

- ✓ schedule time between shifts so that there is no overlap of staff arriving at and leaving the workplace to avoid / reduce interaction.
- ✓ staff could wear a badge as a visual reminder to themselves and customers of social distancing requirements
- ✓ use social barriers, such as clear perspex, at checkouts, where appropriate
- ✓ limit social interactions between workers and customers, where possible
- ✓ limit social interactions between workers, and between workers and other persons at the workplace – e.g. by using contactless deliveries and limiting non-essential visitors, and
- ✓ require workers to use methods such as mobile phone to communicate rather than face to face interaction.

### Layout of the retail shop

Employers may need to redesign the layout of the shop and workflows to enable workers and customers to keep at least 2 metres apart to continue performing their duties and shopping. This can be achieved by, where possible:

- ✓ restricting workers and/or customers and others to certain pathways or areas, and
- ✓ spreading out furniture or store fittings to increase distancing.

If changing the social layout of the shop, the layout must allow for workers to enter, exit and move about the both under normal working conditions and in an emergency without risks to their health and safety.

### Staff meetings and training (where applicable)

Postpone or cancel non-essential meetings or training. If meetings or training are essential, use non face-to-face options such as tele and video conferencing. If this is not possible, ensure face-to-face time is limited, make sure the gathering, meeting or training goes on for no longer than it needs to, and hold the gathering, meeting or training in spaces that enable workers to keep at least 2 metres apart and with 10 square metres of space per person – e.g. outdoors or in large conference rooms. Limit the number of attendees in a gathering, meeting or training by holding multiple training sessions. Ensure adequate ventilation if gathering, meeting or training is held indoors. Consideration needs to be given to how to communicate with workers and others for who Maltese or English are not their first language. Legal notice related to gatherings in public places applies.

### Workplace staff facilities (where applicable)

Reduce the number of workers utilising staff common areas at a given time and stagger meal breaks and start times. Spread out furniture in common areas. Ensure workers maintain 2 metres distance when travelling in lifts. Depending on the size of the lift, this may result in only one person travelling in a lift at any one time.

Place appropriate signage about social distancing both outside and around the shop. Employers may consult the [www.covid19health.gov.mt](http://www.covid19health.gov.mt) website for links to a range of



posters and resources to help remind workers and customers of the risks of COVID-19 and the measures that are necessary to stop its spread. These posters can be placed around the shop and in entrances.

### Deliveries, contractors and visitors attending the shop

Non-essential visits to the shop should not be allowed. Family members of staff, particularly children, should not be allowed inside shops. Minimise the number of workers attending to deliveries and contractors as much as possible. Delivery drivers and other contractors who need to provide maintenance or repair services or perform other essential activities, should be given clear instructions of requirements while they are on site.

Ensure hand washing facilities, or if not possible, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, is readily available for workers after socially handling deliveries. Direct visiting delivery drivers and contractors to remain in vehicles and use contactless methods such as mobile phones to communicate with workers wherever possible. Direct visiting delivery drivers and contractors to use alcohol-based hand sanitizer before handling products being delivered.

Use, and ask delivery drivers and contractors to use, electronic paperwork where possible, to minimise social interaction. Where possible, set up alternatives to requiring signatures. For instance, see whether a confirmation email or a photo of the loaded or unloaded goods can be accepted as proof of delivery or collection (as applicable). If a pen or other utensil is required for signature, ask that the pen or utensil is cleaned or sanitised before use or use your own.

### Do I need to provide personal protective equipment to workers who are in close contact with each other or with customers for prolonged periods of time?

Employers must ensure workers comply with social distancing requirements where possible. In circumstances where the nature of the task requires workers to be in close contact, put control measures in place that minimise the time workers spend with each other or with other people in the shop. Employers must also ensure workers are practicing good hygiene.

If employers have a situation where, despite other control measures, workers will be in close contact with each other or with other people for longer than the recommended time (i.e. more than 15 minutes face to face cumulative over one day or more than 2 hours in a shared closed space), consider the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Workers must be trained in the proper use of PPE. Be aware of risks that may arise as a result of workers using and wearing PPE. Personal protective equipment (PPE) can be used to supplement the other control measures put in place to protect against COVID-19 including good hygiene measures, social distancing, environmental cleaning and providing

workers with information and training. Employers must implement more control measures to protect against COVID-19 than only PPE.

The type of PPE to be provided will depend on your shop and the outcomes of risk assessment. Common PPE that can be used to protect against COVID-19 include masks, gloves, eye protection, and screens. ***The use of certain types of masks, gowns and disposable suits is restricted to healthcare settings. It is not recommended that these types of PPE are used outside of healthcare to protect against COVID-19.***

Eye protection, in the form of safety glasses, goggles or a face shield, can be used as PPE for protecting against the risks of COVID-19. Eye protection can assist to act as a physical barrier from droplet spray and prevent unintentional rubbing of eyes between hand washing. Eye protection may be necessary for workers who are in close proximity to droplet spray. For many retail shops, eye protection will not be a required control measure. Good hygiene practices should be followed if eye protection is used.

### Do I need to provide masks to workers?

The advice of the Public Health Authorities at this stage of the pandemic response is that there are benefits from wearing a face mask when entering closed spaces in order to enhance the effects of social distancing.

In these guidelines, customers and staff are being directed to wear a mask or visor at all times whilst inside a shop or shopping mall. It is the responsibility of employers to provide appropriate masks or visors to their workers. Employers must also provide appropriate training and instruction on how to put on and fit, wear, remove and dispose of masks and on how to put on, remove and sanitise visors. Information about using masks or visors is provided by the manufacturer.

If a worker has been provided training and instruction about using a mask or visor, they must comply with that training and those instructions.

### Do I need to provide gloves?

Gloves will not normally be necessary in many retail shops. A risk assessment must be conducted to help inform what gloves, if any, are appropriate for the shop. If employers choose to supply or use gloves, they should make sure the gloves are suitable for the work; not all gloves are appropriate for all work or workplaces. Be aware that wearing gloves may result in new risks. For example, wearing disposable gloves could cause skin irritation, contact dermatitis or other sensitivities in some workers.

When providing gloves, workers must be trained in how to put on, use, remove and dispose of gloves (Fig. 2). Employers must provide the appropriate facilities to use gloves properly including a hand washing area and appropriate products and a sealed bin for disposal. Even if workers wear gloves in the shop, employers should ensure that workers have good hygiene practices including washing or sanitizing hands frequently.



Fig.2 proper removal of gloves

For more information on proper use of gloves, visit [covid19health.gov.mt](https://covid19health.gov.mt)

### Do I need to install screens in the workplace?

Perspex screens (also known as sneeze guards) can be considered at workplaces where workers are in close proximity to each other or to customers for long periods. For example, a Perspex screen could be considered where two workers work side by side or back to back for a whole day. This does not remove the obligation to wear a mask or face visor.

Many retail shops have chosen to protect workers by installing Perspex screens including retail food stores and pharmacies. Perspex screens come in many different sizes and shapes and can be custom made for the workplace. Generally, they have a space cut out to allow for exchange between the worker and customer, with the screen covering the upper half of the body and head.

If employers choose to install a Perspex screen, they need to ensure that the screen is fit for purpose and protects workers from droplet spray. The screen must allow the workers to safely work and protect their face from exposure to droplet spray. Be aware that installing a Perspex screen may result in other risks that need to be considered. Employers must provide appropriate training and instruction to workers who will use them. Perspex screens should be cleaned in the same manner as other frequently handled objects or surfaces. See cleaning guide below for more information on cleaning and disinfecting, including for specific surfaces.

### My workers need to travel in a vehicle together for work purposes. How do they practice social distancing?

Employers must reduce the number of workers travelling together in a vehicle for work purposes. Employers should ensure that only two people are in a 5-seat vehicle – the driver and a worker behind the front passenger seat. Only one worker should be in a single cab vehicle / delivery van.

These measures may mean that more vehicles are on the road at one time and more workers are driving and for longer periods than usual (if driving by themselves). Because of this, employers should review procedures and policies for vehicle maintenance and driver safety to ensure they are effective and address risks that arise when workers drive for work purposes. If workers are required to travel together for work purposes and the trip is longer than 15 minutes, air conditioning must be switched off and all windows should be opened for the duration of the trip. Employers must also clean vehicles more frequently, no matter the length of the trip, but at least following each use by workers.

### Do workers need to practice social distancing when on lunch break?

Workers must always comply to public health directions or orders. This includes maintaining a social distance of 2 metres between people. Limitations on gatherings in public places apply. This means that workers cannot eat lunch together.

### Cleaning and disinfecting measures

A combination of cleaning and disinfection will be most effective in removing the COVID-19 virus. Retail shops must be cleaned at least daily. Cleaning with detergent and water is sufficient. Once clean, surfaces can be disinfected. When and how often the shop should be disinfected will depend on the likelihood of contaminated material being present. Alternatively, cleaners may be able to do a 2-in-1 clean and disinfection by using a combined detergent and disinfectant.

### How to clean and disinfect

Cleaning means to physically remove germs (bacteria and viruses), dirt and grime from surfaces using a detergent and water solution. A detergent is designed to break up oil and grease with the use of water. Anything labelled as a detergent will work. Cleaning should start with the dirtiest surface first, progressively moving towards the cleanest surface. When surfaces are cleaned, they should be left as dry as possible to reduce the risk of slips and falls, as well as spreading of viruses and bacteria through droplets.





Disinfecting means using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. It is important to clean before disinfecting because dirt and grime can reduce the ability of disinfectants to kill germs. Disinfectants containing  $\geq 70\%$  alcohol, ammonium compounds, chlorine bleach or oxygen bleach are suitable for use on hard surfaces (surfaces where liquids pool, and do not soak in). The packaging or manufacturer's instructions will outline the correct way to use disinfectant. Disinfectants require time to be effective at killing viruses. If no time is specified, the disinfectant should be left for ten minutes before removing.

### Which areas should be cleaned and disinfected, and how often?

Any surfaces that are frequently touched should be prioritised for cleaning, e.g. door handles, counters, phones and POS machines, Perspex screens (if installed) and sanitary facilities (such as toilets). Any surfaces that are visibly dirty, or have a spill, should be cleaned as soon as they are identified, regardless of when they were last cleaned.

Workplaces should be cleaned and disinfected every day. If the shop has many customers entering each day, more frequent disinfection is recommended. If the work environment e.g. warehouse, administration, offices, etc. is only attended by the same small work crew each day and involves little interaction with other people, routine disinfection in addition to daily cleaning may not be needed.

### What should cleaners wear?

In most circumstances, it will not be necessary for cleaners to wear protective clothing to clean the shop. However, workers should use personal protective equipment (PPE) that is necessary for the products they are using. Gloves and a disposable apron are the minimum requirements. Medical masks should be used if cleaning an area impacted by a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case. Clothes that can be washed afterwards are suitable.

## Getting your shop ready to operate with community spread of COVID-19

### If an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 in the workplace

- ✓ Develop a plan of what to do if someone becomes ill with COVID-19 at the shop. It is obligatory to notify the public health authorities.
- ✓ Identify persons who may be at risk, and support them, without inviting stigma and discrimination. This could include pregnant women and staff who have conditions that put them at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. diabetes, heart and lung disease, older age).
- ✓ Review operational procedures and continue to promote teleworking. Teleworking can help businesses to continue to operate while workers stay safe. This measure allows employers to continue to utilise the skills and competences of vulnerable staff members.



- ✓ Treat personal information about individual workers' health carefully, in line with privacy laws.

### If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in the shop

- ✓ Develop a contingency and business continuity plan for an outbreak. The plan will help prepare the business for the possibility of an outbreak of COVID-19.
- ✓ The plan should address how to keep the business running if a significant number of employees, contractors and suppliers cannot come to your place of business - either because they are on obligatory quarantine or because they are ill.
- ✓ Communicate with employees and contractors about the business continuity plan. Make sure they are aware of what they need to do – or not do – under the plan. Emphasise key points such as the importance of staying away from work even if they have only mild symptoms or have had to take simple medications (e.g. paracetamol, ibuprofen) which may mask the symptoms.
- ✓ Be sure the plan addresses the mental health and social consequences of a case of COVID-19 and offer information and support.

### Tips for managing stress from COVID-19

- ✓ Regularly ask workers how they are getting along and if anything is stressing them.
- ✓ Where workers are distressed about the challenging conditions caused by the pandemic, acknowledge their feelings about the situation and re-assure workers they are doing what they can in the circumstances.
- ✓ Stay informed with information from official sources and regularly communicate or share this information with workers.
- ✓ Evaluate with workers and their representatives any risks to their psychological health and physical health and safety.
- ✓ Address the psychosocial risks where it can be reasonably done.
- ✓ Provide workers with a point of contact to discuss their concerns.
- ✓ Proactively support workers identified to be more at risk of workplace psychological injury particularly frontline workers. Remember also those working from home.
- ✓ Refer workers to appropriate mental health and wellbeing support services, such as Helpline 1770 (for everyone) or the Employee Support Program (for public administration employees)