

Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for the Retail and Shopping Centre Sector – COVID-19

OHS is everyone's business!



The purpose of this guide is to support businesses in the retail and shopping centre sector for management of occupational health and safety (OHS) in their work environment. It seeks to guarantee that operations can resume or continue under the safest and healthiest possible conditions in the context of COVID-19. The public health authorities [recommend that the indoor service areas](#) (e.g. play areas) remain closed.

In a crisis period, it is important that workers, employers, shopping centre owners, and other players in the workplace collaborate to have healthy and safe work environments for all! Dialogue and cooperation are essential to achieve this.

For the [measures](#) applicable to their clientele and the capacity limits in their establishment, workplaces should refer to the Direction générale de la santé publique.



Management of occupational health and safety

Management means implementing the necessary measures to honour the employer's legal obligations, namely identify, correct and control the risks and encourage the workers' participation in this preventive approach.

Good cooperation between the employer and the staff is essential to encourage management of OHS.



The employer must **proceed with identification of the risks of transmission of COVID-19 in the work environment**. If the risks of contamination cannot be eliminated, the employer must seek to reduce and control them. The employer must identify the tasks during which workers may be exposed to the virus. The suppliers, subcontractors, partners and customers have been informed of the measures implemented in the business in compliance with the guidelines issued by Santé publique (the public health authorities) to make them aware of the importance of complying with these measures.

The preventive measures that may be applied are based on the principles of exclusion of symptomatic persons from the workplace, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and maintenance of hygiene measures for the tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces.

The COVID-19 context can be a major stress factor, whether for the employer or for the workers, suppliers, store and shopping centre owners, subcontractors, partners and clients, due to the upheaval it causes in the different spheres of society. Special attention must therefore be paid to the psychosocial health of personnel.



Exclusion of symptomatic workers from the workplace

Persons exhibiting symptoms are part of the COVID-19 transmission chain in the workplace. Procedures accounting for the following factors can avoid transmission of the disease:

- Identification of workers with COVID-19 symptoms before they enter the workplace, by means such as:
 - the INSPQ's [questionnaire](#),
 - [self-evaluation](#) by the workers;

Answers to these questions are confidential and employers must take the necessary steps to ensure protection of their confidentiality;

- Isolation in a room of a worker who starts feeling symptoms in the workplace, wearing a procedure mask and reporting to 1-877-644-4545;
- Posting at the shopping centre's key locations (e.g. in the parking area, at the entrance doors and at the delivery docks) of instructions to be followed by the customers (e.g. traffic, hand washing instructions at the entrance to the facility, social distancing, respiratory hygiene);
- As needed, a security officer is present at the shopping centre entrances to enforce the instructions to the customers (hand washing, traffic management, questionnaire for customers on the presence of symptoms);
- A sign has been installed at the store entrance with all the useful information for customers (reminder of instructions, organization of service, organization of queues, terms of payment, removal of merchandise, possibility of preordering by phone or online);
- The workers, suppliers, subcontractors, partners and customers have been informed of the measures implemented in the company to control the risks associated with COVID-19 and made aware of the importance of complying with these measures;
- The customers who exhibit symptoms are informed of their obligation to postpone their purchases, make them online or send someone in their circle to shop on their behalf.



Physical distancing

- Whenever possible, a minimum of 2 metres of distancing between people must be maintained at work, from arrival to departure;
- This distance must also be maintained during breaks and lunch hour. If it is impossible to maintain at least 2 metres of physical distancing during breaks and lunch, evaluate the possibility of adapting the break schedules;
- Handshakes and hugs must be avoided.

Adjustments must be made to limit the risk of transmission when the principles of physical distancing cannot be respected: For example:

- Use of technological means (telework);
- Physical barriers (full partitions) have been installed between the different workstations that are too close to each other or that cannot be spaced;
- Physical barriers (transparent full partitions) have been installed at the checkouts, the information kiosks and the counters of the food court restaurants;
- Organization of work. For example:
 - prefer teams that are as small and stable as possible,
 - reduce the number of workers and job rotations,
 - If applicable, do not hold meetings that require a physical gathering,
 - avoid sharing objects,
 - limit outings and trips to those strictly necessary
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied per employee to personnel who perform a task requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person and in the absence of physical barriers;
- The members of the personnel whose tasks absolutely require them to be within 2 metres of another person without a physical barrier wear the required protective equipment;
- The number of customers in the store and the shopping centre is limited. As needed, a person outside the store is responsible for managing the queue;
- If necessary, a security officer or customer service representative patrols at the entrance of a store with or without an exterior door, in the common areas, and at the shopping centre entrances, as applicable, to:
 - remind people of the distancing rules and manage queues,
 - limit the duration of visits to the strict minimum necessary,
 - prevent gatherings;
- The delivery persons are informed they must deposit the packages on the floor in the customer's presence, without handing them over and respecting at least 2 metres of physical distancing whenever possible;

- One-way corridors are established and maintained in the store and the shopping centre to prevent the workers from encountering other people.
- Signage (e.g. floor marking) has been deployed to establish 2 metres of physical distancing near the checkouts, at the store entrance and at the fitting rooms, if applicable.



Hand hygiene

Washing hands frequently with lukewarm water and soap or with a hydroalcoholic solution of at least 60% for at least 20 seconds limits the risks of transmission in the work environment, in particular.

- before touching the face (eyes, nose, mouth);
- after coughing, sneezing or wiping the nose;
- before and after eating;
- after handling something that is frequently touched or a package received;
- before wearing and upon removing personal protective equipment

Contactless payment (e.g. bank card or contactless terminals) is preferred to prevent visitors from touching the terminals. If visitors pay with cash, the cashiers disinfect their hands immediately afterwards with a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution of at least 60%).

The customers bag their own purchases;

The delivery persons receive no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution of at least 60%) to clean their hands between deliveries.



Respiratory etiquette

Respecting respiratory etiquette consists of:

- covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and using tissues or the crook of your elbow;
- using single-use tissues;
- immediately discarding used tissues in the trash can;
- frequent hand washing;
- not touching your mouth, nose or eyes with your gloved or bare hands.



Maintenance of hygiene measures for tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces

Given that the virus responsible for COVID-19 can live on surfaces, application of hygiene measures is essential:

- Ensure efficient operation and maintenance of the ventilation systems, according to the regulatory requirements for the type of facility and the tasks performed;

- Clean the sanitary facilities of the store or shopping centre at least every shift and disinfect them daily;
- Clean the meal areas before each meal and disinfect them daily. For example:
 - refrigerator door handle,
 - chair backs,
 - microwaves;
- Clean the frequently touched surfaces at least every shift and when they are visibly soiled. For example:
 - tables,
 - counters,
 - doorknobs,
 - faucets,
 - toilets,
 - telephones,
 - computer accessories;
 - elevator buttons;
- The most frequently touched surfaces of the fitting rooms are disinfected regularly. Adjust the cleaning frequency according to the traffic;
- The objects touched by the customers are given special treatment (e.g. waiting period for clothing, cleaning and disinfection of surfaces of objects);
- Clean the tools and equipment used after every shift or when they must be shared;
- Use the appropriate cleaning products or disinfectants (see the manufacturer's recommendations and do not mix cleansers);
- Remove non-essential objects (magazines, newspapers and knickknacks) from the common areas;
- Disinfect the customers' point of contact with the basket or cart after each use;
- Encourage the workers to clean their personal belongings and clothes, if they are responsible for their maintenance.

Resources are available online for more information concerning [cleaning of surfaces](#) or the [recommended disinfectants](#).



Legal obligations

Legal obligations with respect to occupational health and safety, for both the employer and for workers, must be applied in the context of COVID-19. They are summarized below.

Employer

The employer has an obligation to protect the health, safety and physical well-being of their workers. [*The Act respecting occupational health and safety*](#) (AOHS) stipulates that the employer must take all the necessary measures to do so ([section 51](#)). This includes using methods to identify, correct and control risks.

In the context of COVID-19, the employer must ensure that the usual preventive measures are still appropriate. If not, they must modify them to protect workers against the risk of contamination.

The employer must also inform them about the risks associated with their work, including those associated with COVID-19. They must also provide workers with appropriate training, assistance and supervision so that everyone has the skill and knowledge required to safely perform the work assigned to them.

Worker

Every worker has an obligation to take the necessary measures to protect their health, safety or physical well-being and to ensure that they do not endanger the health, safety or physical well-being of other people in the workplace ([section 49](#) of the AOHS). To do this, they must follow the rules and measures put in place in the context of COVID-19, just as they follow the other rules applied in the workplace. Workers must also participate in identifying and eliminating risks. If they see risks or have suggestions in this regard, they must inform the health and safety committee (if there is one), their superior or a representative of the employer.



The guide and the kit result from a reflective process intended to support the work environments in management of occupational health and safety in the context of COVID-19. The project is scalable and will harmonize with the preventive measures order by the Direction de la santé publique (public health authorities).

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