

**Government of Punjab**  
**Department of Health & Family Welfare**

No. COVID/NHM/Pb/21/ 11226-36

Dated, 09.4.21 Chandigarh

To

1. Additional Chief Secretary (Cooperatives), Punjab
2. Additional Chief Secretary (Development), Punjab
3. Principal Secretary, Food & Civil Supplies, Punjab
4. Director, Food and Civil Supplies, Punjab
5. Managing Director Markfed
6. Managing Director PUNSUP
7. Managing Director PSWC
8. Managing Director PUNGRAIN
9. Secretary, Mandi Board Punjab
10. All the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab
11. All the Civil Surgeons of Punjab

**Subject: Advisory on Safe Farming operations (Procurement and Marketing) in wake of COVID-19 pandemic.**

Corona virus Disease 2019 (COVID -19) is a systemic disease caused by a novel Corona virus (SARS-CoV-2), transmitted in most instances through respiratory droplets, direct contact with cases and also through contaminated surfaces/objects. Though the virus survives on environmental surfaces for a varied period of time, it gets easily inactivated by chemical disinfectants. Thus, correct and timely information and knowledge about the corona virus is the key to control the pandemic. It is essential to ensure a meticulous compliance of various guidelines issued by the Government to control the spread of the corona virus.

The summarized and consolidated guidelines for the various stakeholders involved in the operations- Farmers, Combine operators, Labour, Arhtiyas/Shopkeepers, Transporters, Staff of the Market Committees/ State Procurement Agencies (SPAs)/ District Administration are hereby issued as follows:

**A. FARMERS:**

- i. Farmers should prefer mechanized operations over the manual, wherever feasible. Only the essential numbers of persons should be allowed to accompany the machine.
- ii. All machines should be sanitized at the entry point and at regular intervals.
- iii. All the persons engaged in the operations should use cloth masks at all the times and ensure hand washing with soap at reasonable intervals.

- iv. The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
- v. The cloth mask should be properly washed with soap/detergent and water immediately after use.
- vi. Farmers should always maintain and ensure that social distancing of at least 2 metre is maintained by all the engaged labour during rest, taking of meals, transfer of produce at collection point, loading/unloading etc.
- vii. In case of manual field operations of harvesting/ picking, the farmer should accomplish the operation in 6 feet spaced strips assigning one strip to one person so as to ensure an adequate spacing between the engaged labours.
- viii. Stagger the field operations wherever possible and avoid engaging more number of persons on the same day.
- ix. Engage only familiar persons to the extent possible and after reasonable enquiry as to avoid the entry of any suspect or likely carrier of COVID-19 during field activity.
- x. The collection of the produce should be done in small heaps spaced at least 6 feet and field level cleaning/processing, should be assigned to 1-2 persons/heap to avoid crowding.
- xi. All transport vehicles, gunny bags or other packaging material should also be sanitized.
- xii. All persons engaged in operations should wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds by applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space as well as between the finger and the thumb and the wrist immediately before the start and after the end of operations. A two-hourly hand wash during the operations is recommended.
- xiii. In case a Sanitizer is being used, use a minimum of 3 ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
- xiv. Sanitize or wash the hands with soap and water even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
- xv. Do not indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts while carrying the operations. All are encouraged to download "COVA APP" developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.
- xvi. In case someone is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during operations or otherwise, there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104 detailing the exact nature of exposure.
- xvii. Farmer while transacting a paper/cash with labour/combine operator etc. should immediately sanitize his hands before as well as after any such transactions. He should

also encourage the other person to sanitize his/her hands before and after the transactions. The farmer is advised to use online transactions wherever possible.

**B. COMBINE OPERATORS:**

- i. The combine operator and his workers should always bear in mind that the appropriate social distancing and not the time is the key factor during the pandemic in determining his income.
- ii. The transporter and his workers shall be advised not to indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other.
- iii. The operator and his workers should be advised to wear cloth mask at all times immediately from leaving the house till the entry back into the house/place of stay.
- iv. The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
- v. The cloth mask should be properly washed with soap/detergent and water immediately after use.
- vi. All should always maintain and ensure that social distancing of at least 2 meter is maintained while interacting with the farmer/engaged labour during operations, rest, taking of meals, transfer of produce at collection point, loading/unloading.
- vii. All persons engaged in operations should wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds by applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space as well as between the finger and the thumb and the wrist immediately before the start and after the end of operations. A two-hourly hand wash during the operations is recommended.
- viii. In case a Sanitizer is being used, use a minimum of 3ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
- ix. Sanitize or wash the hands even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
- x. Do not indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts while carrying the operations. All are encouraged to download "COVA APP" developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.
- xi. In case someone is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during operations or otherwise, there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104 detailing the exact nature of exposure.
- xii. The operator should avoid eating inside the vehicle.

- xiii. The operator should always keep an alcohol-based sanitizer inside the vehicle and frequently use the same as prescribed during the journey also.
- xiv. The operator while mounting/dismounting the vehicle should use disposable gloves and should immediately wash the hands after the completion of the mounting/dismounting exercise.
- xv. The operator should ensure a minimum distance of 2 metre amongst himself and his workers, if any, while driving the goods vehicle.
- xvi. The operator should avoid the unnecessary halts and contacts during the journey.
- xvii. The operator while transacting a paper/cash should immediately sanitize his hands before as well as after any such transactions. He should also encourage the other person to sanitize his/her hands before and after the transactions. The operator is advised to use online transactions wherever possible.
- xviii. Disinfection of the Combine:- Indoor areas including the inside of the combine, seats, gears etc. should be cleaned every evening and early in the morning before the combine is occupied. Prior to cleaning, the worker should wear disposable rubber boots, gloves (heavy duty), and a cloth mask.

The combine should be cleaned from outside on daily basis with soap/detergent and water or Sodium Hypochlorite (1%) before entering the same.

- High contact surfaces such as door handles, steering wheel, window knobs, gears, and other buttons should be cleaned twice daily by mopping with a linen/absorbable cloth soaked in 1% sodium hypochlorite.
  - Carefully clean the equipment used in cleaning at the end of the cleaning process.
- xix. The Combines entering the State from other States shall be compulsorily cleaned/sanitized at the entry barriers as per the procedure prescribed.

**C. MARKET COMMITTEES/PAs:** The Market Committee/PA shall ensure:

- i. **Maintenance and Sanitization of Office Spaces:** The meticulous compliance of the detailed SOP on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 in offices dated 13.02.2021 issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India in this regard should be ensured. (Copy attached at Annexure-1).
- ii. **At the Mandis/ Storage facility:**
  - (a) Availability of hand washing stations (with soap and water) at sufficient locations needs to be ensured after assessment of its daily footfall.

- (b) Announcements at regular intervals/ display of banners to instil the practice of hand washing.
- (c) Availability of adequate clean drinking water.
- (d) Removal from the common areas any unnecessary touch points like tables/clothes/covers etc
- (e) All shall be advised not to indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other.
- (f) All, including Arhtiyas/ Farmers/ Labour/ Staff etc. should wear cloth mask at all times.
- (g) The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
- (h) The cloth mask should be properly washed with soap/detergent and water immediately after use.
- (i) All the farmers/workers/labour/staff should avoid going into the communities during the free time.
- (j) All stakeholders must always maintain and ensure the social distancing of at least 2 meter while interacting with the farmer/engaged labour during operations, rest, taking of meals, transfer of produce at collection point, loading/unloading etc.
- (k) Signage of physical distancing should be placed at various locations all throughout the mandi area.
- (l) All persons engaged in operations should wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds by applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space as well as between the finger and the thumb and the wrist immediately before the start and after the end of operations. A two-hourly handwash during the operations is recommended.
- (m) In case a Sanitizer is being used, use a minimum of 3ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
- (n) All should be encouraged to sanitize the hands even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
- (o) If possible, thermal scanners should be installed at all the entry points in the mandis so as to check the temperature of all the people entering the premises.
- (p) No-one should indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts while carrying the operations. All are encouraged to download "COVA APP" developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.
- (q) In case someone develops Coughing/sneezing/fever/ difficulty in breathing/or is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during operations or otherwise,

there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104, detailing the exact nature of exposure.

**D. Mandi Board Licensees (Arthiyas, Tolas, Direct Purchaser etc) :** During the procurement, the Licensees (as the case may be) shall ensure:

**i. At their shop/premises:**

- a) Procurement may be in staggered manner with the appointment system for the farmers.
- b) Availability of hand washing stations (with soap and water) or Alcohol-based sanitizer (minimum 70% ethyl alcohol v/v) are mounted or kept for themselves and their workers to sanitize their hands before entering the shop/initiation of work and at the end of days work, apart from using them in between. The sanitizers are to be refilled / replaced frequently.
- c) Use a minimum of 3 ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
- d) Encourage their workers and also themselves to sanitize the hands even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
- e) Wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space between the finger and the thumb and the wrist wherever and whenever the opportunity to wash the hands is available. However, a two-hourly hand wash is recommended.
- f) Arthiyas should not indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other. Similarly, their labour should not indulge in any such practice.
- g) All should wear cloth mask at all times.
- h) The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
- i) The cloth mask should be properly washed with soap/detergent and water immediately after use.
- j) That all stakeholders always maintain and ensure the social distancing of at least 2 meter is maintained while interacting with the farmer/engaged labour during operations, rest, taking of meals, transfer of produce at collection point, loading/unloading.
- k) No-one should indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts while carrying the operations. All are encouraged to download "COVA APP" developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.
- l) In case someone develops Coughing/sneezing/Fever/ difficulty in breathing/or is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during operations or otherwise, there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104 detailing the exact nature of exposure.

- m) Arhtiya should ensure the regular cleaning of the toilet, if any, at his shop/premises or if provided to its labour by his sanitary workers who use a separate set of cleaning equipment for toilets (mops, nylon scrubber). The workers should always wear disposable protective gloves while cleaning a toilet.
- n) Arhtiya should ensure that the sleeping area/place for his labour is well ventilated and of adequate area so that the requirement of social distancing of at least 2 metre is met. The Licensee will ensure that such place is regularly cleaned and disinfected with soap/detergent and water.



Director Health Services, Punjab  
W

No. COVID/NHM/Pb/21/11237-40 Dated, 09.04.21 Chandigarh

1. A copy is forwarded to OSD to Chief Secretary, Punjab for the kind information of Worthy Chief Secretary please.
2. A copy is forwarded to PS to PSHFW, Punjab for the kind information of Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare.
3. A copy is forwarded to PA to MD NHM Punjab for the kind information of Mission Director NHM.
4. A copy is forwarded to PA to MD PHSC for the kind information of Managing Director PHSC.



Director Health Services, Punjab  
W

**Government of India  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**

**SOP on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 in offices**

**1. Background**

Offices and other workplaces are relatively close settings, with shared spaces like workstations, corridors, elevators & stairs, parking places, cafeteria/canteens, meeting rooms and conference halls etc. and COVID-19 infection can spread relatively fast among officials, staffs and visitors.

There is a need to prevent spread of infection and to respond in a timely and effective manner in case suspect case of COVID-19 is detected in these settings, so as to limit the spread of infection.

**2. Scope**

This document outlines the preventive and response measures to be observed to contain the spread of COVID-19 in office settings. The document is divided into the following sub-sections

- i. Generic preventive measures to be followed at all times
- ii. Measures specific to offices
- iii. Measures to be taken on occurrence of case(s)
- iv. Disinfection procedures to be implemented in case of occurrence of suspect/confirmed case.

**Offices in containment zones shall remain closed except for medical & essential services. Only those outside containment zones will be allowed to open up.**

**3. Generic preventive measures**

The generic preventive measures include simple public health measures that are to be followed to reduce the risk of infection with COVID-19. These measures need to be observed by all (employees and visitors) at all times. These include:

- i. Individuals must maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (*2 gaj ki doori*) in common places as far as feasible.
- ii. Use of face covers/masks at all times. They must be worn properly to cover nose and mouth. Touching the front portion of mask/face covers to be avoided.
- iii. Practice frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20 seconds) can be made wherever feasible.



- iv. Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing off used tissues properly.
- v. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to the immediate supervisory officer.
- vi. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.
- vii. Installation & use of Aarogya Setu App by all employees.

#### **4. Specific preventive measures for offices:**

- i. Entrance to have mandatory hand hygiene (sanitizer dispenser) and thermal screening provisions.
- ii. Only asymptomatic staff/visitors shall be allowed entry.
- iii. Any officer and staff residing in containment zone should inform the same to supervisory officer and not attend the office till containment zone is denotified. Such staff should be permitted to work from home.
- iv. Drivers shall maintain physical distancing at all times particularly within rooms/ spaces designated for drivers. They shall follow required do's and don'ts related to COVID-19. It shall be ensured by the service providers/ officers/ staff that drivers residing in containment zones shall not be allowed to drive vehicles.
- v. There shall be provision for disinfection at-least twice a day of the interior of the vehicle using 1% sodium hypochlorite solution/spray. A proper disinfection of frequently touched surfaces i.e. steering, door handles, keys, etc. should be taken up.
- vi. Advise all employees who are at higher risk i.e. older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions, to take extra precautions. They should preferably not be exposed to any front-line work requiring direct contact with the public.
- vii. All officers and staff / visitors to be allowed entry only if using face cover/masks. The face cover/mask has to be worn at all times inside the office premises.
- viii. Visitors with proper permission of the officer who they want to meet, should be allowed after being properly screened.
- ix. Meetings, as far as feasible, should be done through video conferencing.
- x. Posters/standees/AV media on preventive measures about COVID-19 to be displayed prominently.
- xi. Proper crowd management in the parking lots and outside the premises – duly following physical distancing norms be ensured.
- xii. Valet parking, if available, shall be operational with operating staff wearing face covers/ masks and gloves as appropriate. A proper disinfection of steering, door handles, keys, etc. of vehicles should be taken up.
- xiii. Any shops, stalls, cafeteria/canteen etc., outside and within the office premises shall follow physical distancing norms at all times.

- xiv. Specific markings may be made with sufficient distance to manage the queue and ensure physical distancing in the premises.
- xv. Proper cleaning and frequent sanitization (at-least twice a day) of the workplace, particularly of the frequently touched surfaces must be ensured.
- xvi. Ensure regular supply of hand sanitizers, soap and running water in the washrooms.
- xvii. Number of people in the elevators shall be restricted, duly maintaining physical distancing norms for which purpose proper marking be made on the floor of the elevators.
- xviii. For air-conditioning/ventilation, the guidelines of CPWD shall be followed which mentions that the temperature setting of all air conditioning devices should be in the range of 24-30° C, relative humidity should be in the range of 40- 70%, intake of fresh air should be as much as possible and cross ventilation should be adequate.
- xix. Large physical gatherings continue to remain prohibited.
- xx. Effective and frequent sanitation within the premises shall be maintained with particular focus on lavatories, drinking and hand washing stations/areas.
- xxi. Cleaning and regular disinfection (using 1% sodium hypochlorite) of frequently touched surfaces (doorknobs, elevator buttons, handrails, benches, washroom fixtures, etc.) shall be done in office premises and in common areas at-least twice a day.
- xxii. Proper disposal of face covers / masks / gloves left over by visitors and/or employees in covered bins, shall be ensured.
- xxiii. In the cafeteria/canteen/dining halls:
  - a. Mandatory placement of hand sanitizers at the entrance to ensure personal hygiene.
  - b. Staff to take their temperature regularly and check for respiratory symptoms. They must see a doctor if feeling unwell or having flu-like symptoms.
  - c. Adequate crowd and queue management to be done to ensure physical distancing norms for which purpose markings be made on the floor of cafeteria/canteen/dining halls.
  - d. Staff / waiters to wear mask and hand gloves and take other required precautionary measures.
  - e. The seating arrangement to ensure a distance of at least 6 feet between patrons as far as feasible.
  - f. In the kitchen, the staff to follow physical distancing norms.

## **5. Measures to be taken on occurrence of case(s):**

Despite taking the above measures, the occurrence of cases among the employees working in the office cannot be ruled out. The following measures will be taken in such circumstances, when one or few people(s) who share a room/close office space is/are found to be suffering from symptoms suggestive of COVID-19:

- a. Place the ill person in a room or area where they are isolated from others at the workplace. Provide a mask/face cover till such time he/she is examined by a doctor.

- b. Immediately inform the nearest medical facility (hospital/clinic) or call the state or district helpline.
- c. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the designated public health authority (district RRT/treating physician) and accordingly further advice shall be made regarding management of case, his/her contacts and need for disinfection.
- d. The management of cases and contacts will be done as per the existing protocol (<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/FinalGuidanceonMangaementofCovidcasesversion2.pdf> and <https://ncdc.gov.in/showfile.php?lid=570>).

## **6. Management of premises**

- i. If there are one or two cases reported, the disinfection procedure will be limited to places/areas occupied and visited by the patient in past 48 hours and work can be resumed after disinfection as per laid down protocol.
- ii. In case of larger number of cases are being reported at the workplace, the whole block or building, as the case may be, should be disinfected.