

Interim Recommendations for Essential Manufacturing Sectors

March 27, 2020

COVID-19 Preventive Measures in the Workplace

These measures apply when sustained community transmission has been confirmed by public health authorities.

To protect the health of employees and others in the workplace, employers and workers are asked to:

1. **Adjust work methods and schedules** to encourage respect for the directives applicable to employees in mandatory isolation (teleworking) and to those with other constraints (flexible hours, teleworking).
2. Advise workers **not to come to work** if they present symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms that may eventually be added to the list at the following website):
<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/>
 - If a worker starts experiencing symptoms in the workplace, have a procedure for isolating them in a room or have them wear a procedural (or surgical) mask. Call 1-877-644-4545.
3. Promote proper **hand hygiene** by providing employees with all necessary supplies (running water, soap, alcohol-based solution, touchless trash cans, disposable tissues, hand towels or paper towels, etc.).
4. Promote **respiratory etiquette** (coughing into the folded elbow, or into a tissue that is discarded immediately after use, then washing hands as soon as possible).
5. Respect **social distancing** measures (e.g. teleworking, physical barriers), avoid direct physical contact (e.g. handshakes, hugs) and, where possible, maintain a two-metre distance between people in the company's common and production areas. Passing by someone for a few moments without contact is not a risk (e.g. on a staircase or in a corridor).

Pay particular attention to the following situations:

- a) Areas acting as **bottlenecks** (e.g. entrance to production areas, cafeteria entrance, areas where time stamps are located, etc.):
 - Avoid line-ups of people standing close together in these areas.
 - If necessary, slightly stagger work shifts and break times.
 - Make available alcohol-based solutions in these areas.
 - Place posters reminding people of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and social distancing in these areas.

b) **Meal times:**

- Ensure thorough hand-washing before and after eating.
- Have workers eat in rooms large enough to ensure a distance of more than two metres between each of them. If a large enough room is not available, modify meal time schedules so as to have a limited number of workers in the dining room at all times.
- Do not exchange cups, glasses, plates, or utensils; wash dishes in hot water with soap.

c) **Breaks:**

- Ensure that social distancing measures are applied during breaks (e.g. avoid gatherings).
- Avoid the sharing of items (e.g. cigarettes, pencils, coins or bank notes).
- Remove non-essential items (e.g. magazines, newspapers, knick-knacks) from common areas.

6. If it is impossible to maintain a distance of two metres at all times or to avoid working in direct contact, the following **adjustments** must be made in the following contexts:

- Strictly enforce the exclusion of individuals from the workplace if they present symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- Have the smallest and most consistent teams possible work on the same production line (reduce the number of workers and task rotations) to **avoid the multiplication of interactions**.
- As far as possible, have workers keep the same position on the production line for the entire work shift, unless there are risks related to physical, chemical or ergonomic constraints.
- Avoid sharing materials and equipment (tablets, pencils, cell phones, etc.).

In addition:

- a) For **production lines** where workers are positioned less than two meters from each other or are in direct contact:
- **Consider reducing production** to reduce the number of workers, and aim for a distance of at least two metres between workers where possible.
 - If applicable, install **physical barriers** (solid partitions) between workers.
 - If it is impossible to maintain a distance of two metres between workers or to install physical barriers, given the large number of workers who may be present and circulating in the same room, it is recommended that **a procedural mask and protective eyewear be worn** in addition to the gloves usually worn. A visor that covers the entire face down to the chin can be worn as an alternative, to replace a procedural mask and protective eyewear.
 - Before leaving the production area:
 - (1) Remove the gloves, protective eyewear and the procedural (surgical) mask safely¹ and place them in a trash can or in other designated containers or resealable bags, then dispose of them.
 - (2) Disinfect reusable equipment (e.g. protective eyewear or visor, if reusable) using a product recommended for this equipment.
 - (3) Ensure that hands are washed or that a hydro-alcoholic solution is used after the removal of equipment.

¹ Remove gloves, wash hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution, remove protective eyewear, wash hands with a hydro-alcoholic solution, remove the mask by handling it only by the elastics or straps, and finish by washing hands with soap and water or a hydro-alcoholic solution.

- b) For **merchandise handling (receiving and shipping)**:
- Favour the consistency of teams that come into contact with persons from outside of the company (e.g. delivery persons, drivers).
 - Ideally, organize tasks so that delivery persons and suppliers can drop off goods at the company entrance to avoid having workers from other companies circulate on the premises.
 - Have goods placed on a clean surface, while maintaining the two-metre distance between individuals.
 - Keep the merchandise-handling operations separate from the company's other work areas where possible.
- c) **For the exchange or signing of documents**:
- Where possible, minimize the exchange of hardcopy documents (e.g. sign contracts and delivery slips electronically).
 - Where hardcopy documents are required:
 - (1) Exchange documents (transmit and retrieve) by placing them on a clean surface, while maintaining the two-metre distance between individuals.
 - (2) Do not share pens with others; they must use their own pen.
 - (3) Set out designated pens that customers can keep if they did not bring their own pen to sign documents.
 - (4) Clean your pen with a damp cloth and mild soap as needed, when dirty.
 - (5) During the retrieval of documents, place them in an envelope and transport them in a document carrier.
7. Disinfect **dining rooms** after each meal and **restrooms and locker rooms** on each work shift using the disinfecting product normally used.
8. Clean **frequently touched surfaces** (tables, counters, door handles, telephones, computer accessories, pencils, etc.) on each shift, or when a new user takes over the workspace, with the cleaning product normally used.
- a) For **production lines**, pay particular attention to:
- Manual controls on production lines (e.g. levers, control handles, buttons)
 - Tools and other devices handled in the course of production activities
- b) **For handling activities** (reception and shipping of merchandise), pay close attention to forklift truck controls and pallet truck handles.
9. Remove work clothes at the end of the work shift. Clean them following the usual procedure.
10. Have an infection control plan adapted to the specific context of your workplace and see to its implementation.

Note: The preceding recommendations are based on the latest available information at the time of writing. Given that the situation and knowledge about the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) are evolving rapidly, the recommendations in this document are subject to change.

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The French version is entitled *Recommandations intérimaires concernant les secteurs manufacturiers essentiels* is also available on the website of the Institut national de santé publique du Québec at: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2943-recommandations-secteurs-manufacturiers-covid-19>

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