



# COVID-19

GUIDELINES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE WORKPLACE  
ENVIRONMENT UPON RESUMING OF ACTIVITIES

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**VIEIRAREZENDE**  
ADVOGADOS

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# Guidelines on Resuming of Activities

A lot is being said about the measures companies must observe for resuming their usual activities. On June 19th, 2020, the Special Secretary of Social Security and Employment, from the Ministry of Economy, along with the Ministry of Health, published Joint Decree nº 20/2020, establishing the measures that must be observed in the workplace environment for preventing, controlling and reducing the contamination by Covid-19 and enabling companies to draft a plan for resuming activities.

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## *Fundamental Measures*

Companies whose activities were impacted by the pandemic must implement several measures, including the following:

- Sanitize and disinfect the workplace, common areas and vehicles;
- Improve communication with employees;
- Supervise the health condition of employees', enforcing the medical leave of confirmed and suspect cases, as well as cases of people who had direct contact with confirmed cases;
- For the moment, companies cannot require employees to undergo Covid-19 tests as a condition for resuming their activities.

# Definition of Cases and Possible Cases of Covid-19

## Confirmed cases

There is a laboratory test confirming the employee's diagnosis, or, despite not having undergone the test, show symptoms compatible with influenza or respiratory syndrome, and have had direct contact with a confirmed case in the past 7 days.

## Possible cases

When employees have severe respiratory syndrome, in addition to one or more than one of the following symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, coryza, shortness of breath, muscular discomfort, fatigue or exhaustion, nasal congestion, loss of sense of smell and/or taste, diarrhea.

# Definition of Cases and Possible Cases of Covid-19

## **Cases of employees who had contact with a confirmed case**

An asymptomatic professional was in contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19 between 2 days before or 14 days after the beginning of symptoms, or confirmation by laboratorial exam in the following situations: (i) if the contact was maintained for more than 15 minutes and within one meter distance; (ii) if remained within one meter distance during transport; (iii) if shared the same domicile ambience; and/or (iv) professionals of the health sector or person who takes care of someone contaminated, or professional who handles samples of possible Covid-19 without the necessary protection equipment.

# Definition of Cases and Possible Cases of Covid-19

## Attention!

- In the occurrence of any of the hypothesis listed in the chart above, if duly demonstrated, the respective professionals must be immediately removed from their activities for a 14-day period and be directed to stay at home. During said period, these employees are eligible to receive their regular remuneration;
- The leave period for professionals who had contact with an infected person should be counted as from the last day of contact;
- The leave period of possible infected employees may be shortened if the laboratorial examination discards the contamination by Covid-19, or if they remain asymptomatic for more than 72 hours.

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# Recommendations and procedures

With that in mind, for safely resuming the companies' activities, it is also important to follow the following recommendations and procedures through trainings, electronic messages and banners, among others:

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## *Possible cases*

- Creation of communication channels between the company and the professionals for registration of information concerning Covid-19, such as symptoms or contact with other possible or confirmed cases;
- Implement screening in the companies' entrance at the beginning of each shift, where every professional (employees and contractors) will undergo corporal temperature check with an infrared or similar equipment;
- Gathering of information regarding professionals who had contact with a contaminated person, their activities, workplace, common areas visited by said person, among other;
- Provide guidance to professionals who had contact with infected people about the necessity of immediately reporting the appearance of any symptom;
- In the occurrence of any possible or confirmed cases, reevaluate the preventive measures that were adopted;
- Referring possible cases to the companies' medical department, when available, for evaluation and proper monitoring. Assistance to symptomatic people should occur separately from other professionals and masks should be provided for everyone in the medical department.

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# Recommendations and procedures

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## *Hygiene and Protection Measures*

- Providing resources for hand sanitization near the workplace, including water, liquid soap, disposable paper towel and trash bins that do not require manual contact, or proper sanitizer such as 70% alcohol.
- Provide guidance about the proper and frequent sanitization of hands;
- Adoption of procedures for professionals to avoid touching surfaces that are frequently used, such as elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, among others;
- Provide guidance about not sharing towels or any personal usage products;
- Provide guidance about avoiding touching mouth, nose, eyes and face with hands and about practicing respiratory etiquette, including using a disposable tissue for nose hygiene, covering nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing and sanitizing hands after doing that;
- Increase cleaning and disinfection of workplace and common areas between shifts and whenever an employee is ordered to occupy other employee's workstation;
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of sanitary and changing rooms, as well as points with frequent contact such as keyboards, handrails, door handles, ATMs, elevator buttons, tables, chairs, among other;

# Recommendations and procedures

- Increase the natural ventilation in the workplace, or adopt measures for increasing the air refresh in said places, bringing clean air from outside;
- When in an acclimatized environment, the company must avoid the air recirculation and verify the adequacy of the preventive and corrective maintenance;
- Water dispensers, if available, should be adapted in a way that users can only dispense water in disposable plastic cups;
- Create or review the procedures for the use, sanitization, stowage and disposal of Individual Protective Equipment;
- Provide Guidance to professionals about the use, sanitization, disposal and substitution of masks, sanitization of hands before and after handling them, and including the limitations of the protection they provide;
- Surgical and fabric-made masks are not considered as Individual Protective Equipment and do not substitute the ones used for respiratory protection, when its use is recommended;
- Surgical and fabric-made masks are mandatory and must be provided to every professional, and their use must be required in every space shared by more than one person. The masks are personal, and they should be changed at least every three hours or whenever they are dirty or wet;

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# Recommendations and procedures

- Fabric-made masks must be sanitized by the company after each shift, or by the professional who uses them, according to companies' guidelines;
- Professionals responsible for the screening, professionals from the laundry and who perform the sanitization of toilets and common areas must receive the compatible Individual Protective Equipment according to the risks they are exposed to, according to the orientation and regulation provided by the Ministries of Economy and Health.

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## *Distance*

- Adopt measures for expanding the distance and reducing the personal interaction among professionals and between them and external public;
- Maintain a minimum distance of one meter between professionals and between professionals and external public;
- In case it is not possible to implement the measures for expanding the physical distance between professionals, companies must: a) for activities rendered on fixed workstations, implement the use of surgical or fabric-made masks, and adopt the use of impervious partitions, or provide face shields, protection glasses or similar; b) for other activities, maintain the use of surgical or fabric-made masks. Alternative measures may be adopted based on the companies' risk analysis;

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# Recommendations and procedures

- Companies must adopt measures for limiting the occupation in elevators, stairs, restrict environments, including toilets and changing rooms;
- Demarcate and reorganize the places and spaces for lines with a distance of at least one meter separating each person;
- Prioritize prior scheduling for attendance in order to organize the flow of people and avoid unnecessary crowds;
- Prioritize measure for distributing the workforce throughout the day, avoiding larger concentration of professionals in the workplace environment;
- Encourage remote work whenever possible;
- Avoid face-to-face meetings and maintain the minimum distance when meetings are unavoidable.

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## *Canteens and Changing Rooms*

- It is forbidden to share cups, plates and cutlery without the proper sanitization;
- Self-service should be avoided. In case of impossibility to suspend said service, the following measures will need to be observed: a) hands sanitization before and after serving; b) sanitization or constant exchange of the common use cutlery, such as ladles, clamps and spoons; c) installation of impervious covers over the self-service buffet; d) use of masks when serving and orientation to avoid conversation while serving;

# Recommendations and procedures

- Company must clean and sanitize tables, benches and chairs frequently;
- Foster a minimum distance of one meter between users queuing in line or sitting in the tables, orienting for the observance of respiratory etiquette and avoid conversation during meals;
- When the frontal or transverse distances cannot be implemented, companies must install a physical barrier on tables with a minimum height of one and a half meters over the floor;
- Spread professionals in different hours in the canteen;
- Remove the seasoning recipients (olive oil, vinegar, salad dressings, etc.), salt shaker and similar, as well as napkin rings and other shared utensils;
- Provide sanitized utensils, such as cutlery and paper napkin, packed individually;
- Avoid agglomeration of professionals when entering and leaving the changing rooms, as well as while using said room;
- Adopt a crowd control and oversee the flow of people in changing rooms, as well as orient professionals to maintain a minimum distance of one meter from each other;
- Orient professionals on the correct way of removing their uniform and gears, in a way that the mask is the last item to be removed;
- Providing resources for hand sanitization in the entrance and exit of the changing rooms, including water, liquid soap, disposable paper towel and trash bins that do not require manual contact, or proper sanitizer such as 70% alcohol.

# Recommendations and procedures

## *Transport*

- Implement procedures for the communication, identification and removal of possible cases before their boarding in the transport on their way to work, when provided by the employer, in order to prevent the boarding of symptomatic people;
- Avoid the agglomeration during the boarding and the disembarkation from the transport vehicle, as well as during the trip. Company should implement measures for guaranteeing a one meter minimum distance between each professional in the transport vehicle;
- Give preference to the natural ventilation inside the transport vehicles. When necessary to activate the air-conditioning system, avoid the air recirculation;
- Properly sanitize the seats and other surfaces of common use;
- Maintain a record of all professionals that use the transport, listed by vehicle and trip.

# Recommendations and procedures

## *Records*

The company must keep an updated record of its employees for the authorities use. The report must contain at least the following information:

- Employees for age range;
- Employees with comorbidity factors for the development of complications in connection with Covid-19. The specific disease must not be informed in order to maintain the employees' personal information confidential;
- Possible and confirmed Covid-19 cases, as well as professionals on leave after having contact with a confirmed case;
- Measures adopted for the workplace environment adequacy due to the Covid-19.

# Recommendations and procedures

## *Risk Group: **Special Attention***

Severe heart diseases (heart failure, heart attacks, carriers of arrhythmias, systemic arterial hypertension), severe pneumopathy (asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases), Immunosuppressed, severe kidney diseases (degrees 3, 4 and 5), diabetic patients, pregnant women and people over 60 years: for these categories of employees, the company must provide special attention and care, prioritizing their maintenance in home-office/remote work, or, in case it is not possible, prioritize their activation in a workplace with reduce contact with other employees and the external public, as well in a well ventilated and very well sanitized environment.

Finally, it is important to highlight that Specialized Services of Safety Engineering and Occupational Health, and the Internal Commission for the Prevention of Occupational Accidents may take part in the actions and procedures implemented by the Company.

Vieira Rezende, through its Labor and Compliance teams, is able to assist the clients in the implementation of the appropriate procedures, including technological tools, to help in the management and compliance with all procedures and protocols that must be observed when returning to the activities.