**RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROVIDERS DURING COVID 19**

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| 1. **CHARACTERISTICS** | 1. **RISK CONSIDERATION** | 1. **PUBLIC HEALTH RATIONALE** | 1. **RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES** |
| 1. **Demographics**    1. Demographics of your workforce involved in the provision of the essential service.    2. Demographic of clients / customers receiving the products | 1. Are your employees/clients from demographic groups which are at a greater risk of severe disease, such as older adults or people with underlying medical conditions? | 1. Older adults, people with immune compromising conditions and chronic diseases appear to be at greater risk of severe disease, so consideration should be given to protecting them from possible exposure to COVID-19 cases. 2. However, the health status of employees/clients may not be disclosed to their employers. 3. Workplaces/businesses cannot assume they know the health status of their employees. | 1. ESP workforce to sign reciprocal undertaking of ES delivery and assumption of risk; 2. Communication about risk to ESP workforce and clients emphasized; 3. Encourage use of individual measures such as frequent hand hygiene as well as respiratory etiquette; 4. Provision of protective gear such as gloves and masks as well as hand sanitiser.   . |
| 1. Are your employees at greater risk of spreading the disease (e.g. young children and people in a poverty- stricken area where there is malnutrition and poor sanitation)? | 1. Young children may be at greater risk of increasing disease transmission because they are generally less compliant with effective hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices and tend to socialize with others in a way that is likely to increase transmission. | 1. Adjust policies and procedures 2. Obtain consent and risk assumption disclaimer – reciprocal undertaking form; 3. Consider modifying service delivery (e.g., reducing number of clients using services at the same time, providing services outdoors); 4. Promote use of individual measures such as frequent hand hygiene, distancing, respiratory etiquette. 5. Consider need for increased frequency of cleaning especially of high touch services. |
| 1. **Local demographics and epidemiology of the area where ES is provided.** | 1. Is the local community where products or services are delivered experiencing an increased rate of COVID-19 infection? | 1. The risk of exposure to staff/clients may be higher in the workplace if there is ongoing local community transmission. | 1. Consider staggered delivery and collection of products 2. Sanitize surfaces and equipment regularly and set an alarm for this routine; 3. Sanitize product packaging 4. Drop off and collection to be staggered and in an outdoor area, 5. promoting use of individual measures such as frequent hand hygiene, 2m distancing, respiratory etiquette and use of protective gear. |
| 1. Is the local population at increased risk of severe disease if COVID-19 circulated? | 1. Businesses that interact with communities with a high number of elderly residents, higher rates of chronic disease or challenges accessing health care services need to limit exposures within the community and increase safety measures. |
| 1. **Type of service / activity** | 1.What kind of service is being undertaken (e.g., customer service, food service, rideshare, etc.)? | 1. The risk of being exposed and/or acquiring the infection is greater if employees/clients interact more closely or with one another or with numerous clients. 2. The duration of the exposure also has an impact on the risk of transmission.  The longer the exposure, the higher the risk for transmission. 3. Given that COVID-19 can survive on surfaces and objects for hours to days, work and/or services that are transactional in nature may represent a higher risk of exposure (e.g., exchange of money or items). | 1. Adjust workplace policies and procedures; 2. Reciprocal Risks Undertaking / disclaimer to be signed by ESP employees. 3. Consult with local Health Standards Authority, obtain assessment from HSA on hygiene standards in light COVID; 4. Consider going completely cashless; 5. Encourage hand hygiene after exchange of money and items; 6. Reinforce safe food handling practices with suppliers and ESP’s as well as customers; 7. Assign and allocate risk where it should lie – e.g. supplier of packaging to ensure that packages are sanitized. Indemnities and disclaimers to be added to contracts and terms and conditions of use of the service. 8. Revise / amend supply contracts; 9. Obtain public liability insurance. |
| 2.Will employees/ customers be participating in activities that promote transmission? | 1. Activities that could contribute to spread include, close physical contact (less than 2m), and touching common objects (e.g. service tables, packaging, service vehicles and utensils). | 1. Revised policy must be read, understood and signed by ESP workforce. 2. Disclaimers to be signed. 3. Reinforce social distancing measures (e.g. avoid greetings like handshakes, maintain 2m distances between people if possible); 4. Avoid sharing communal office equipment/supplies and vehicles (e.g., tablets, electronic devices, sanitize equipment and surfaces on a regular basis – set an alarm every 20 minutes for this purpose, make provision for disposal of protective gear and tissues); |
| 1. **Setting/Location** | 1. In what setting is your workplace/business located (i.e., a community-setting,)? | 1. A workplace/business located in a public space with high traffic is at an increased risk of being exposed/infected with COVID-19   due to the number of people coming in and out of the setting (i.e., high number of potential introductions of the virus). | 1. Consider modifying service delivery/hours or closing to reduce spread. 2. Private transportation and car-pooling to and from collection point to be arranged for ESP’s. 3. Sanitize delivery vehicles on a regular basis and designate collection points and times. 4. Where there is more than one location adopt a tailored approach on workplace measures based on specific context. 5. Limit ESP to 1 per location and service vehicle if possible. 6. Reinforce hygiene measures and communication. 7. Agree protocols with suppliers and customers and implement distancing. |
| 1. Is the majority of the work/service carried out indoors, outdoors or both? | 1. Work/services offered outdoors i.e. higher ventilation) are likely to be lower risk than those held indoors (e.g., construction work vs. administrative work in an office). |
| 1. Is your workplace/business in a geographically remote area or in close proximity to a densely populated area? | 1. A workplace/business located in a more densely populated area (e.g., metropolitan), may have higher exposure/infection risks.  Proximity of a workplace/business to a densely population area could result in a more rapid dissemination of disease. |
| 1. How do ESP’s clients/customers/contractors primarily access your workplace/business (e.g., public transit, personal car)? | 1. Workplaces/businesses accessible primarily via public transit may be at an increased risk of transmission due contact of potentially contaminated surfaces/objects and proximity with other individuals (especially at peak times) for a long period of time. |
| 1. **Planning** | 1. Does your workplace/business have a pandemic preparedness plan? | 1. Workplaces/businesses with robust pandemic are more likely to be able to adapt their operations/activities based on recommended public health advice. | 1. Review and revise, as needed, your business continuity plans to prioritize key functions in the event of ESP absenteeism. 2. Update emergency contact information of employees/contractors. |
| 2. Does your workplace/business have a robust business continuity plan addressing issues like critical operations, prioritization of work/services, surge capacity planning, cross-training of employees. | 2. Workplaces/businesses with robust business continuity plans are more likely to be able to adapt their operations/activities based on recommended public health advice. |
| 3.How will staff absenteeism impact your operations? | 3. Many employees/clients could be ill or be a caregiver to an ill person (e.g. elderly parent, child), therefore would be unable to attend work for a number of days or weeks.  Are employees cross-trained to assume other functions within your workplace/business?  4. Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from school. | 1. Prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies for employees who are sick, in self-isolation, or caring for family members. 2. Update policies and communicate. |
| 4.Do you have a risk communication plan to share information with your employees, contractors and clients? | 5. Workplaces and businesses with an existing risk communication plan are more likely to be able to ease employees’/clients’ fear, anxiety, rumors, and misinformation.  This will contribute to a more productive workforce in uncertain times.  6. Good communications channels are key to reinforce public health measures in the workplaces such as hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and staying home when ill in order to limit transmission.  It may also help with compliance with public health advice. | 1. Develop a risk communication plan to ensure effective and efficient communication with employees, contractors and clients. 2. Identify a single person responsible for COVID communication between ESP workforce and management. |
| 5.Does your workplace/business employ a small or large number of employees? | 7. The larger the number of employees/clients, the greater the likelihood of one of them being a case or a contact of COVID-19. However, larger workforces may be better able to manage absenteeism. | 1. Consider staggering work hours and shifts to reduce close contact; 2. Consider retaining employees with critical functions only to reduce close contact. |
| 1. **Policies and practices** | * 1. Can your workplace/business support flexible workplace policies (e.g. remote working and, staggered hours). | 1.Workplaces and business with flexible workplace policies will help reduce transmission amongst staff by reducing close contact between employees and/or clients. | 1. Consider relaxing sick leave policies that support employees in self-isolating when ill, exposed to cases, or returning from international travel, such as suspending the need for medical notes to return to work. |
| 1. **Infrastructure of the workplace** | * 1. Can your workplace/business infrastructure be easily altered/modified to implement public health and infection prevention and control measures (e.g., additional hand cleaning stations, spatial separation of 2-metre between workstations)? | 1. Respiratory droplets tend to fall within 2 metres of their source, so maintaining a 2-metre distance from others is a precaution to prevent spread. 2. If the employer/owner is unable to modify the workplace/venue to maintain spatial separation between employees and/or clients (ideally 2 meters), the risk of transmission is greater (e.g., spacing). 3. Hand hygiene should be performed more frequently. Alcohol-based hand rub (60% alcohol or greater) or hand washing sinks with soap and disposable towels should be made readily available. | 1. Provide access to handwashing facilities and place hand sanitizing dispensers in prominent locations throughout the workplace/business and in the delivery vehicles; 2. Provide additional respiratory etiquette supplies such as tissues, lined waste container, and hand hygiene products/supplies; 3. Consider increasing the spatial separation between workstations and in delivery vehicle. individuals (e.g., employees, customers) from each other, ideally a 2 m separation or use a physical barrier if possible; 4. Minimise the number of ESP’s who deliver to an area, if possible, only 1 ESP in a delivery vehicle. 5. Enhance environmental cleaning procedures and protocols with a special attention to high-touch surfaces and objects. |
| 5. .Are there restricted points of entrance and exit that force people to be in close proximity and/or pass through high-touch areas? | 4.Crowding and lines at bottlenecks can put employees/clients at increased risk of exposure to respiratory droplets. High-touch surfaces can also be contaminated and increase the risk of transmission. |
| 1. **Environmental cleaning** | 1. Does your workplace and business have existing environmental cleaning procedures and protocols? | 1. Routine cleaning of frequently used surfaces and objects help to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in order to mitigate the risk of people becoming infected through self-inoculation after touching contaminated surfaces.  The virus that causes COVID-19 has the potential to survive in the environment for up to several days. Cleaning, particularly of frequently touched surfaces, can kill the virus, making it no longer possible to infect people. | 1. Enhance your environmental cleaning procedures and protocols with a special attention to high-touch surfaces and object (e.g., phones, car door handles, computers, desks, tables, kitchens, washrooms, customer service counters). |
| * 1. Will high-touch surfaces be cleaned and disinfected frequently? | 2.High-touch surfaces can be contaminated and increase the risk of transmission. The virus that causes COVID-19 may live on surfaces for a few hours or up to a few days. It can be killed with store bought disinfectants (link to environmental cleaning Fact sheet). The frequency (i.e., one contact versus multiple contacts) and duration (i.e., transient contact versus prolonged contact) of exposure to high-touch surfaces and objects could potentially increase the risk of contamination. |
| 1. **Occupational Health and Safety** | 1. Do your employees have access to Occupational Health and Safety services on site? How will symptomatic individuals in the workplace/business setting be handled? How will contacts be handled? | 1. Although screening may not identify all individuals infected with COVID-19 in the workplace/business, occupational health and safety professionals may be able to quickly and safely identify and isolate symptomatic individuals in the workplace. | 1. Plan for rapid isolation of a symptomatic employee;   1. Identify an area where employees/clients can be isolated if they become ill at the workplace. |

This document is intended to provide guidance to businesses which deliver “Essential Services” during the COVID 19 Lockdown period, as contemplated by the regulations to the Disaster Management Act. Essential Services providers (ESP’s) trading over this period are encouraged to undertake this risk assessment for relevant categories which will enable then to identify and implement the appropriate risk mitigation strategies. This will in turn assist ESP’s in identifying and limiting their exposure and liabilities for damages, injury or harm claims made by essential services workforces, customers or suppliers.

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