



**STOP
THE
PANDEMIC**

EU guidance on COVID-19 – BACK TO THE WORKPLACE

Meeting social partners from the social services sector

9 June 2020



#EUhealthyworkplaces
#StopthePandemic

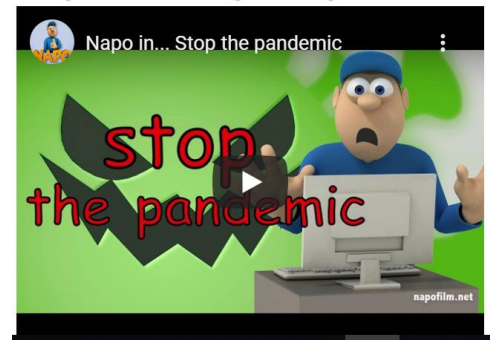
Elke Schneider
Senior project manager,
Prevention and Research Unit, EU-OSHA



Available resources

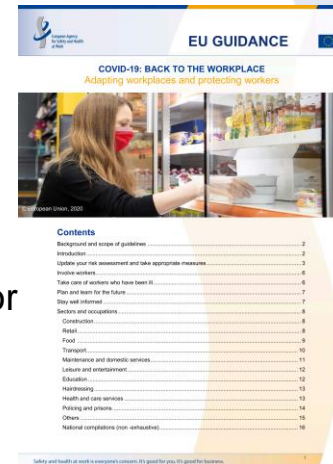
- **COVID-19: Guidance for the workplace**
- **COVID-19: Back to the workplace - Adapting workplaces and protecting workers – OSH wiki article, includes links sectoral guidance from many countries**
- **Dedicated web section <https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/covid-19-resources-workplace>**
- **Awareness-raising video “Napo in...stop the pandemic”**
<https://youtu.be/x9NOUr0ItNA>
- **Powerpoint presentation by the EU Commission**
- **Resources from EU and international organisations**
 - European Commission: [webpage on Covid-19](#)
 - European Commission: [data portal for researchers](#)
 - [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#)
 - [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#)
 - [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

Napo in... Stop the pandemic



Covid-19 – Back to the workplace

- **Applicable legislation: Biological agents Directive**
- **Update of risk assessment and taking appropriate measures!**
 - Considering all risks, including mental health
- **Hierarchy of control measures**
 - **Technical measures:**
 - Reorganising work processes
 - Reducing physical contact between workers
 - Barrier between workers
 - **Organisational measures:**
 - Avoiding excessive workload, carrying out only essential work
 - Eliminating/limiting physical interaction with/between customers
 - Delivering goods through pick-up or delivery outside the premises
 - If close contact unavoidable, keep it to less than 15 minutes
 - Policies for flexible leave and remote working
 - Encouraging individual rather than collective transport, e.g. car parking or place for storing bicycles securely, encouraging workers to walk to work.



Covid-19 – Back to the workplace

■ Hygiene measures:

- Washing facilities, soap, alcohol rubs, paper towels
- Procedures for waste – waste bins
- Cleaning premises (counters, door handles, tools)
- Organising meal breaks - reduce the number of people sharing a cafeteria, staff room, or kitchen.
- Only one worker at a time in bathrooms and changing rooms
- Staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette
- Hand hygiene at the entrance to the workplace and in other areas

■ Personal protective measures

- PPE are a last measure!
- Providing appropriate PPE, surgical masks are not PPE, but medical devices
- PPE free of charge
- Consider provider information and applicable standards
- PPE often cause additional physical load – breaks!
- Replacement and storage of PPE and work clothing

➤ **Making use of occupational health service and health and safety advisor!**



Covid-19 – Back to the workplace (3)

Information and consultation of workers

- Understand workers' concerns, provide information about measures taken and available support
- Guidance and training on changes to work procedures and special measures – consider written instructions
- Consultation of workers/representatives on the measures
- Include agency workers, cleaners and contractors

Mental health

- Support for workers suffering from anxiety or stress
- Changes to the job – may result in stress and mental health problems
- Employee assistance programme or coaching service,
- Information on publicly available sources of support and advice

Vulnerable workers to work from home

- Older people
- People with chronic conditions (incl. hypertension, lung or heart problems, diabetes, or undergoing cancer treatment or other immunosuppression)
- Pregnant workers
- workers with close family members who are at high risk



Covid-19 – Back to the workplace (4)

■ Certifying absence from work

- Discretion on medical evidence for absence when a worker is self-isolating
- Flexible sick leave policies and for care obligations
- Companies that provide subcontracted or temporary workers: sick workers to stay home and non-punitive leave policies.
- Not require a healthcare provider's note for workers who are sick with flu-like symptoms - healthcare providers and medical facilities may be extremely busy

■ Taking care of workers who have been ill

- Worker's doctor and occupational health service to advise on return to work
- Workers who have been ill may suffer stigma and discrimination
- Muscle weakness
- Problems with memory and concentration, difficult to return to previous performance
- Long time for resuming work - half of patients need a year to resume work and up to a third may never return
- Post Intensive Care Syndrome (PICS) happens to an estimated 30 to 50% of people admitted to IC / comparable to a posttraumatic stress disorder



Covid-19 – Back to the workplace

▪ **Teleworking:**

- Allow workers to take home equipment they use at work (computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse, printer, chair, footrest, or lamp)
- Guidance on setting up a workstation at home
- Support and training on IT equipment and software, tele and video conferencing
- Information on exercise to avoid sedentary work and work organisation

▪ **Managing workers who work remotely:**

- Workplace risk assessment incl. workers who telework
- Encourage workers to take breaks
- Effective communication and support from the manager and colleagues
- Regular staff or team meetings online
- Being aware of care responsibility, family members in confinement or teleworking
- Assist workers in setting healthy boundaries between work and free time

➤ **Plan and learn for the future:**

- Contingency plan
- Teleworking policy and procedures or revising existing ones



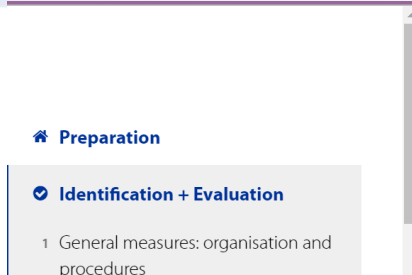
Other resources

- **OSH wiki article Practical tips to make home-based telework as healthy, safe and effective as possible**
 - Advantages and disadvantages of teleworking
 - Work environment at home
 - Display screen equipment and workstation
 - Tips and advice regarding DSE
 - Simple steps/activities that can be taken to reduce the risks related to sedentary work/prolonged sitting
 - Stress and mental health issues
 - Tips to prevent the feeling of being isolated, disconnected or abandoned
- **MSD database of practical tools and guidance: teleworking**
 - Guidance for teleworking, not only for Covid-19

[Napo is... teleworking to stop the pandemic](https://youtu.be/TB_d6kfkWgM)

https://youtu.be/TB_d6kfkWgM





COVID-19

It is possible for you to print out the contents of the tool to enable you to look for the information at the relevant workplace (by walking around and looking at what could cause harm, or by consulting the workers and/or their representatives about problems they have encountered). You can then introduce the information into the tool.

<https://oiraproject.eu/oir-tools/eu/covid-19/covid-19>

Covers:

- **General measures**
- **Workplace management**
- **Encouraging and enabling hygienic behaviour**
- **Commuting to work/travel**
- **Teleworking**
- **Externals on site**
- **Reopening premises after business closure**
- **Meetings or events with externals**
- **Business trips**
- **Added risks (by user)**
- **EN master version, Will become available in: LV, LT, BE (NL and FR), SL, HR, CY, EL, CZ, PT**

Sectoral guidance - links in OSH wiki

from AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, ES, FR, IE, IT, NL, PT, UK and AUS, CAN, USA/WHO, ILO, ISHCO

- **General guidance, incl. toolboxes**
- **Mining**
- **Construction, incl. metal, motorway construction**
 - Painters
 - Carpenter
 - Plumber
- **Craftsmen**
- **Retail**
 - General
 - Gardeners and florists
 - Market, street and hiking trade
 - Tobacconists
 - Cashiers
 - Changing, social & smoking rooms
 - Food retail and hospitality
 - Supermarkets
 - Opticians
 - Orthopaedics
 - Pharmacies
 - Airport retail, airline catering
- **Other services**
 - Insurance agents
 - Consulting, accounting and ICT
 - Banking
- **Agriculture, incl. seasonal workers, crop farming, animal farming, direct sale at farms**
- **Fisheries, fishing vessels, maritime shipping**
- **Food industry**
- **Abattoir/slaughterhouse**
- **Butchers**
- **Artisan icecream**
- **Bakers**
- **Mussels culture**
- **Wine and winemaking**
- **Waste management and collection, incl. from healthcare**
- **Drinking water, treated recreational water & wastewater**
- **Gardening**
- **Cleaning, maintenance**
- **Electrical, building, alarm, comms, home technicians**
- **Industrial laundry**
- **Pest control**

Sectoral guidance - links in OSH wiki

- **Health and social work (AT,DE, ES, IT, NL, UK, ECDC, AUS, CAN, ILO, WHO)**
 - Hospitals
 - Obstetrics, midwives
 - Ophthalmology
 - Pediatrics
 - Laboratories
 - Intensive care units
 - Blood and tissue donation
 - Vaccinations
 - Dialysis
 - Heart surgery
 - Nursing homes
 - PPE for care and support, types of masks and nose protection
 - Mental health for care workers
 - Dental practices
 - Rehabilitation clinics and therapeutic practices
- **Home help and care, personal care, 24-care**
- **Social services**
- **Workshops for disabled people**
- **Homeless shelters**
- **Firefighters**
- **First responders**
- **Ambulance workers**

Other resources for the healthcare and social services sector

- **Work-related diseases from biological agents, incl.**
 - Exposure to biological agents and related health problems for healthcare workers – discussion paper
 - **Current and emerging occupational safety and health (OSH) issues in the healthcare sector, including home and community care – report and summary**
 - **Legionella and legionnaires' disease: European policies and good practices – factsheet and report**
 - **Case studies, e.g. How to prevent needlestick injuries effectively**
 - **OiRA tools in social services (LT), healthcare (LV, BG), residential care (BG)**
- **Occupational health and safety risks in the healthcare sector - Guide to prevention and good practice – EU guidelines**



Thank you...

Any questions?