

Good News
Department of Labor and Employment
Bureau of Working Conditions
29 April 2020

DOLE COVID-19 workplace guidelines underway

As some works in areas declared as General Community Quarantine shall resume work in the next few days, the DOLE and DTI will issue a guideline for workplaces to provide recommendations on COVID-19 mitigation response for both employers and workers in their operation. The guideline is replete with safety and health protocol employers and workers will observe in the “new normal” as social distancing measures are going to be with us for some time.

The new normal is highlighting health consciousness in every aspect of our activities of daily living including work. It is about resetting and making practices more efficient and easier for employers and workers to do amidst the pandemic. It should not be viewed as another complication on how we conduct our work. But an opportunity for us to start picking up the pieces and be part of the rebuilding efforts of the government.

The DTI-DOLE Interim Guidelines on Workplace Prevention and Control of COVID 19 was issued to assist workplaces from the private sector in their preparations for the return to work of their workers and resumption of on-site operations, after the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). It highlighted the establishment’s obligation to protect its workers while resuming business operations in light of the continuing threat of COVID-19. Compliance to these safety and health programs is seen to enhance business resilience and sustainability.

The key components of the guideline are on increasing the workers physical and mental resilience, reducing transmission of COVID-19 virus, minimizing contacts, early identification, referral, and management mechanisms for suspects and probable cases. The policy also highlighted the duties and responsibilities of employers and workers, protocols for physical distancing, disinfection and hygiene.

In these extraordinary times, the DOLE is constantly reviewing and issuing policies in support of the national efforts to address the health and economic impact of COVID-19. While the new normal requires physical distancing in all workplaces and mandatory wearing of masks, this public health measure from the DOLE’s perspective should not deter work but instead shall be part of operations to reduce the spread of infection until a vaccine or gold standard cure will be discovered.

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