

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

No. Health.99/2020/Pt/48

Dated Shillong, the 25th June, 2021.

NOTIFICATION

SOP on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19
in Offices and other Establishments

The State of Meghalaya has been putting in the best efforts to ramp up vaccination considering the surge in the cases. It may be mentioned that of the genome-sequencing samples taken in the State, more than 90% cases detected are of delta variants (Variants of Concern) which should in itself be reason for caution and extra precaution by everyone to safeguard themselves and their loved ones. With the anticipated 'Third Wave' of the Pandemic, the welfare of the people should be considered of prime importance. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that adequate care is exercised as per the Health Advisories which are validated by thorough research and scientific validation. It is also understood that the restrictions imposed on the public has been in the interest of their welfare. However, it is also inevitable that return to normalcy and the gradual easing of the lockdown measures are being considered in the interest of the livelihood of the people and the economy in general. Given this background, it is of utmost importance that the individual or persons from each household who are venturing outside to work to earn their livelihoods be made to understand the importance of getting themselves vaccinated and maintain Covid protocols.

To this end the following Guidelines are hereby issued for the guidance of Officers and staffs of the State Government and all other establishments in the State in taking preventive and responsible measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 in office settings.

A. Generic preventive Measures to be followed at all times

- (i) Social distance to be maintained as far as feasible such as not having tea, snacks and lunch together in closed spaces.
- (ii) Use ***N95 or double mask*** at all times. The masks must be worn properly to cover nose and mouth. Touching the front portion of mask/face covers to be avoided.
- (iii) Hands to be washed frequently with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20 seconds) can be used wherever feasible.
- (iv) Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. While coughing/sneezing, the mouth is to be covered with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow. Used tissues to be disposed of properly.
- (v) All Officials and staffs to self-monitor their health and to report any illness at the earliest to the immediate supervisory officer.
- (vi) Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.

B. Specific preventive measures for offices which has to be regularly monitored by the concerned Nazarat Department/Administrative Branch.

- (i) Entrance to have mandatory hand hygiene (sanitizer dispenser) and thermal screening provisions.
- (ii) Posters/IEC media on preventive measures about COVID-19 to be displayed prominently.
- (iii) Only asymptomatic staffs/visitors shall be allowed entry.
- (iv) Any officer and staff tested COVID-19 positive or residing in containment zone must inform the controlling officers. Such staffs are not to attend the office till recovery. Such staffs can choose to work from home based on the necessity and their health condition.
- (v) Older employees, pregnant employees and employees who have underlying medical conditions are advised to take extra precautions.
- (vi) All officers, staffs and visitors to be allowed entry only if using face cover/masks. The face cover/mask has to be worn at all times inside the office premises. No coughing or sneezing without the masks are to be practiced as it is one of the fastest way to spread the virus.
- (vii) Visitors may be allowed after proper screening.
- (viii) Meetings, as far as feasible, should be done through video conferencing.
- (ix) Cafeteria/canteen etc., outside and within the office premises shall follow physical distancing norms at all times.
- (x) The workplace to be properly cleaned and sanitized at-least twice a day. Frequently touched surfaces – doorknobs, handrails, benches - must be sanitized (using 1% sodium hypochlorite). Lavatories to be disinfected properly.
- (xi) Regular supply of hand sanitizers, liquid soap preferably those with automatic sensors to avoid frequent touching and running water in the washrooms to be ensured
- (xii) Number of people in the elevators shall be restricted.
- (xiii) Proper disposal of face covers / masks / gloves left over by visitors and/or employees in covered bins, shall be ensured.

C. Measures to be taken on occurrence of case(s)

The following measures will be taken in cases when one or few people who share a room/close office space is/are found to be suffering from symptoms suggestive of COVID-19:

- (i) Place the ill person in a room or area where they are isolated from others at the workplace. Provide a mask/face cover till such time he/she is examined by a doctor.
- (ii) Immediately inform the nearest medical facility (hospital/clinic) or call 108 or 14410 or district helpline.

- (iii) A risk assessment will be undertaken by the designated public health authority (District RRT/ Medical Officer in-charge) and accordingly further advice shall be made regarding management of case, testing of all identified high risk contacts.
- (iv) The management of cases and contacts will be done as per the existing protocol.

D. Management of premises

- (i) If positive cases are reported, the disinfection procedure will be limited to places/areas occupied/visited by the infected person in the past 48 hours and work can be resumed immediately after disinfection as per laid down protocol.
- (ii) if large number of cases are reported at the workplace, the whole block or building should be disinfected.

E. Vaccination:

- (i) All the State Government employees and all those working in various establishments are advised to get themselves vaccinated at the earliest and they are expected to *lead by example* so as to effectively contain the spread of COVID-19.

This measure is also to help in the reduction of widespread infection amongst co-workers and their clients /reduce the severity of cases even if there is a case of vaccine breach, which is of minimal percentage as per data. It is to be understood by all concerned that with the easing of restriction measures and slow return to normalcy, the number of people working will be as according to the already existing spaces despite the need to maintain maximum distance possible, considering space constraints in almost all offices both private/government. In such working environments getting oneself vaccinated is the most sensible solution.

- (ii) Even after vaccination, the cardinal principles of COVID protocols (wearing of mask; maintaining social distance and hand hygiene) are to be followed diligently till achievement of '*herd immunity for COVID-19*' by vaccinating the entire eligible population of the State.
- (iii) The vaccination status is to be informed to the Supervisory/Controlling Officer and those who have not been vaccinated may also be advised to get themselves tested for COVID-19 at regular intervals as a measure of safety.

Sd/-

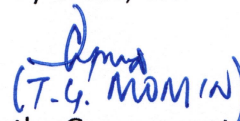
(Sampath Kumar, IAS)

Principal Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya,
Health & Family Welfare Department

Copy to:

1. The Secretary to the Governor of Meghalaya, Shillong for kind information of the Governor.
2. The Private Secretary to Chief Minister, Meghalaya, Shillong for kind information of the Chief Minister.
3. The Private Secretary to Deputy Chief Minister, Meghalaya, Shillong for kind information of the Deputy Chief Minister.
4. The Private Secretary to the Speaker, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, Shillong for kind information of the Speaker.
5. The Private Secretary to Health Minister, Meghalaya, Shillong for kind information of the Minister.
6. The Private Secretaries to all Ministers, Meghalaya, Shillong for kind information of the Minister.
7. The Leader of Opposition, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly, Shillong.
8. The P.S. to Chief Secretary for kind information of the Chief Secretary.
9. The Additional Chief Secretaries/ Principal Secretaries/ Commissioners & Secretaries/ Secretaries, Government of Meghalaya.
10. The Deputy Commissioner,
East Khasi Hills, Shillong / West Khasi Hills, Nongstoin/South West Khasi Hills,
Mawkyrwat / Ri Bhoi District, Nongpoh / West Jaintia Hills, Jowai / East Jaintia
Hills, Khliehriat / West Garo Hills, Tura / East Garo Hills, Williamnagar/ South
Garo Hills, Baghmara / North Garo Hills, Resubelpara/ South West Garo Hills,
Ampati
11. The Mission Director, National Health Mission, Meghalaya, Shillong
12. The Director of Information & Public Relation for wide circulation in the
Print/Electronic media of the State.
13. The Director of Printing & Stationery, Meghalaya, Shillong.
14. The Deputy Director General & State Informatics Officer, NIC, Meghalaya,
Shillong
15. All Administrative Department/Heads of Department.

By order, etc.


(T.G. MDMIN)

Joint Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya,
Health & Family Welfare Department
