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Occupational health and safety management — General guidelines for safe working during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 283, *Occupational health and safety management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

This document is a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased risk this disease presents to the health, safety and well-being of people in all settings, including those working at home or in mobile settings, and workers and other interested parties in physical workplaces.

Governments, regulators and other professional bodies across the world have published guidance on working safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. This document provides a single generic set of guidelines that complements this information and supports the principles that:

— reasonable measures to manage the risks arising from COVID-19 are, or will be, implemented to protect the health and safety of workers and other relevant interested parties;

— workers should not be required to work unless these measures have been implemented.

This guidance includes practical recommendations to organizations and workers on how to manage these risks and is suitable for organizations resuming operations, those that have been operational throughout the pandemic, and those that are starting operations.

The guidance is generic and applicable to organizations regardless of the nature of business, service provision, size or complexity. It recognizes that many smaller organizations do not have dedicated departments for functions such as occupational health and safety (OH&S), facilities management or human resources. More detailed information for specific functions is available from professional bodies and a wide range of national and international standards.

By implementing the guidance in this document, the organization will be able to:

a) take effective action to protect workers and other relevant interested parties from the risks related to COVID-19;

b) demonstrate that it is addressing risks related to COVID-19 using a systematic approach;

c) put in place a framework to enable effective and timely adaptation to the changing situation.

Organizations using ISO 45001 can use this document to inform their OH&S management system by relating the relevant clauses to the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, as outlined below. Taking a systems approach facilitates the coordination of resources and efforts that is so important in managing COVID-19.

— Plan: Plan what needs to be done for the organization to work safely (see Clauses 4 to 8).

— Do: Do what the organization has planned to do (see Clauses 9 to 12).

— Check: See how well it is working (see Clause 13).

— Act: Fix problems and look for ways to make what the organization is doing even more effective (see Clause 14).

This document is not intended to be a single step-by-step set of recommendations. It provides a framework in which the PDCA cycle outlined above should be repeated, with all parts active at all times, to enable ongoing continual improvement and to ensure the organization responds to changes during the different phases of the pandemic.

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Occupational health and safety management — General guidelines for safe working during the COVID-19 pandemic

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for organizations on how to manage the risks arising from COVID-19 to protect work-related health, safety and well-being.

This document is applicable to organizations of all sizes and sectors, including those that:

a) have been operating throughout the pandemic;

b) are resuming or planning to resume operations following full or partial closure;

c) are re-occupying workplaces that have been fully or partially closed;

d) are new and planning to operate for the first time.

This document also provides guidance relating to the protection of workers of all types (e.g. workers employed by the organization, workers of external providers, contractors, self-employed individuals, agency workers, older workers, workers with a disability and first responders), and other relevant interested parties (e.g. visitors to a workplace, including members of the public).

This document is not intended to provide guidance on how to implement specific infection control protocols in clinical, healthcare and other settings.

NOTE Applicable legislation and guidance is provided by government, regulators and health authorities for workers in these settings or in related roles.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
organization
person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, association, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.1, modified — The word “association” has been deleted from Note 1 to entry and Note 2 to entry has been removed.]

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3.2
worker
person performing work or work-related activities that are under the control of the *organization* (3.1)

Note 1 to entry: Persons perform work or work-related activities under various arrangements, paid or unpaid, such as regularly or temporarily, intermittently or seasonally, casually or on a part-time basis.

Note 2 to entry: Workers include top management, managerial and non-managerial persons.

Note 3 to entry: The work or work-related activities performed under the control of the organization may be performed by workers employed by the organization, workers of external providers, contractors, individuals, agency workers, and by other persons to the extent the organization shares control over their work or work-related activities, according to the context of the organization.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.3]

3.3
workplace
place under the control of the *organization* (3.1) where a person needs to be or to go for work purposes

Note 1 to entry: The organization's responsibilities for the workplace depend on the degree of control over the workplace.

Note 2 to entry: Workplaces can include the *worker's* (3.2) own home, other people's homes, personal vehicles, vehicles provided by the organization, another organization's facilities and public spaces.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.6, modified — The words "under the OH&S management system" have been deleted from Note 1 to entry and Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.4
risk
effect of uncertainty

Note 1 to entry: In this document, the term "risk" refers to risks related to *COVID-19* (3.6), unless otherwise stated.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.20, modified — The original notes to entry have been deleted and a new Note 1 to entry has added.]

3.5
pandemic
worldwide spread of a disease

[SOURCE: World Health Organization[9], modified — The word "new" has been removed.]

3.6
COVID-19
infectious disease caused by the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 discovered in 2019

[SOURCE: World Health Organization[10], modified — The words "SARS-CoV-2 discovered in 2019" have been added.]

3.7
incident
occurrence arising out of, or in the course of, work that could or does result in injury and ill health

Note 1 to entry: In this document, "injury and ill health" refers to a direct infection with *COVID-19* (3.6) or any physical or psychological injury and ill health that is a consequence of COVID-19.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.35, modified — The original notes to entry have been deleted and a new Note 1 to entry has added.]

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3.8
personal protective equipment
PPE
device or appliance designed to be worn by an individual for protection against one or more health and safety hazards

Note 1 to entry: PPE includes, but is not limited to, gowns, gloves, respirators, safety glasses, helmets and goggles.

Note 2 to entry: While generally not considered PPE, masks [and *face coverings* (3.9)] can provide a level of protection for the user, in addition to their primary purpose as a public health measure to control the spread of transmission and infection.

Note 3 to entry: In many countries, PPE is required to conform to national regulations.

[SOURCE: ISO 15384:2018, 3.12, modified — The words "or held" have been removed from the definition and the notes to entry have been added.]

3.9
face covering
facepiece that covers the mouth, nose and chin

Note 1 to entry: Face coverings are also known as community masks, hygiene mask, barrier masks, comfort masks and other local terms.

Note 2 to entry: Face coverings in the context of this document are not considered to be *personal protective equipment* (3.8) or a medical device.

[SOURCE: CWA 17553:2020, 2.3, modified — The word "community" has been deleted from the term, the words "fitted with the head harness which can be head or ears attachment" has been deleted from the definition, and the notes to entry have been added.]

3.10
well-being
fulfilment of the physical, mental and cognitive needs and expectations of a *worker* (3.2) related to their work

Note 1 to entry: Well-being can also contribute to the quality of life outside of work.

Note 2 to entry: Well-being relates to all aspects of working life, including work organization, social factors at work, work environment, equipment and hazardous tasks.

[SOURCE: ISO 45003:—[1)], 3.2, modified — The words "at work" has been deleted from the term and from the notes to entry.]

3.11
common areas
spaces and amenities provided for the use of more than one person

EXAMPLE Canteens, lifts/elevators, stairs, reception areas, meeting rooms, areas of worship, toilets, gardens, fire escapes, kitchens, fitness facilities, store rooms, laundry facilities.

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