COVID-19 Communication and Training

Introduction

Communication and training are essential to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Workers have the 'Right to Know' about workplace hazards, including COVID-19 transmission risks and how to protect themselves and others. Visitors (contractors, patrons, clients, etc.) need instructions to understand what is required of them when visiting the workplace. Here are recommendations for how and what to communicate about COVID-19.

Tailor the communication and training to the workplace setting:

- Use accessible formats and languages appropriate for workers and visitors, to make sure they understand the information provided.
- There are many communication methods available to make sure that the information is understood by workers and visitors:
  - Signs and infographics
  - Floor markings and barriers to show where people should walk and stand
  - Video slide displays
  - Announcements on loudspeakers
  - Worker e-learning, training sessions, and safety or toolbox talks
  - During appointment registration (online or over the phone)
  - Websites, apps, texts, e-mails, social media platforms, blogs, etc.
  - Verbal reminders from supervisors and workers
- Choose high-traffic locations to share the information such as the front entrance, reception or waiting rooms, breakrooms, bulletin boards, washrooms, and at hand sanitizer dispensers.
- Mark furniture, equipment, areas, and facilities that are closed.

Train workers on COVID-19 topics, including:

- What COVID-19 is, and the disease symptoms.
- How, when, and why to perform screening.
- What to do if they (or someone in the workplace) feel sick or may have been exposed.
- The risks of transmission, including those specific to the workplace and job activities.
- The workplace COVID-19 safety plan, if in place.
- How to protect themselves and others by layering multiple COVID-19 control measures and personal preventive practices.
- Good hygiene practices (e.g., hand washing technique and frequency, coughing and sneezing into elbow or tissue, avoiding direct contact with others or their belongings, etc.).
- Work processes, procedures, and policies that are new or updated because of COVID-19 (e.g., sick-leave, family care, telework, accommodation for workers at higher risk, etc.).
- How to properly put on, remove, wear, inspect, and care for respirators and masks and any personal protective equipment (PPE) they are required to wear.
- How to safely use cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., following manufacturers safe-use instructions or Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System).
- How to stay informed about COVID-19 using reputable sources.
- The benefits of COVID-19 vaccination.
- Worker rights and responsibilities during the pandemic. (Note that existing rights and responsibilities and the internal responsibility system still apply).
- How to safely manage conflict with a person who is not following control measures.
- How to access wellness and mental health support and resources, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Visit the CCOHS 'COVID-19 Health and Safety Planning for Employers' and 'COVID-19 Prevention for Workers' for more information.

Make sure all visitors are also informed about workplace safety protocols:

- Remind them to follow COVID-19 precautions such as wearing a mask, maintaining physical distancing, and performing hand hygiene.
- Inform them of current policies, products, and services that might be different than previously experienced or expected due to COVID-19.
- Remind them to be considerate of workers, other visitors, and the environment (e.g., avoid littering used masks and wipes).
- Consider preparing a COVID-19 information package for visitors to read and acknowledge before they arrive for appointments or book services.

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- Cooperate with external service providers to support their COVID-19 precautions, such as contractors, supply delivery services, and regulatory inspectors.

As the pandemic continues to evolve:

- Stay up to date on current legal requirements and resources from local public health authority and jurisdictional Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) regulator.
- Continue to review and update the communication and training materials, work practices, and organizational policies.
- Monitor compliance and repeat the communication and training as often as needed.
- Encourage workers to report any COVID-19 concerns to their employer, supervisor, health and safety committee or representative, or union if present.
- Be available to answer frequently asked questions and provide support to workers and visitors.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please contact your local hospital, call 911 immediately, or contact a Crisis Centre in your area.

It is important that mental health resources and support are provided to all workers, including access to an employee assistance program, if available.

For further information on COVID-19, refer to the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Note that this guidance is just some of the adjustments organizations can make during a pandemic. Adapt this list by adding your own good practices and policies to meet your organization's specific needs.

Disclaimer: As public and occupational health and safety information is changing rapidly, local public health authorities should be consulted for specific, regional guidance. This information is not intended to replace medical advice or legislated health and safety obligations. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.