

MEMBER ADVISORY

GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS, SAFE RETURN TO WORK

Dear Member,

In view of calls to gradually ease restrictions and open up the Country for work, the **Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)** has developed protocols and guidelines to assist employers to enhance measures on health and safety of their premises, employees, clients and customers during this COVID -19 period and beyond.

The Guidelines and Protocols are based on the premise that business continuity and recovery is critical and thus employers must prepare themselves for any eventuality. Even as employers support the protocols and guidelines on safety and health issued by the Ministry of Health, the economic impact will have a long-lasting effect.

The recommended protocols and guidelines to employers include: -

1. **Constituting an internal planning team to organize return to work.** The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Committee will convene meetings, train staff, develop a workplan and communicate to staff on changes happening.
2. **Decision on when to reopen, who returns to work and how,** will be undertaken following a risk assessment to establish the safety, preventive and control measures in place and those needed to determine the safe return to work.
3. **Implementing organizational and administrative measures** which will require putting in place a hierarchy-of-controls strategy that promotes social distancing measures, good ventilation in the workplace, working from home, limiting the number of employees at the workplace, among others.
4. **Regular cleaning and disinfection** before reopening the premises and frequent cleaning while at the premises.
5. **Promoting personal hygiene** at the workplace will require that the employers provide workers with the conditions and means necessary for frequent hand washing with soap and water, put signage for proper hand washing methods and inform workers on the need to avoid physical contact.
6. **Providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** and educate workers on their correct use.
7. **Health Surveillance** to constantly monitor the health status of workers, develop protocols and procedures for handling cases of suspected and confirmed infection and further reporting cases of infection to the authorities.

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8. **Considering other hazards, including psychosocial effects** and regularly communicate with the workers and where possible provide for psychological counselling services.
9. Businesses to **develop and review emergency preparedness plans** adapted to COVID-19 and in view of the new changes at the workplace.
10. **Periodic review of preventive and control measures** as the situation evolves, to determine whether they have been adequate to avoid or minimize risk. Thereafter, the business can identify and implement corrective actions for continuous improvement.
11. **Sustaining the right culture post COVID -19** to reassure employees of safety measures taken by your enterprise.
12. **Embracing the new realities of work** which means that policies and procedures will be regularly reviewed and amended to adopt to the changing times.
13. **Evaluating the business processes, products and services.** With lessons learned from COVID - 19, a review of the businesses processes, products and offering may be critical.

We acknowledge that strategies may differ from one employer to another, this guide can be modified to suit your business accordingly. Detailed copies of the Guidelines and Risk Assessment Tools are available on the FKE Website www.fke.org for free.

The Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) reaffirms its commitment to support members and the Government to curb the COVID – 19 disease and create a conducive environment for businesses to thrive and grow the economy.

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