

Government of Punjab
Department of Health & Family Welfare
(NHM, Punjab)

No. MD/NHM/2020/3151(R) - 3156 (R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 26th April, 2020

To

1. Financial Commissioner (Rural Development & Panchayats), Punjab
2. Financial Commissioner (Forests & Wildlife), Punjab
3. Principal Secretary, Water Resources, Punjab
4. Director (Rural Development & Panchayats), Punjab
5. Joint Development Commissioner, Punjab
6. All Deputy Commissioners, Punjab

Subject : Advisory on maintaining the hygiene and sanitization while carrying out works under MGNREGA during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID -19) is a systemic disease caused by a novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), transmitted in most instances through respiratory droplets, direct contact with cases and also through contaminated surfaces/objects. Though the virus survives on environmental surfaces for a varied period of time, it gets easily inactivated by chemical disinfectants. Thus, correct and timely information and knowledge about the coronavirus is the key to control the pandemic.

The Government of Punjab has imposed severe restrictions on free movement of people in the larger public interest of controlling the spread/transmission of Coronavirus through the imposition of Curfew in its all 22 districts. The Government has, however, allowed essential activities, including works under MGNREGA, to continue/start with an objective to minimise the hardships. However, a meticulous compliance of the guidelines essential to prevent the spread of Coronavirus shall be ensured.

The guidelines are summarised as below:

I. Guidelines for the Sarpanch/Gram RozgarSevak(GRS):

1. The supervisory Sarpanch/GRS/mate shall meticulously follow the instructions with regard to the permissible works under the MGNREGA as well as with regard to the area where the work has been allowed to start.

2. The supervisor may develop a comprehensive work-plan in a manner that he/she can alter the time of reporting for work at the work-site as well as day's stoppage of work of MGNREGA workers in a manner that though they complete the daily work-cycle but at the same time, reporting/see off is staggered. Similarly, the work-area shall be allocated at the work site in a manner that the social distancing norm of at least 1 meter is maintained between the MGNREGA workers.
3. MGNREGA workers having fever or other symptoms such as Cough/shortness of breath shall be encouraged to stay at home and seek medical advice.
4. MGNREGA workers shall be advised not to indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other.
5. All should be advised to follow strict social distancing measures and maintain a minimum distance of 1 metre amongst themselves at all times,i.e, during the work as well as during the tea/lunch breaks.
6. MGNREGA staff shall further be advised not to roam unnecessarily at the work site and to work from their allotted area/site only.
7. All, including Sarpanch/GRS should wear cloth masks at all times.
8. The masks shall be worn in a manner that it snugly covers the nose as well as the mouth.
9. The cloth mask should be washed with soap and water daily after use.
10. **Hand Washing and Sanitisation:**
 - i. Ensure availability of water and soap in adequate quantity at the work-site.
 - ii. Encourage the MGNREGA workers to wash the hands with soap for at least 40 seconds by applying the soap gently on the palm and back of the hand including web spaces between the fingers and space as well as between the finger and the thumb and the wrist wherever and whenever the opportunity to wash the hands is available. However, a two-hourly hand wash is recommended.
 - iii. The hands should be mandatorily washed with soap and water, as prescribed above, before starting the work and after the end of work.

- iv. In case sanitizer is to be used, only Alcohol-based sanitizer (minimum 70% ethyl alcohol v/v) should be used. Use a minimum of 3 ml of the sanitizer (approximately 2 pushes of sanitizer dispenser) on DRY HANDS for at least 30 seconds for good hygienic hand disinfection.
 - v. Sanitize the hands even if the hands appear to be apparently clean.
 - vi. The hands should be either sanitized or washed with soap and water whichever is feasible and available.
 - vii. The supervisor should encourage the MGNREGA workers to handwash in the manner prescribed every 2 hourly.
11. All should be encouraged to follow the norms of respiratory etiquettes. Cover the mouth while coughing/sneezing with cloth/ handkerchief. In case cloth/handkerchief is not available, then it is preferable to cough/sneeze into one's bent elbow rather than one's palms.
12. Anyone detected with high fever at the work site does not mandatorily mean that he/she is suffering from COVID-19. It is advised to get him/her who is suffering from high fever medically examined by temporarily isolating him/her from the rest of the MGNREGA workers before drawing any conclusion/inferences and before sending him/her back to home.

II. Guidelines for the MGNREGA workers :

- a. A MGNREGA worker suffering from high fever/cough/sneezing/difficulty in breathing should voluntarily report the same to supervisor as well as seek immediate medical advice for timely detection and treatment.
- b. He/she should wear masks at all times in the manner prescribed above, i.e, from leaving the house till return to the house and should follow the reporting time as well as the time to leave the work-site as prescribed by the supervisor.
- c. He/she should not indulge in handshake/hug with fellow workers and should discharge his/her work from the area/site allocated by the supervisor.
- d. Before touching/using any equipment, it is better to disinfect it with 1% Hypochlorite solution.
- e. He/she should avoid roaming without purpose at the work-site as also touching other's equipments etc.

- f. He/she should not smoke or chew tobacco-based products such as gutka, pan masala etc. at the work-site.
- g. He/she should meticulously handwash/sanitize his/her hands with soap in the manner prescribed at point 10 at least every 2 hourly.
- h. He/she should not miss meals.
- i. He/she should mandatorily hand wash/sanitize in the manner prescribed before touching the refreshments during tea-break/lunch-break etc.
- j. MGNREGA workers should not share their lunches/snacks with each other in order to prevent cross-infection.
- k. In case of a cough/sneeze, he/she should use the cloth/handkerchief to cover the face which shall then be kept in his/her own pocket/purse in a manner that the surface of the handkerchief exposed to the cough/sneeze shall not touch the other parts of the belongings directly.
- l. In case he/she is not carrying the cloth/handkerchief, he/she should cough/sneeze into the *flexed/bent elbow*.
- m. In either case, he/she should immediately handwash with soap in the manner prescribed his/her hands/ other exposed surfaces to cough/sneeze.
- n. He/she should refrain from touching face, mouth, nose and eyes with his/her hands at all times.
- o. He/she should not spit in open.
- p. He/she should avoid all type of gatherings at the work-site.
- q. He/she should not indulge in gossip/rumours with regard to COVID-19 without verifying the facts. The supervisor may encourage them, wherever feasible, to download “COVA APP” developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information.

III. In case someone is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during work, there is no need to panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104/State Control Room No. 01722920074/08872090029, detailing the exact nature of exposure so as to assist the medical facility to undertake further necessary actions.

- IV. The supervisor, in case a MGNREGA worker is diagnosed as corona positive and such a worker has attended the work, shall immediately inform the Helpline No. 104/State Control Room No. 01722920074/+91-8872090029 along with all the facts about the worker and the contacts he/she might have during the work. A complete and proper record of all workers reporting at the work-site on any particular day should be maintained.

All are encouraged to take proper diet, assimilate correct information and keep themselves aware and updated with the information at all times.



**Secretary Health &
Mission Director, NHM, Punjab**

No. MD/NHM/2020/3157 (R) - 3159 (R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 26th April, 2020

1. A copy is forwarded to OSD to Chief Secretary, Punjab for the kind information of Worthy Chief Secretary please.
2. A copy is forwarded to PS to ACS (Home), Punjab for the kind information of Additional Chief Secretary (Home)
3. A copy is forwarded to PS to PSHFW, Punjab for the kind information of Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare.



**Secretary Health &
Mission Director, NHM, Punjab**

No. MD/NHM/2020/3160 (R) - 3167 (R)

Dated, Chandigarh the 26th April, 2020

Copy forwarded to :

1. Commissioner, FDA, Punjab for information please.
2. MD, PHSC for information please.
3. Commissioner AYUSH cum PD-PSACS for information please.
4. Director Health Services, Punjab for information please.
5. Director Family Welfare, Punjab for information please.
6. Director (ESI), Punjab for information please.
7. Executive Director, SHSRC, Punjab for information please.
8. All Civil Surgeons, Punjab for information & necessary action.



**State Programme Officer (IEC)
NHM, Punjab**