

KEEPING SUPPLY CHAIN WORKERS SAFE DURING A PANDEMIC



Warehouse worker. Photo credit: GHSC-PSM/Bobby Neptune

Trained human resources are the most valuable asset in the supply chain. It is important to reinforce the basic principles for keeping yourself and others from contracting or spreading COVID-19 through hand washing, social distancing (maintaining two meters of distance from other people) and covering your mouth with your inner arm when you cough or sneeze.

In addition, here are some tips for keeping your health workforce safe while conducting logistics activities.



DO prioritize the needs of first responders and healthcare workers followed by logistics workers when fulfilling orders, distributing goods, or revising protocols.

FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE:



DO encourage workers to wash their hands regularly with verbal and written reminders. Add handwashing stations wherever possible.



DO spread workstations as far apart as possible to allow workers to keep a minimum two-meter distance from each other. Consider reconfiguring break rooms to allow more space for social distancing. Encourage workers to take breaks outside, and stagger break times as much as possible.

SECURITY PROTOCOLS:



DO relocate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to secure areas of the warehouse. Treat these items as high value commodities and restrict access to them accordingly.



DO revisit and reinforce security protocols for the entire warehouse.

POLICIES AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES:



DO consider avoiding 'picking and packing' by distributing commodities in existing cartons. This may require communication throughout the supply chain, but will limit time workers spend in groups, mitigate the potential to contaminate each and every item, and encourage moving product as far downstream as possible.



DO request 3PL staff and truck drivers maintain distance from warehouse staff during order receiving and shipping. The inbound/outbound areas of the warehouse are where it is hardest to maintain two-meter social distancing protocol. Hand washing stations in or near these areas is crucial.



DO ask forklift operators to take ownership of wiping down their equipment with rubbing alcohol or disinfectant and keeping it clean. Frequently used tools should also be wiped down daily. Cleaning staff can be asked to increase rounds and regularly clean frequently touched surfaces.

DO NOT restrict staff ability to take care of their personal or family needs. If current policies prohibit cell phone use, consider revising them to allow staff to communicate with family and childcare providers as need

DO NOT hold unnecessary meetings or gatherings.

DO NOT require staff to come to work if they report feeling ill. Ask workers to self-isolate if they come into contact with a person who is known or suspected to be positive for COVID-19.



DO contact PSMHSSOperations@ghsc-psm.org if you have questions about safety protocols.

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