

RETURNING TO WORK AFTER LOCKDOWN: GUIDELINES

PREAMBLE:

Corona virus has forced the entire world to adapt to change quickly and rapidly. Even after the lockdown end, Offices in India will have to take a large number of precautions for their employees.

COVID-19 Virus spreads from person to person mainly in droplets that fly out when you cough or sneeze. These tiny drops from a sick person move through the air and land on the mouths or noses of others nearby. It may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

The central government at the start of the lockdown issued an advisory, which included guidelines of proper sanitization and social distancing measures in place and availability of 33 per cent workforce in non-hotspots.

In line of these guidelines, SoftTech too has taken steps to minimize the impact on employees and ensure their wellbeing and safety

DOS & DONTS:

Suggested Checklist & Guidelines for Precautions that you need to take while resuming work from office after lockdown

FOR EMPLOYEES

1. Use Mask and Gloves. Never ever, leave for office without these two things. Think of them as your bodily extensions, and keep on replacing them at relative intervals.
2. Sanitize your hands after roughly every alien surface you happen to touch, in buses or trains or even inside the cab.
3. Transport is the key. Any place where the notion of social distancing is supposed to not live up should be avoided. Use a private vehicle if possible or make sure the transport you are taking has social distancing measures well at its place.
4. Do not touch your face, mouth or nose, as this might increase the risk of infection.
5. Make sure, you do not sneeze or cough in open. Carry a small packet of tissues or handkerchief and keep on replacing them during relevant intervals.
6. Ensure that every employee gets his/her temperature checked before entering the office premises. If not, decisively compel your employer to put in place such a system.
7. Carry your stationery from home to reduce the risk of being contaminated through office stationery you do not know who else has touched before.
8. Prefer not to eat from outside.
9. Sanitize your hands every now and then, and ensure supremely precautionous surroundings in office washrooms.

10. If you find any COVID symptoms – cold, fever, breathlessness or loss of sense of taste or smell – stop going to the office with immediate effect and seek medical health, and tell others to do the same if it happens to them as well.
11. In case you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with a tissue or with your elbow. Do not throw your used wipes anywhere around. If infected it might be contagious for others. If you are, down with a cold or cough? Kindly think about others and stay home.

FOR & AT OFFICE

1. To make sure your workspace is safe; sanitize the office space on a daily basis. This should include common areas and office lifts in commercial complexes.
2. Have a detailed planning activity to identify which employee really need to come to work and Keep a Track of every such single member in the office premise.
3. A similar set of action needs to do with support staff, helpers and security guards and stagger timings if necessary to maintain social distancing.
4. There should be no crowding in the office space, ensure only 25%-30% of the workspace is actually occupied.
5. There should be a proper screening via infrared thermometer. If someone is feeling unwell or found having, COVID Symptoms immediately direct him/her to the hospital.
6. Keep record of every employee & visitor entering the office space and collect contact information (name and phone no) to enable reach at time of emergency.
7. Instruct employees not to travel from containment areas, red zones, or localities and societies, under quarantine due to cluster outbreaks.
8. Stop or disallow all kinds of mass gatherings and restricting public meetings that can potentially lead to the spread of the COVID-19.
9. Meetings if any are to be done online over Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or any other permitted apps by the IT/System Admin team only.
10. Allowing Employees to have their Lunch at their respective workstations, followed by cleaning up of the same to maintain Desk Hygiene before they start touching everything (keyboard, mouse, desk surface, phone, stapler, calculator, files, papers, stationary etc.) around. Employees need to avoid sharing of food.
11. No crowding at water outlets and tea/coffee vending machines. Encourage employees to use your own personal cups / mugs while helping themselves with beverages.
12. Bathroom/ Toilet etiquette to be followed It is essential to keep toilets clean and hygienic to avoid transmission of germs and infections. A dirty and unhygienic toilet is the breeding ground of several diseases.
13. Avoid shaking hands while greeting colleagues, visitors and guests, verbal salute should do. This small action can dramatically decrease spread of any virus from person to person.
14. Employee Birthday/ any celebrations can be permissible in a controlled manner and only through social distancing norms.

15. Employees should avoid using the biometric machines, they are encouraged to use their Swipe cards while entering and exiting the Office.
16. The front desk office/ receptionist strictly need to follow the protocol provided to them. They should immediately raise a flag in case they find someone flouting these norms.
17. While dealing with Vendors and visitors entering the office sanitization and infrared thermometers to be used to check COVID Symptoms. For all inward and outward deliveries or purchases are to be sanitized.
18. Employees are directed not to order any online deliveries in office which can be a possible risk of spreading the virus
19. While we are trying our best to not step out of our office, we do end up going to the ATM or bank to withdraw money and to get essentials during breaks. In such scenarios, carry a Sanitizer with you and use frequently whenever necessary.
20. Avoid AC, as its risky, in one room people are breathing in the same air, the problem with central air conditioners is that if one person is infected, chances of others getting the infection are high as everyone is inhaling the same air.
21. Any employee reportedly suffering from flu-like illness should not attend office and seek medical advice from local health authorities. Such persons, if diagnosed as a suspect/confirmed case of COVID-19 should immediately inform the office authorities.

NOTE:

With the pandemic outbreak, let us be responsible for our self-care and understand the do's and don'ts of this pandemic. This is the time when you must take every step with precaution to keep ourselves, family and loved ones away from the deadly virus. Social distancing has become an active practice of our lives but it must be followed not just at your home but at the workplace as well.