MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 2020-0024

TO : All PEZA Officials and Employees

FROM : BGen CHARITO B. PLAZA MNSA, PhD
        Director General

SUBJECT : Guidelines for Preparing the PEZA Workplace for COVID-19 Response after Lifting of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ)

DATE : 22 April 2020

The WHO and local health experts have advised that the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) measures should be gradually lifted to prevent the resurgence of infections. Thus, the PEZA workplace need to implement strategies in re-establishing operations without cancelling the gains brought about by the total Luzon lockdown to achieve the following objectives:

- Minimize COVID-19-related health risks to PEZA employees and its clients considering possible asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission in the community and in the workplace;
- Minimize the risk of the PEZA office as a source of transmission of SARS-CoV-2; and,
- Establish plans that will ensure continuity of PEZA operations in case members of top management, officials or employees will be on leave of absence, on quarantine or infected.

Thus, the Guidelines for Preparing the PEZA Workplace for COVID-19 Response after Lifting of the ECQ, provided as Annex A, is adopted in all PEZA Offices through the following measures:

1. Revision of existing frontline services registered in the PEZA Citizens Charter to consider work from home (WFH) processing of applications as much as possible.
2. The managers / officers in-charge of PEZA offices at the Head Office, public zones, private zones and Joint PEZA Customs Offices (JPCOs) are requested to implement and enforce adequate social distancing measures in its frontline services (e.g. promote safe distance in frontl ine queues, implement shift arrangements to reduce the number of employees reporting for work, encourage carpooling).
3. All PEZA officials and employees shall be mindful of the COVID-19 protocols and shall take the necessary safety measures to prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission in the workplace.

For your strict compliance.
1. **Policy Statement**

PEZA recognizes the need to establish internal COVID-19 protocols for the continuity of the organization once the Enhance Community Quarantine (ECQ) measure is lifted to achieve the following objectives:

- Minimize COVID-19-related health risks to PEZA employees and its clients considering possible asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission in the community and in the workplace;
- Minimize the risk of the PEZA office as a source of transmission of SARS-CoV-2; and,
- Establish plans that will ensure continuity of PEZA operations in case members of top management, officials or employees will be on leave of absence, on quarantine or infected.

2. **Scope of Application**

The policy, which is internal in nature, applies to all employees, service providers (e.g. clerical staff, security services, utility service and the like) hired by PEZA and visitors in the premises of PEZA offices nationwide.

3. **Operational Protocols for Business continuity.** Formulation of PEZA’s operational protocols and business continuity plans to ensure continuity of operations during and after the ECQ.

**Responsible Units:** Office of the Director General (ODG) and Management Committee (Mancom) for the formulation of succession contingencies, review and approval of work assignments that may be assigned at home; MIS for identification and provision of IT resources for virtual office or telecommuting

The plans include the following:

a. **Formulation of succession contingencies for top management and key officials.**

   This exercise recognizes the need to develop a plan for the continuity of leadership in the event of absence or quarantine of key decision makers, executives and unit heads specially signatories. A memorandum from the Director General shall be issued to request top management / key officials and unit heads to do the following:

   i. Identify processes within their jurisdiction that will require alternate signatory; and
   
   ii. Nominate their immediate temporary replacement in case of sickness or quarantine.

b. **Identify work assignments and business meetings that may be conducted virtually**

   and provide adequate IT resources (e.g. computer, internet connectivity at home for work from home employees) to make this arrangement possible. The PEZA Board Meeting and Mancom meeting may be conducted virtually or in different locations and connected through video or teleconference to allow adequate distance of one (1) meter between participants.

c. **Identify resources needed and how they will be made available** to the SEZs (i.e. PPE, supplies, payment processing of utilities in the private zone PEZA offices and JPCO offices, etc.) and work from home employees. in case restrictions on movement of goods and workers are still in place after lifting of quarantine.

4. **Social distancing measures.** All PEZA units to consider alternative work arrangements to reduce the number of employees that will be exposed to the virus in the community in the workplace and while on travel from home to the workplace and vice versa.
Preparing the PEZA Offices for COVID-19 Response after lifting of ECQ

HRD.1.M.005
Rev 00 / 22 April 2020

Responsible Units: HR Department for identification of vulnerable employees, attendance monitoring, coordination with CSC for approval of alternative work arrangements; Heads of units for performance monitoring, implementation of shift arrangements and promotion of safe distance in frontline services.

Some of the measures to be adopted are as follows:

a. **Work from home (WFH) arrangements.** This shall include online processing of applications and telecommuting or videoconferencing to allow employees to work from home.

   Vulnerable employees (e.g. 60 years old and above, pregnant employees and employees who are immunocompromised as certified by the PEZA physician with the assistance of the Head Office nurse) will be given priority to enable them to work from home. Measures to enable them to WFH may include reviewing the work processes and providing the necessary IT equipment to affected employees.

b. **Reduce proximity and duration of physical interactions.** For job functions that require frontline services or essential face to face meetings, the following measures shall be in place:
   i. Reduce the number of employees that will report to work to allow at least one (1) meter distance in the workstations;
   ii. Physical meetings shall have less participants to allow at least one (1) meter distance, if necessary, divide the meeting participants in more than one meeting venue and link them through teleconference.
   iii. Clients or visitors are requested to set an appointment with the unit concerned and will be advised to accomplish an online health form ahead of the meeting. The form shall be used in contact tracing in case of suspected, probable or confirmed case.

c. **Flexible working time or stagger working hours.** Those who will be tasked to report for work shall be entitled to flexible time schedule as prescribed in Civil Service Commission (CSC) guidelines. This will reduce crowds in common spaces such as entrances / exits, elevators, pantries / canteens and allow employees to travel to and from work during off-peak hours.

d. **Defer mass gatherings.** Flag ceremonies, celebratory functions including flag ceremony, non-essential inspections may be deferred until the State of Public Health Emergency has been lifted to prevent close and prolonged contact among participant to minimize possible transmission especially by asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic COVID-19 positive employees.

e. **Implement shift arrangements.** This is a human traffic management measure so that employees in units are divided in teams and be physically segregated to avoid risk of infection between teams, this may be implemented as follows:
   i. Establish alternate teams of employees (e.g. Team A and Team B) who shall report to the office at different work schedules. For example, Team A will report to the office while Team B members are given assignments according to work from home (WFH) arrangements. After 14 days, Team A switches role with Team B.
   ii. Heads of units (e.g. Division Chief, Department Manager, Zone Manager, OICs) shall ensure equitable distribution of tasks and that employees or the team assigned on WFH arrangements are delivering on targets.
   iii. Group Managers and Cluster Heads shall check up on units or zones with inadequate number of warm bodies. Whenever possible, they shall assign
employees to be cross-trained so that adequate number of employees will be reporting on alternate schedules.

f. **Promote safe distance in frontline queues.** In frontline services, establish measures to allow for at least one (1) meter distance between clients. Adhesive marks on the floor may be placed as guide to maintain a safe distance between clients. Heads of units are requested to print WHO or DOH guidelines on social distancing to inform the transacting public why such measures need to be in place in PEZA offices.

g. **Transport to and from the office.** It is possible that public transport will not be on “business as usual” mode after the lifting of the ECQ, thus, employees are encouraged to use the PEZA shuttle service as possible. Employees who have private vehicles are encouraged to carpool with fellow employees. Additional shuttle route may be provided using existing fleet service vehicles as needed.

5. **COVID-19 Workplace Protocol.** All PEZA officials and employees including janitorial, clerical or security service shall be made aware of the policies or procedures on handling suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19 positive cases in the workplace. The workplace protocol shall also include measures to prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in the PEZA offices.

**Responsible Units:** All employees for good personal hygiene practice, use of reusable masks, daily temperature and symptom checking, reporting of suspected / probable / confirmed cases of family members in close contact; PASG / Admin services for information dissemination of relevant policies; HR / Clinic for monitoring of suspected / probable / confirmed cases.

The policies and procedures include the following:

a. The procedure to practice infection control and good personal hygiene is provided as Annex A.

b. All employees are required to take daily temperature reading in the morning and afternoon and they shall maintain a log of the readings together with symptoms as applicable. The logsheet for the temperature reading is provided as Annex B while the tips on proper temperature reading using different types of thermometer is provided in Annex C.

c. All employees are requested to report to the HR Department, suspected, probable or COVID-19 confirmed cases of the following:
   i. Fellow employees in the workplace; and,
   ii. Family member of employees who are living in the same house or in close contact with.

d. Annex D provides the procedure for reporting of suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19 positive employee, service provider or client in the workplace. It provides the procedure for handling of workers who exhibit symptoms in the workplace which may include fever, shortness of breath.

e. Contact tracing shall be done in coordination with the DOH and local health institutions in the case of confirmed positive, suspected or probable cases.

f. All visitors and clients shall accomplish Annex E, Health Screening Log to detect symptoms and assist in contact tracing whenever necessary. All those with temperature above 37.6 degrees Celsius will be refused entry. This is consistent with PEZA Memorandum Order 2020-03, COVID-19 interim guidelines in the PEZA offices.

g. Establish indoor disinfection procedures of the workplace, common areas and high-touch surfaces that makes use of disinfectants with known efficacy against SARS-CoV-2. PEZA Memorandum Circular 2020-18, guide to disinfect the workplace premises using products known to be effective against the human coronavirus shall be used as reference in disinfection. Annex F, provides the protocol for disinfection.
h. Promote the proper use masks through the following:
   i. Wearing of non-medical reusable face masks to act as a physical barrier and prevent transmission of the virus while speaking, sneezing or coughing.
   ii. Wear cloth masks properly, it should fit snugly and be made of multiple layers of durable cloth to make it washable and reusable. WHO and CDC recommends that surgical and N-95 face masks be reserved for frontline medical personnel and health responders.
      Annex G provides the CDC guidelines on how to wear mask properly and Do-It-Yourself procedure for making masks at home.
   i. Provide information to employees on how to avoid bringing in SARS-CoV-19 into the homes after visiting the workplace or community. Annex H provides a sample checklist what to do before entering the homes.

6. Communication. The communication procedures shall establish the duties and responsibilities of each employee and the unit handling external and internal communication on COVID-19 management in PEZA.

   Responsible Units: All employees on the responsible use of social media; PPRG and ODG on external communications; HR / Clinic on internal communications.

   The communication procedures shall include the following:
   a. Use of social media or internal systems to provide updates on COVID-19 and new measures if any, that will be in place within the organization.
   b. Protocol when an employee, zone official or member of top management is contacted by the media in case of confirmed COVID-19 case within PEZA and its economic zones.
   c. Protect the rights of diagnosed employees by having clear policies against disclosure in social media by fellow employees.

7. Effectivity. This guideline shall take effect immediately.
ANNEX A
Good Personal Hygiene Practices in the Workplace and at Home

1. Practice the following precautions at all times:
   a. Avoid crowded places and close contact with people who are unwell or showing COVID-19 symptoms
   b. Practise frequent hand washing with soap (e.g. before handling food or eating, after going to the toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing)
   c. Limit social behaviours such as hand-shaking, physical contact and visits to any company unless absolutely necessary.
   d. As much as possible, avoid sharing food, cutlery, utensils and personal hygiene items.

2. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water during the following:
   a. Before and after preparing food
   b. After going to the toilet
   c. Before and after eating
   d. After coughing and sneezing
   e. After removing personal protective equipment like mask and disposable gloves

3. Proper hand washing with soap and water dissolves the fat membrane of the SARS-CoV-2 virus making the virus inactive and unable to cause harm.

Source: UNICEF South Africa on Twitter
# ANNEX B
Monitoring Logsheet for Each Employee (whether reporting to the Office or WFH)

Name of PEZA Employee  :  ______________________________

Office  :  ______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Morning</th>
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Symptoms to be recorded: fever, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, loss of sense of taste or smell, diarrhea

Reminders:
1. All employees are requested to keep a record of their temperature daily.
2. Coordinate with the PEZA nurse, PEZA doctor or direct supervisor if your temperature is between 37.6 deg C and 40 deg C
3. Report to the Nurse Head Office if temperature is 40 deg C and above.
4. Please keep a record of your temperature if in case there will be an audit.
ANNEX C
Tips on Proper Temperature Taking

A. When to take your temperature
   a. Wait for 20 minutes after smoking, eating or drinking hot or cold liquid.
   b. Wait at least 1 hour after heavy exercise or taking a bath before measuring body temperature

B. Method for taking the temperature
   a. Using glass thermometer
      i. Wash the thermometer bulb with soap and water before use
      ii. Shake the thermometer a few times to bring the level of liquid in the thermometer below 35 deg C
      iii. Temperatures may be taken from the armpit or mouth
         1. Armpit reading – place the thermometer bulb securely under the armpit, remove the thermometer and read after 5 minutes.
         2. Oral reading – place the thermometer under the tongue, close your mouth and do not talk or bite the thermometer. Remove the thermometer and read the temperature after 3 minutes.
   b. Using digital thermometer
      i. Wash the area of the thermometer bulb with soap and water before use.
      ii. Switch on the thermometer and wait until it is ready to register a reading
      iii. Temperatures can be taken from the armpit or mouth. Reading may be taken as soon as the thermometer beeps.
   c. Using ear thermometer
      i. Keep the probe clean, use a disposable probe cover. Use a new cover each time you take an ear temperature.
      ii. Switch on the thermometer.
      iii. Center the probe tip in the ear and push gently inward towards the eardrum.
      iv. Press the activation button and hold until a reading appears or the thermometer beeps.
      v. Remove the thermometer and read the temperature.
   d. Using non-contact infrared thermometer
      i. Place the thermometer 3 cm to 5 cm from the forehead or temple
      ii. Ask the person to hold still and to hold the thermometer steady for 2 – 3 seconds during measurement. Movement will impact the temperature reading.
      iii. Remove any hair, sweat, cosmetic or dirt from the forehead before measuring temperature.
      iv. For best results, the person should be indoors and away from direct sunlight for at least 30 minutes before taking the temperature.
ANNEX D
Procedure for Reporting of Suspected, Probable or COVID-19 confirmed PEZA employee

1. Employee informs the direct supervisor of medical condition and the latter informs Nurse Head Office of the status.

2. If the symptoms or confirmation of COVID-19 occurred in the PEZA office, these are the steps to be taken:
   a. Nurse Head Office will guide the employee so that he / she will be isolated
   b. Nurse Head Office or the direct supervisor to arrange transport to designated clinic or hospital for medical assessment.
   c. Nurse Head Office to notify management’s COVID-19 Incident Command System
   d. Nurse Head Office to facilitate contact tracing by coordinating with the direct supervisor of the unwell employee to identify all the people working with the unwell employee or who have come into contact with him / her.
   e. Nurse Head Office to contact the DOH COVID-19 hotline through (02-894-26843) and 1555 to get guidance on which employee shall be placed on quarantine and get advice on which area to be vacated or cordoned off (DOH Circular 2020-0131).
   f. The direct supervisor shall coordinate with the Administrative Services so that appropriate disinfection procedures will be implemented in the vacated or cordoned off area.
   g. As per DOH Circular 2020-0131, there is no need to vacate the whole building or whole floor if there is no sustained and close contact with the COVID-19 confirmed employee.

3. If the symptoms or confirmation of COVID-19 occurred outside the PEZA office, these are the steps to be taken:
   a. Unwell or confirmed COVID-19 employee shall seek medical attention immediately.
   b. Family members are requested to inform the direct supervisor of the PEZA employee of the medical condition of the unwell employee.
   c. Direct supervisor of the unwell employee shall notify Nurse Head Office.
   d. Nurse Head Office to notify management’s COVID-19 Incident Command System
   e. Nurse Head Office to facilitate contact tracing by coordinating with the direct supervisor of the unwell employee to identify all the people working with the unwell employee or who have come into contact with him / her.
   f. Nurse Head Office to contact the DOH COVID-19 hotline through (02-894-26843) and 1555 to get guidance on which employee shall be placed on quarantine and get advice on which area to be vacated or cordoned off (DOH Circular 2020-0131).
   g. The direct supervisor shall coordinate with the Administrative Services so that appropriate disinfection procedures will be implemented in the vacated or cordoned off area.

4. Employees considered as close contacts shall undergo 14-day quarantine. Close contacts in the workplace setting are defined in DOH Administrative Order 2020-13 someone who had direct physical contact, worked, transacted or travelled in close proximity (less than 1 meter) for more than 15 minutes with a confirmed COVID-19 case.
Dear Valued Clients and Visitors.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community and reduce the risk of exposure, we would like to request your kind assistance in accomplishing the survey form below. Your participation is important to help us take precautionary measures. Any information that you have provided us will be handled according to the Data Privacy Act and will only be used if contact tracing is necessary. Thank you for your time.

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Company / Organization</th>
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<th>Venue of meeting or business transaction</th>
<th>Temperature reading</th>
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Self-declaration by visitor

1. **No symptom**

   Please put a check mark if you have any of the symptoms below:
   - Fever
   - Dry cough
   - Body ache
   - Headache
   - Sore throat
   - Runny nose
   - Tiredness
   - Shortness of breath

2. **Have you been in contact with any COVID-19 confirmed positive patient?**

   - Yes
   - No

Signature _________________________     Date _________________________
ANNEX F
Protocol for Disinfection

A. Protocol for Routine Cleaning and Disinfection

1. Disinfection staff shall use appropriate PPEs prior to cleaning and disinfection. The Safety Officer shall ensure that the disinfection staff is aware of the correct procedure for the use of the PPEs.
2. Determine areas to be cleaned and disinfected. These areas include walls, floors, windows, toilet bowl, bathroom surfaces, doorknobs and the like.
3. Open doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area to be cleaned.
4. If surfaces are dirty, this should be cleaned with soap and water before disinfection.
5. To disinfect, wipe all surfaces that may be reasonably touched by an infected person. This is usually from head height down to the floor. Disinfection products may be applied using manual pump spray bottles, lightly wetted cloth or mop for floors. Allow the surface to air dry for 30 minutes. Disinfection may be done with the use of the following:
   a. Bleach solution – 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution or as suggested by the DOH, one-fourth (1/4) cup of bleach to one gallon of water.
   b. Alcohol solution – for surfaces that may be damaged by bleach such as metal surfaces or electronics (e.g. computer screens, keyboards and the like), 70% alcohol may be used using lightly wetted clean cloths.
   c. Other solutions – if other products will be used to disinfect, it is suggested that the “US EPA List N: Disinfectants against SARS-CoV 2” be consulted to ensure that the product meets the US EPA’s criteria for use against ARS-CoV-2. Currently, this is the most exhaustive list available in the web.
6. Disposable gloves and gowns used by the disinfecting staff should be treated as potentially infectious material and disposed in accordance with national rules. Non-single use PPE such as safety goggles or face shield should be decontaminated using the available products (e.g. 0.1% sodium hypochlorite or 70% ethanol).
7. Ensure that the disinfection staff are aware of proper removal of PPEs to minimize contamination. Safety Officers shall also ensure that the disinfection staff are aware of the proper hand hygiene before, during and after the cleaning and disinfection process.

B. Enhanced Protocol for Workplace with Confirmed COVID-19 Case

The following enhanced disinfection actions are recommended only after notification of a confirmed COVID-19 case in the workplace. Most likely a long time period will have passed between the time the confirmed COVID-19 positive individual would have been in the area and management personnel became aware of the individual’s COVID-19 status. Therefore, in most cases, disinfection should begin immediately upon receipt of notice. It is also recommended to close of all areas suspected to have been contaminated by the affected individual(s) prior to beginning the disinfection process.

Staff assigned disinfection work should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the confirmed COVID-19 case, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. Use only EPA-approved disinfecting agents following manufacturer’s label directions.

1. Identify all employees having close contact (within six feet) of the ill customer and instruct them to return home and self-quarantine for 14 days.
2. Disinfection staff shall don appropriate PPE prior to working on disinfection projects. At a minimum this should include N-95 respirators, safety glasses, and gloves (latex or nitrile).
3. Determine as close as possible, all paths traveled and areas visited or used by the ill person during their time in the facility and cordon off using signs and physical barriers such as caution banner tape, safety cones etc.
4. Using an EPA-approved disinfection product, wipe all horizontal surfaces reasonably touched by all persons in the facility. This is usually from head height down to the floor. Follow manufacturers’ directions and allow to air dry for at least 30 minutes. Disinfection product may be applied using pump spray bottles or lightly wetted clean cloths.
5. Wipe down PPE (safety glasses, respirators, etc.), dry, and store appropriately. Place used applicators, wipes, cloths, and gloves into plastic trash bags, seal well, and dispose in normal trash.
6. Depending on the length of time in the facility and the areas traversed by the confirmed COVID-19 case, consideration may be given to using a professional cleaning/disinfection service and extreme measures such as ozonation, UV disinfection, and/or ULV fogging.

SOURCE: Lab Manager. COVID-19. What you need to know and what you should know
Annex G

CDC Guidelines on Use of Masks

Recent studies disclosed by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that a large number of persons that have the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) are “asymptomatic” or lack symptoms. Some infected individuals may be “pre-symptomatic” or will exhibit symptoms after a few days of having the disease. Considering that the current testing capacity and DOH guidelines prescribes testing only of Persons Under Investigation (PUIs), or those showing symptoms, it is possible that we are interacting with asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals in the workplace and in the community.

To further prevent the spread of the virus, we would like to recommend the following measures:

1. Wear cloth or non-medical face masks. The mask will act as a barrier for people interacting in close proximity and prevents transmission of the virus during sneezing, coughing or speaking.

2. Wear cloth coverings properly. The mask or cloth cover, made up of multiple cloth layers should fit snugly and be made of durable material so that it may be washed and re-used.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and CDC recommends that surgical masks or N-95 masks be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders considering the critical level of supplies available worldwide. As reference, the CDC guidelines entitled “Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19” is provided as reference.
Annex H
Making the Home Safe from COVID-19: Tips Before Entering the Home from the Office

BAYANIHAN NA!

PROTOCOLS FOR HCWs WHEN ENTERING THE HOME

1. DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING when you come home.
2. TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES IMMEDIATELY. Leave shoes outside or near the door. Disinfect shoes afterwards.
3. PUT THINGS IN A BOX PLACED BY THE DOOR INSIDE YOUR HOME. Include bag, keys, cellphone.
4. TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES AND PUT IN A PLASTIC. Wash with bleach in warmest water possible.
5. TAKE A SHOWER AT ONCE AFTER ARRIVAL. Wash face, neck, hands, wrists thoroughly.
6. CLEAN GLASSES, CELLPHONE. Wear gloves first then clean with soap and water, or 60% ethanol.
7. CLEAN OTHER ITEMS BROUGHT FROM OUTSIDE. Wear gloves first then clean with bleach solution (4tsp in 1 quart water).

REMEMBER - IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO DO TOTAL DISINFECTION. We can only reduce the risk.

If COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, cough or difficulty breathing are experienced, notify UPHS immediately:

UPHS HOTLINE
0977 826 4560
0925 369 5898

TALUNIN NATIN ANG COVID-19!

*Adapted from Grupo Especial de Operaciones de Salvamento (GEOS): Protocols when entering your home

Note: Protocol is adopted from UP-PGH, designed for Health Care Workers (HCWs)
REFERENCES


PEZA Memorandum Order 2020-03. COVID-19 Interim Guidelines in the PEZA Offices.

PEZA Memorandum Circular 2020-18. Guide to Disinfect the Workplace Premises using Products known to be Effective against the Human Coronavirus.