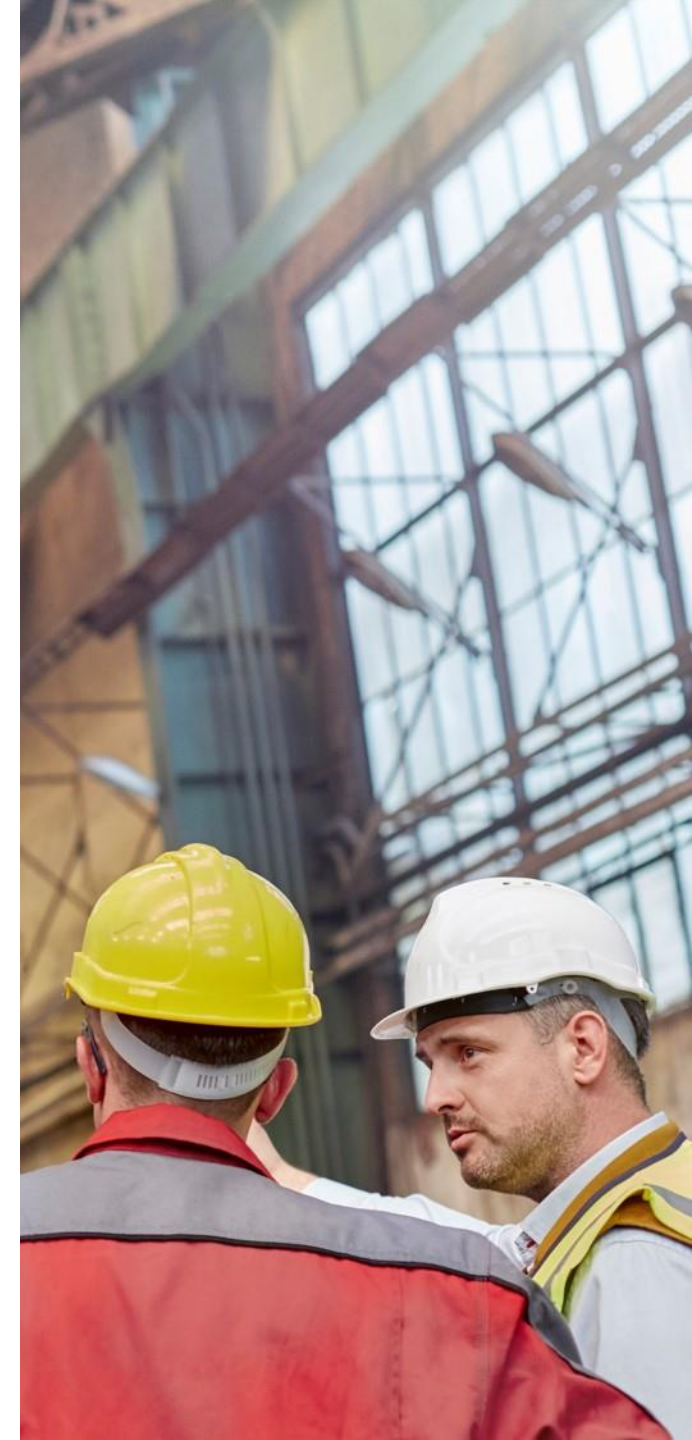




**Do you have a COVID-19 Prevention Plan?**

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## Introduction

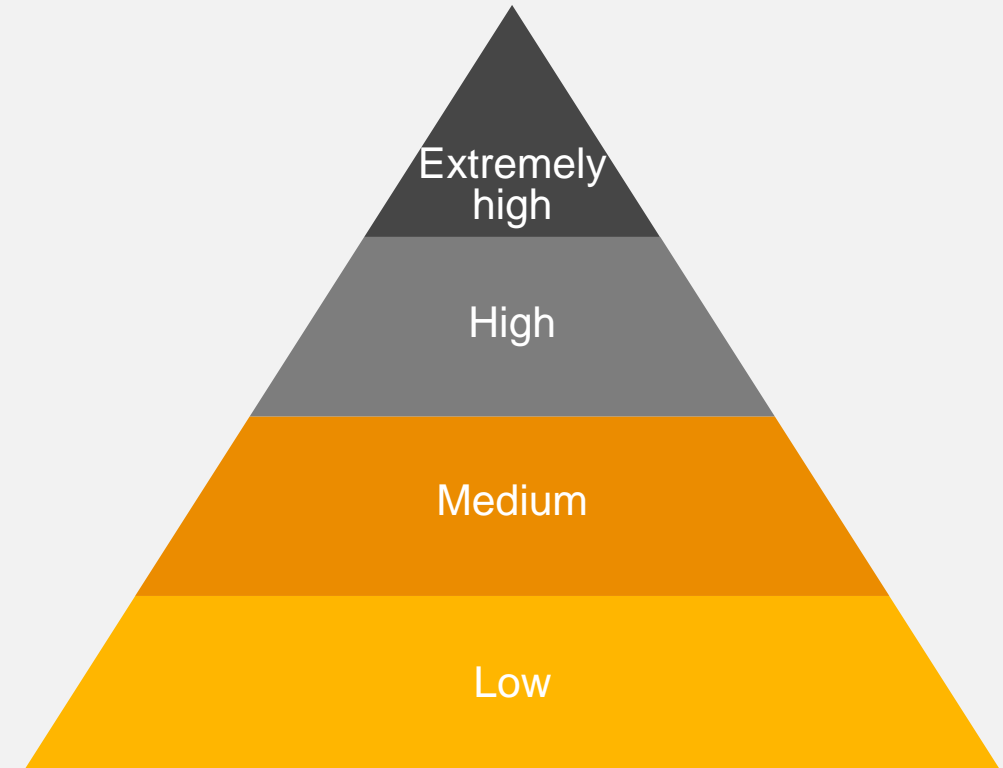
Every employer must have measures to prevent occupational risks (“COVID-19 Prevention Plan”)\*.

This involves (i) identifying and (ii) assessing the risk of COVID-19 infection in the workplace. The risk assessment must cover (i) all categories of workplaces and (ii) assess the associated risk level:

- Risk assessment: Kazakhstan does not have an established system to assess the level of risk of COVID-19 on personnel. Consequently, international practice is a good guide.
- Controls: international health and safety specialists commonly use a “hierarchy of controls” system, to identify and select methods for control over dangerous elements in the workplace.

These are the crucial elements of the COVID-19 Prevention Plan

*\*Decision No. 36 of the Chief State Sanitary Doctor (10 May 2020).*



**Jobs can be divided into four levels of coronavirus exposure.**



## Low risk

Workers in this category have minimal occupational contact with the public. Job do not require continuous contact with people.

### Workers include:

- Remote workers (working from home during the pandemic)
- Office workers with limited close physical contact with others
- Workers in production and industrial enterprises with limited close physical contact with others

## Medium risk

Jobs that require frequent / close contact with people who may be infected but are not confirmed.

### Workers include:

- Employees who interact with potentially infected people (e.g. workers in shops, supermarkets, banks, schools, delivery services, restaurants, sports and tourist facilities, etc.)
- Workers in open workspaces (e.g., factories, call centers, open space offices, etc.)

## High Risk

Frequent contact with a large number of people in the workplace and the wider public, implying possible direct contact with infected people. (Typically this is people linked to / associated with the medical profession, as well as others who are in contact with people known to be infected.) Jobs with high potential for exposure to confirmed or suspected sources of virus infection.

### Workers include:

- Healthcare delivery and support staff (staff in hospitals and other healthcare facilities in contact with confirmed and/or potentially infected patients)
- Laboratory workers and funeral services staff
- Emergency transport staff
- Cleaners and waste treatment workers in health and emergency care facilities
- Others (e.g., police officers, civil protection officers, military personnel, firefighters)

## Extremely high risk

Personnel have frequent direct contact with infected people. Jobs with extremely high potential for exposure to confirmed or suspected sources of coronavirus infection during specific medical, laboratory or post-mortem procedures.

### Workers include:

- Professional medical workers (e.g., doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, ambulance specialists) who carry out professional procedures for confirmed and/or suspected patients with coronavirus. (This is a more specific group than under high risk.)
- Morgue workers who carry out autopsies and other professional procedures for confirmed and/or suspected deceased patients with coronavirus

**Staff can move between different levels of exposure as their roles change.**

COVID-19 Prevention Plan

Risk assessment: levels of safety risks

Hierarchy of safety controls

Legal requirements

Self-diagnostic checklist

1 2 3 4 5



International health and safety specialists commonly use a “hierarchy of controls” system, to identify and select methods for control over dangerous elements in the workplace.

Optimal control over any dangerous element involves its full elimination/removal.

Generally, it is impossible to eliminate the danger; consequently, the following methods of protection and control should be considered:

- Engineering control
- Administrative control
- Safe Work Practices
- Personal protective equipment

Each type of protection method and control has advantages and disadvantages, from ease and/or complexity of implementation to effectiveness of measures and cost issues. Usually a combination of controls is optimal.

## Engineering controls

Engineering controls imply complete isolation of employees from hazards related to performance of work. These controls are a cost effective way to minimize exposure to the hazard (COVID-19) in the workplace, without relying on safe conduct of employees.

### Engineering controls include:

- Installation of high-performance air filters
- Increasing speed of ventilation and air conditioning in the workspace
- Installation of physical barriers, e.g. protective screens made of transparent plastic
- Additional permanent or portable equipment to minimize or eliminate the spread of pathogens and contamination of surfaces and objects
- Specialized negative pressure ventilation, functional isolation rooms in medical facilities, etc.





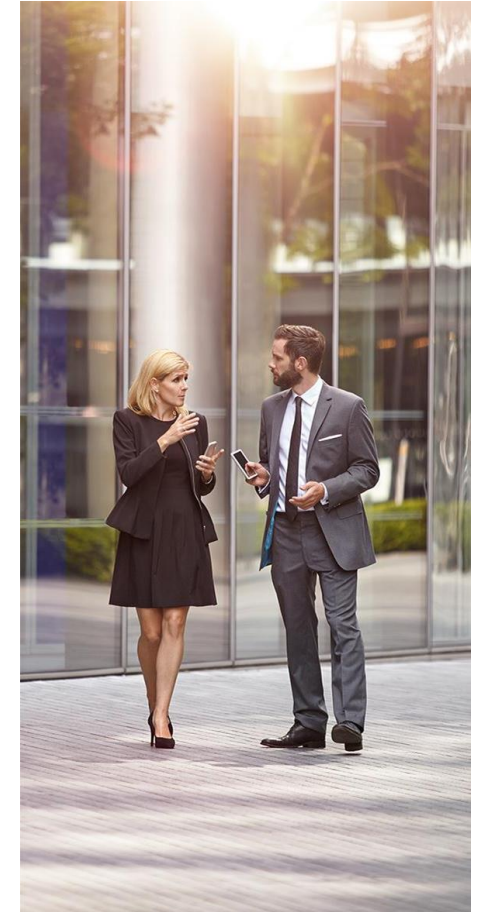


## Administrative controls

Administrative controls require actions by an employer and employee. Usually, administrative controls are documented working policies, practices and procedures aimed at reducing or minimizing the employees' exposure to hazards and related risks. Administrative controls aim to prevent risky behaviour by staff.

### Administrative controls may include:

- Encouraging infected workers to stay at home (starting with the first symptoms of physical distress)
- Minimising physical contact between employees, clients and customers by replacing face-to-face meetings with virtual communications
- Introduction of shifts to reduce presence of employees in the same workspace at a given time, allowing them to keep distance from each other and maintain a full working week in the workplace
- Business Travel Policy, including COVID-19 restricted country/regions
- Emergency and crisis plans with description of response methods, emergency communication channels, corporate emergency scenarios, etc.
- Providing employees with timely and up-to-date information on hazards and risk factors in the workplace, conduct of health and safety induction and training
- Training in the proper use of personal protective equipment
- Warning Posters on Hazards
- Training material should be easily accessible and understandable, in the appropriate language(s)





## Safe Working Practices

Safe Work practices are a type of administrative control that includes specific procedures for the safe and proper conduct of work, aimed at reducing the duration, frequency and/or intensity of exposure to the hazard.

### Examples of safe work practices include:

- Disinfection of working surfaces
- Stronger personal hygiene with the requirement of regular hand cleaning with a liquid containing alcohol or washing with soap
- Compliance with respiratory hygiene regulations
- Providing various resources and generally promoting a safe environment supporting personal hygiene in the company. For example, providing sanitisers, alcohol wipes containing at least 60% alcohol, contact-free bins, disposable towels for cleaning the premises etc
- Placing posters describing effective methods of hand washing in toilets



## Personal protection equipment (PPE)

PPE used in isolation is generally not effective in the workplace. It should be combined with the other methods mentioned above.

- PPE may include disposable gloves, goggles, protective suits, face shields and screens, face masks, respirators and respiratory protection
- The use of PPE depends on the local epidemiological situation, the occupation, extent of hazards etc.



### Personal protective equipment should be:

- Selected based on level of the hazard in the workplace for an employee
- Properly stored, maintained and worn, according to attached instructions
- Regularly inspected and, if necessary, replaced
- Properly removed, cleaned and disposed of according to the usage and level of exposure to harmful and hazardous factors

**It is the employer's responsibility to supply, maintain, store, replace and dispose of PPE appropriately.**

**We will help employers assess their readiness for return of employees to work safely & prepare a Prevention Plan**

## Legal Requirements

Decision No. 36 of the Chief State Sanitary Doctor (10 May 2020) introduces comprehensive rules and regulations for employers.

The decision covers essential elements the employer must address:

- Access to the workplace/office (monitoring body temperature, installing sanitizers, stopping personnel with signs of illness).
- Organization of the work process (determination of the person responsible for compliance with sanitary and epidemiological requirements, process for safe work, PPE requirement, process of organizing social distance).
- Maintenance of workplaces (requirements for daily cleaning, requirements for personnel, equipment and substances for the disinfection process).

**Noncompliance** with the Decision or other relevant regulatory provisions leads to **administrative and criminal liability** [*Code of Administrative Offences (art 425 and 462), Criminal Code (art 304)*].

### List of mandatory documents for the Employer to ensure safe working conditions to prevent COVID-19

- Internal Act (eg Plan, Instruction) for COVID-19 prevention. This must cover mandatory elements for the employer to comply with the law.
- Health & Safety Policy (if required by Law, depending on the type of company activity)
- Health & Safety Risks Identification procedure
- Health & Safety Induction and Training procedure and training log
- Health & Safety regulation on remote work

### List of recommended documents for the Employer according to international best practices

- Business Continuity Plan
- Communication Plan (for internal & external stakeholders)

## Questions to self-assess staff safety in the post-quarantine period

- Yes
- No
- Planning soon

1 Does your company have a COVID-19 Prevention Plan? Do you have a clear plan of action if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is detected at the workplace and an internal incident reporting process?

2 Do you have a communication strategy to provide updated information to your employees and key stakeholders about the current situation and measures taken by the company in connection with COVID-19?

3 Have you organized a risk assessment process and taken measures to prevent them? Have you covered all types of work when compiling this risk map?

4 Do you have an internal occupational health and safety policy that includes sanitary measures and remote work?

5 Have you conducted safety and labor protection training for your employees? Have you provided training on safe work practices and measures taken to prevent the risk of infection with COVID-19?

6 Do you have a Business Continuity Plan? Do you know about the response measures taken by your contractors, suppliers and customers?



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