

## **Members Question Time**

“A manufacturing company is looking to understand other companies’ policies in relation to Covid-19”. Specific questions include:

1. What preventative measures are manufacturing companies putting in place beyond hand washing and good hygiene practices?
2. Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms. What is your approach in relation to (a) employee with symptoms (b) other production employees and (c) production plant?
3. Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus. What is your approach in relation to (a) employee with Covid-19 (b) other production employees and (c) production plant”?

## **Additional Information from IRDG**

For reference [Enterprise Ireland have issued this document](#) which might be useful to you.

The HSE replied to IRDG with the following information on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

- There is guidance in a document entitled [Guidance for the Business & Retail Sector](#) on the Health Protection Surveillance Centre website - [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) - for businesses and all people on how to deal with symptoms.
- Food industry will be dealt with by EHOs, and the Food Safety Authority has advice for food workers and businesses. <https://www.fsai.ie/faq/coronavirus.html>
- The advice is that the incidents described in the two scenarios presented above are dealt in the same way any infectious disease is dealt with by interviewing the case and determining contacts close or casual.

## **Responses received from Member Companies**

### **Company Response 1: Manufacturing-Light Engineering (49 people)**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

- Limiting access to site by non-essential sub-contractors. Staggering tea breaks and lunch breaks. Flexi time where possible.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

- If anyone is reporting symptoms we are advising them to self isolate and contact their GP. We have put in place an isolation room with a mobile phone, and emergency contact numbers for anyone who doesn't have the ability to leave site without assistance.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- We are following HSE and Government guidelines.

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**Company Response 2: Small company, 3 staff (including correspondence from large manufacturing customer)**

As a small company with just 3 people on manufacturing, we will manage on a day by day basis and if we lose specific staff due to Covid 19 we will most likely close production until they are able to return.

However we received the email below from a large manufacturing customer which might be beneficial to your survey.....

“Protecting our employees from the coronavirus is top of mind for all of us. We have received requests to share some of our learnings on managing our manufacturing facilities through the Covid-19 outbreak. The following are some of the measures that have been implemented in our system.

We are not asking you to implement these actions. We are just sharing our actions and would very much welcome hearing from you what actions you have taken.

**Precautionary Measures**

- Review the general emergency response plan, special emergency response plan, and on-site emergency response work aids.
- Monitor environmental conditions in the neighbouring countries & media reports.
- Provide the epidemiology prevention knowledge training and improve the associate’s awareness on Covid-19 prevention.
- Provide refresher training on proper hygiene practices
- Conduct risk assessment of high contact areas, (rest rooms, bathroom, smoking area, gyms, air conditioning, physical material transmission) and identify mitigation actions.
- Increase sanitizing and cleaning of high contact points.
- Separate associates doing critical roles and implement work from home schedule if possible.
- Minimize gatherings and large meetings, use online meetings tools
- If possible, remove half of chairs in conference rooms to maintain 1.5 meter social distance
- If possible, remove chairs in lunchrooms to maintain 1.5 meter social distance
- Increase inventory and finished goods stocks

**Worker Criteria**

Set clear criteria of people who could or could not come to work.

- Physical condition:
  - Temperature checks: People with body temperature greater than 37.3C and/or respiration symptoms are not allowed to enter into the campus
  - Examine body temperature twice per day. Report abnormal readings to the designated person
  - Any associates with elevated temperature or other Covid-19 symptoms to be sent home and self isolate for 14 days and visit GP and follow GP recommendations

- Travel and health declaration tracking
  - Employees or visitors complete travel and health declaration document. Specifically, report travel to any of the high impact zones (as determined by government agency or your Company) as well as current health condition
  - Employees or visitors must report if they have an ill family member or have come into contact with a known Covid-19 case. If so, person needs to take a 14-day quarantine period before coming back to work
  - Employee to report this information every day
- Shift Arrangement
  - Ask office staff to work from home
  - Split on-site workers into groups to reduce the number of people being together
  - Reduce shift time to prevent shifts from coming into contact with each other during shift change (see chart below)
  - Conduct increased sanitation procedures between shifts

#### **External Visitors**

- Postpone projects which are not urgent
- Limit external visitors except in business-critical situations.
- External visitors and truck drivers need to follow above criteria set for the employee (body temperature no higher than 37.3C; sign a guarantee letter to confirm no respiration symptom or contact with anyone with Covid-19 symptoms.
- Truck drivers shall stay in the truck and have no physical contact with our employees

#### **Protection**

- Provide enough PPE for protection following your country or local health official guidelines. Official requests for the use of masks or goggles varies by country, local requirements.
  - Recommend employee to increase Frequency in washing their hands (Provide cleaning/sanitation drops to employees)
- Provide safe & hygienic environment
  - Rearrange workspace, canteen table to ensure at 1.5 meter social distance between each person
  - Increase frequency of sanitation of office, meeting room, canteen, lockers
  - Implement no touch delivery of record or samples when necessary.
  - Stop or reduce high risk activities, ie close gym & shower room; allow limited # of people go smoking in one time etc.

The following chart is in French but is self-explanatory

*Red is time in change room for incoming operators*

*Yellow is break time*

*Green Lunch time*

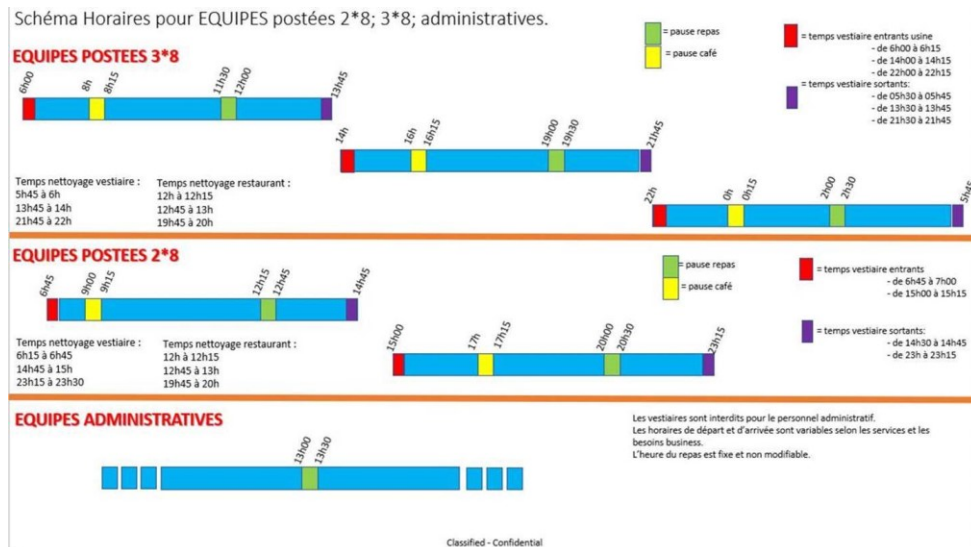
*Purple is change room time prior to leave*

*3 shifts in production & Maintenance*

*2 shifts Lab & Warehouse*

*Day work alternating every other day in office/home office*

*As you will see no team crosses another team*



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### Company Response 3: Manufacturing of products, 500 employees

#### Q1: Preventative Measures being put in place?

- Note we have been doing many of these things since the China outbreak – as a global company we have been preparing, not all items, but cleaning and hygiene ...
- Social Distancing
- Work from home for most non production people, rotating attendance in office, will probably reduce even that.
- All internal meetings on Microsoft teams, max 4 people in a meeting room where personal attendance required.
- Teaming employees – so same people with same group all the time as much as practical
- Enhanced cleaning routines across the plant (we have been doing this since the outbreak in China)

#### Q2: Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

- Stay at home.
- Ask for their contacts list -we are asking people to log who they are in contact with
- Review contact list and respond based on data available
- Production plant remains open, with employees teaming as highlighted above.

#### Q3: Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- Same as scenario 1, additional cleaning and interviews to team members

Finally, we are expecting customers to cascade closures across Europe in the next 2 days. This will probably put us on a partial closure early next week.

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**Company Response 4: 16 employees, design, build & support manufacturing equipment for Medical device**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

- Separation of staff – moving desks & work locations for those in the premises – utilisation of secondary premises for separation & contingency
- Approx 60% working from home.
- Strict controls on visitors
- Daily disinfection of shared surfaces.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

- Will follow HSE instructions specific to the situation.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- Will follow HSE instructions specific to the situation.

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**Company Response 5: 200+ and Contract Manufacturing**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

Changed building entry/exit protocols; staggered breaks; split key teams and segregated from each other.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

Defer to national guidelines.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

Defer to national guidelines.

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**Company Response 6: Food, Health and Pharma sectors, 47 employees**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

- Work from home where possible
- Distancing
  - I. Staggered breaks
  - II. Online meetings rather than face to face
  - III. Workstation distancing
- Regular scheduled cleaning of communal spaces
- Each employee cleaning own work station daily
- Revised company policies and guidelines on COVID19, Remote Working, Attendance and Sickness issued to all employees.
- Appointment of Information Officer to co-ordinate and respond to questions / new information

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

(a) employee with symptoms

- Self-isolation at home
- Seek advice from help-line
- Escalate as advised

(b) other production employees and

- Make aware of potential exposure, especially close contacts
- Seek advice from help-lines and assess risk
- Self-isolate if considered at risk from infection

(c) production plant?

- Daily cleaning by each member of team
- Regular scheduled cleaning of communal spaces

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

(a) employee with Covid-19

- Self-isolation at home
- Follow doctor / HSE advice

(b) other production employees and

- Make aware of potential exposure, especially close contacts
- Seek advice from help-lines and assess risk
- Self-isolate if considered at risk from infection

(c) production plant”?

- Daily cleaning by each member of team

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### **Company Response 7: Medical Device Operation, 460 employees**

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

(a) employee with symptoms – Self isolate and contact GP- provide feedback on approach e.g. if testing is required what is the result – normal sick pay policy applies

(b) other production employees – No impact – symptoms are not proof of virus.

(c) production plant? As per B

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- (a) employee with Covid-19 – They will not be allowed to return without a cert from GP stating that they are virus free.
- (b) other production employees - We would contact the HSE to organise contact tracing and may well need to send close contacts home to self isolate
- (c) production plant - If positive test we have arranged a cleaning team to come to site and do a deep clean in that specific area. Production in all other areas carries on as normal.

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**Company Response 8: SME automotive manufacturing, 46 employees**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

Measures implemented

- Communications: Updates for staff, posters on hand washing methods in toilets, posters on cough etiquette throughout.
- Staggered breaks & lunches for all staff
- Home working: At risk individuals, employees who have been to affected regions, employees with self-declared concerning symptoms
- Social distancing: Workers placed minimum 2.0m apart, telephone or online meetings for external
- Social distancing: Limit number of employees in key areas & break areas
- Limit network: No business trips by personnel, no visitors allowed, hauliers do not enter building (1-person allocated to loading/unloading duties)
- Surfaces: Frequent touch surfaces being sanitised and or need for contact removed (e.g. propped open doors)
- Sign-In: use of personal mobile device app to limit shared touching surfaces
- PPE: Gloves and face masks available within production environment

Measures under consideration

- No group meetings – use Teams or phone instead
- Desk / workstation bound working – no unnecessary movement through building
- Maximise remote working: Any workers who can work remotely or whose presence at the office is not essential to daily operations

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

- a) Self-isolate and request feedback on any testing
- b) Communicate update to employees. Further separate and segregate production employees from same team from rest of production; assign last break time & sanitise afterwards. Monitor for symptoms
- c) Communicate update to employees. Maintain minimum workforce necessary on site

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- Self-isolate for 14 days. Request fit for work certificate. Employee to take Covid emergency sick pay.

- Communicate update to employees. Direct team to self isolate for 14 days. Others to monitor for symptoms
- Communicate update to employees. Maintain minimum workforce necessary on site.

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### **Company Response 9: Medical Devices, 170 Ireland & 300 Globally**

Happy to share our policy, which I have anonymized.

[\(See word document on this link\)](#)

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### **Company Response 10: Design and Manufacture of beverage systems (hot cold drinks), 65 employees in Ireland**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

- All non-direct staff are working from home (WFH) i.e. only production staff and warehouse staff on site.
- Staggered shifts and breaks
- No sitting opposite one another at break time
- Mandatory wearing of masks
- Mandatory body temperature measurement before and after every shift. Anyone with temp >37.3C not allowed in and referred to GP/HSE protocols.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

- For a) Follow HSE protocols: self-isolate and keep manager informed of status.
- For b) and c) continue with protocols as Q1 above.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

- Shut the plant for 14 days.
- All WFH employees continue to work

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### **Company Response 11: Medical Device Company >1000 employees**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

We have separated our shifts with no handover and surface cleaning at end and start of shift. There are constant reminders of HSE recommendations on hand washing and good hygiene practices by notices, verbally and e-mail. To minimise contacts, all employees have been allocated specific car parking areas, building access points and canteen times and areas. They are also recommended to only use the toilets closest to their areas of work. Where possible/practical we are asking non-manufacturing people to work remotely, however, bandwidth problems are arising with conf. calls, web meetings and general access.



**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

If person has symptoms they are asked to self-isolate and contact their doctor. Unless confirmed, we are doing nothing with regard to other production employees or the production plant except reminding of HSE recommendations on hand washing and good hygiene practices.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

If the person is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus, close contacts would be identified and asked to self-isolate. Effected area will be deep cleaned and disinfected with clean of all hard surfaces in area and an aerosol disinfectant on all other surfaces.

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### **Company Response 12: Manufacturing & Retail, 100 employees**

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

Split shifts, staggered breaks, distancing for all staff. Eliminated all meetings, any face to face discussions are the correct distance apart for no more than 10 minutes. Increased cleaning. Removed the clock in machines (bio metric). Admin staff working from home. Different entrances for different staff.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

(a) employee with symptoms advise them to follow HSE protocol, contact GP & request a test.

(b) other production employees risk assess what area's would be affected and get advice from HSE/HR consultant and

(c) production plant? Follow HSE advice & close the plant for a short period for a deep clean.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

(a) employee with symptoms advise them to follow HSE protocol, contact GP & request a test.

(b) other production employees risk assess what area's would be affected and get advice from HSE/HR consultant and

(c) production plant? Follow HSE advice & close the plant for a short period for a deep clean.

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### **Company Response 13: Electronics, 200 employees**

Below in blue is an extract from a comms we issued last Thursday, prior to this we had ceased unnecessary travel between Sites as we have 3 main locations (in one Irish city). We're doing all the usual comms re good hygiene, getting Employees to all clean their own work stations as well as Cleaner on Site.

Last Wednesday an Employee made it known to us that he had returned from abroad the previous weekend and that one of the group had tested positive. He left Site immediately and we paid him for the remainder of the day. He was tested that evening, we didn't advise Employees of the situation at that point as the situation was evolving and there was no confirmation of diagnosis. We have had negative feedback from a couple of Employees on this point but spoke with IBEC today who said they would be happy that we were managing an evolving situation.

I was in touch with the Employee every day who was feeling fine and still is as of last night when I was last in contact. The Employee did test positive Saturday afternoon, we asked him for a list of potential close contacts and I contacted all by phone Saturday evening whereby we made them aware that a Colleague had tested positive. We named the Employee as he gave his consent to do so. We felt employees could only make their own decisions regarding close contact or not by naming them. We recommended that the list of people self isolate and contact the HSE/GP as soon as they could.

Sunday morning I set up a What's App Group for the 50 or so Employees that were in the building on the days when the Employee was working. I sent them an update but the mistake we possibly made was we didn't limit the comms to one way communication as I was inundated with questions, comments in a public arena all day Sunday and part of yesterday, have since changed that.

In this Employees case he will be unpaid for Thursday and Friday unless he takes holidays or time in lieu (TIL) as per below extract. Our Sick Pay kicks in after 3 days absence for up to 15 days, less social welfare after the 6<sup>th</sup> day. He will as you know get the Covid 19 Pandemic Payment and he will get that from last Thursday i.e. first date of absence and we will top up as of Tuesday this week i.e. 4<sup>th</sup> day of absence which of course was a paid holiday and complicates it a little further.

As of today we have a suspected case so communicated this to the Employees the person was working with which was in another of our facilities. We spoke to Employees face to face, it went very well with all employees remaining at work and being advised to contact the HSE/their GP with any concerns.

Our workforce reduced by about 50% on Monday this week in the facility where we had the confirmed case so we are having to manage carefully what scenario's employees are in which is a minefield in itself. Are they in self isolation/quarantine voluntarily, advised by the HSE or GP to do so, are they taking annual leave, unpaid leave or again TIL? I had a long call with IBEC this afternoon and it appears that if a person is advised to self isolate/quarantine and has written proof of this they will also be eligible for the 305 level payment. This was a concern of ours as to how is this proved.

Also to note certainly at the weekend the HSE were giving differing advice which wasn't helping those calling or us as Employers. We have a lot of people working from home and have drafted a remote working policy for this period of time. We unfortunately are now looking at next steps, not renewing contracts, lay offs, short term working and maybe more i.e. pay cuts.

I would be interested to understand if possible what companies are doing in this regard at this stage.

We also look after the US, UK and some Middle East countries so to say keeping up with each County and State is a challenge is an understatement!

["We continue to put the health and wellbeing of our Employees to the forefront of our decision making. As a result, effective from tomorrow, we are facilitating the following arrangements subject to your Managers approval. Therefore, effective immediately and until further notice, we will make the following options available to employees](#)

- [Working from Home](#)

If your role allows working from home and your Manager is in agreement this will be facilitated until further notice. Employees should ensure they have adequate internet connectivity and the ability to connect from home as needed.

- **Unpaid Leave**

Unpaid leave should be requested in the same way as annual leave. If approved by your Manager/Supervisor up to 11 days unpaid leave can be taken at this moment in time.

- **Annual Leave**

Leave should be requested in the usual way and employees can avail of their entitlement subject to Manager/Supervisor approval. On this occasion we will be flexible with requests at short notice and we would encourage Employees to take next Monday off.

- **Time in Lieu**

TIL should be requested in advance subject to Manager/Supervisor approval. 40 Hours taken off can be paid but will have to be worked up within 3 months on an hour for hour basis.”

In summary:

**Q1:** Preventative Measures being put in place?

Elimination of travel between sites unless approved, each person cleaning their own work station morning and evening plus cleaning support, social distancing and putting people on shifts.

**Q2:** Scenario 1: A production employee rings in with symptoms.

Recommend to self isolate, call GP/HSE, take their advice and let us know. Based on today’s case we are now telling Employees when we know/are in a position to do so. We were to start today but didn’t get to it to speak to the various locations when Employees are finishing at end of day to give them a quick update. Aiming to put a written daily comms in place but with everything going on and a small team to support we may or may not get to this every day.

**Q3:** Scenario 2: A production employee is confirmed to have Covid-19 virus.

Covered in main body above.

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**Company Response 14: Design and manufacture for Ag Sector, 140 employees**

- We have hand sanitisers at each clocking station and insisted before and after hand sanitising which was policed for compliance initially. Now due to lack of hand sanitiser, we’re operating a roll call. Office based clocking in via PC.
- Lucky in our workplace plenty of space so social distancing is already present.
- Removed chairs in canteen to ensure social distancing.
- Set up a whats app group for updated information so all can be advised on updates.
- Couriers and Truck drivers remain in trucks and paperwork is soft copy or where hard is required have drop points.
- Established a visitor screening form.
- Established an employee self certification form before they are allowed return to work following any personal travel.
- All business travel suspended for March.
- COVID 19 reaction team.

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### **Company Response 15: Manufacture, 500 employees**

Below is a summary of what has been implemented here:

- All personnel not essential to production are working from home
- Social distancing policy enacted
- Crisis Management team on call
- Sanitation at each entrance
- Temperature monitoring at entry to car parks and main entrance
- Regular sanitising clean down of surfaces by cleaning staff
- Teams have been dispersed across buildings to ensure whole teams do not go down
- People to stay in their own buildings unless approved
- No collective meetings – all conducted via Webex or Skype
- Canteens reconfigured to facilitate social distancing
- Breaks staggered
- Clock ins staggered
- Daily video updates to all associates
- Continuous reminders on social distancing, hand washing and other preventative measures on video screen and at Tier meetings

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### **Company Response 16: Manufacture, 500 employees**

- Contingency Plan Prepared
- Daily Contingency Team Meeting (SLT, HR & IT)
- Additional hand sanitisation stations installed
- Awareness raised –communications, posters, screen presentations
- Office wipes provided for communal keyboards and phones
- Individual temperature checking before coming to work
- Visitors reduced –those who do arrive on site have their temperature checked
- Good hygiene practices –hand washing, cough/sneeze into tissues/elbow
- Meeting room etiquette has been changed to reduce occupancy, open windows and ensure space between occupants.
- Meeting etiquette in terms of avoid the shaking of hands has been implemented
- All international travel suspended & all domestic travel to be reviewed
- All site entrants required to complete questionnaire
- Attendance at off-site meetings via webex
- Remote working “pressure tested” Wed 11 March
- Escalation to “Delay” mode saw changes made to the number of staff physically required on site every day
- Escalation to “Mitigation” mode will see changes made to the number of processes running on site
- On site manufacture of hand gel sanitiser

- Line managers advised to support team member reasonable requests
- HR Policies in place and will be revised as appropriate
- Q&A list being prepared –please submit questions to your line manager



END