CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES IN THE WORKPLACE IN RELATION TO COVID-19

Demerara Distillers Ltd Group Of Companies, Guyana
Presentation Outline

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Introduction

- Due to the outbreak of the highly contagious ‘Coronavirus’ (COVID-19); DDL, its employees and its customers are all at risk of contracting the deadly virus.

- Therefore, the company has made provisions in order to play its part in reducing the spread of the virus; and to also fulfill its corporate social responsibility in the face of a viral outbreak.

- The measures that DDL has implemented take into consideration not only our premises and our employees, but our customers and the general public as well.
Challenges Faced

• Because the coronavirus, COVID-19 is new to the world the challenges faced will be how employers and employees mitigate the transmission of this deadly and contagious virus.

• In general, these challenges include: placing and maintaining physical distance between persons, enhanced sanitation and deep cleaning methods for our facilities, employee sensitization and awareness, management of employees who may begin to show symptoms and ensuring that sick/infected persons are not allowed to enter the premises.
Providing of Additional Handwash Stations

- Strategically placed at the entrances of all locations across the group
- All individuals entering our premises are mandated to wash hands thoroughly before entering
- Handwashing signs posted with instructions for proper handwash method
- Wall-mounted soap dispensers made available for use
Screening and Restrictions of Persons Who Enter Our Premises

- Temperature checks have been implemented at the head office and before entry to all other operations
- Access is denied to visitors, except those conducting urgent business or making deliveries
- Persons are to wash their hands thoroughly at the strategically provided handwash stations before entry
- Security checklist has been established for all visitors to DDL and its subsidiaries, to prevent sick persons from entering. The checklist is monitored daily by the HR Department.
Wherever possible, staff have been sent on annual leave during this period.

Persons capable of working from home have been made to do so.

Face-to-face conversations replaced with phone calls wherever possible.

Replacing of face-to-face meetings with virtual meetings or Zoom.

Reduction of physical work interactions.
Employee Sensitization and Awareness

- Signs and posters posted around facilities providing information to employees on the virus, its symptoms and measures to keep safe
- Advisories sent out to employees reminding them to:
  - Wash hands properly with appropriate cleaning agents
  - Cough or sneeze into elbow, or into a tissue which is to be discarded afterwards
  - Avoid touching face, eyes, nose, mouth
  - Avoid shaking of hands
  - Engage in a healthy diet, getting enough Vitamin C in particular to boost immunity
Sanitization and Cleaning

• Sanitizing solutions have been placed in all kitchens and washrooms for use

• Frequency of deep cleanings for offices and plant facilities, including machinery and equipment with 70% ethyl alcohol and other cleaning and sanitizing agents; has been increased

• Regular disinfecting of frequently touched areas and objects such as doorknobs, light switches and canteen surfaces

• One bottle of company-produced sanitizer is given to each staff for personal use from time to time
Protection of Mouth and Nose

- Masks have been provided to all employees on the job
- Protocol has been issued to employees for the wearing and cleaning of re-usable masks
- Re-usable masks are continuously being acquired
Management of Staff Who Show/Report Symptoms

Responsibility of the Human Resource Dep’t

- Protocol has been developed for the managing of staff who report symptoms
- Each employee is monitored and followed up with individually
- Appropriate steps are taken after discussion and after a period of time has elapsed

All employees who show symptoms are advised to isolate themselves, contact the Ministry of Public Health hotline numbers, and not report to work!
Arranging Transportation for After-Curfew Workers

- The government of Guyana has implemented a curfew of 6 p.m. in an effort to keep persons off the road during the evening hours.

- DDL has provided transportation for its employees working after 6 p.m.
DSL Cash and Carry Outlets

- All customers are made to wash hands at the hand wash stations placed at the entrances of the outlets
- Restriction placed on the number of customers allowed in the store at once
- Customers must wear masks to be allowed into the store
- Distance markers placed in store to ensure customers stay 6ft apart from each other
- Enhanced cleaning procedures on premises
- Trolleys and shopping baskets are regularly sanitized
Corporate Efforts

**Establishment of New Company Protocols**
COVID-19 Protocols were written and introduced with respect to operations and staff, including:
- Courier handling
- Sanitization and Cleaning
  - External Contractor Mgt
  - Shipping and Logistics

**New Product**
Operations commenced production of a new alcohol-based sanitizing agent for commercial purposes in sizes 700mL, 750mL, and 1140mL (no VAT)

**Donations**
In excess of 15000L of the alcohol-based sanitizing agent were donated to Senior Homes, Orphanages, Ministry of Public Health, and Health Clinics.
In essence, DDL has done the following in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Made handwash resources and sanitizer more accessible
- Sensitized employees to COVID-19 and encouraged proper hand and respiratory hygiene amongst them
- Enhanced the frequency of deep cleanings of our facilities
- Created documented protocols in managing COVID-19, inclusive of handling sick employees
- Encouraged social distancing and reduced face-to-face interactions
- Implemented temperature screening for all areas, and more strictly controls who enters the premises
- Provided face masks, bottles of alcohol-based sanitizer to employees and provided transportation home for employees working after curfew
- Developed a new sanitizing product for commercial use; and donated a sizeable amount to priority institutions

DDL continues to monitor the situation closely and remain aware of updates posted by relevant authorities such as the Ministry of Public Health and WHO. We will continue to implement appropriate measures in an attempt to effectively mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 in our workplace.
THANK YOU

Any questions or comments?