

# GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENTERPRISE-LEVEL COVID-19 TASK FORCE

## ILO DWT for South Asia and Country Office for India

### 1. PURPOSE

These guidelines inform and encourage the formation of an enterprise-level COVID-19 Task Force. They provides broad guidance on the composition and functions of such a Task Force.

It is underpinned by the following ILO Recommendations:

- i) The Co-operation at the Level of the Undertaking Recommendation, 1952 (No.94) of the ILO: this Recommendation describes the purpose of workplace cooperation as consultation and co-operation between employers and workers at the enterprise level on matters of mutual concern.
- ii) The Examination of Grievances Recommendation, 1967 (No. 130: this Recommendation provides a framework for the resolution of grievances at an enterprise level, in a rapid, structured and transparent way.

The guidelines are intended to provide guidance for a post-lockdown phase in which workplaces would gradually return to operations, in the absence of a vaccine having been developed. The guidelines provide a basis for a safe, peaceful and structured return to work. They also seek to reinforce the ILO's commitment to the promotion of decent work, and respect to fundamental principles and rights at work.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE ENTERPRISE-LEVEL COVID-19 TASK FORCE**

The Task Force is not intended to replace existing labour relations mechanisms, or as a basis for collective bargaining. These mechanisms, where they exist, may be adapted to undertake the envisaged activities of the Task Force.

The enterprise-level COVID-19 Task Force would primarily be responsible for the development and joint implementation of a post-lockdown COVID-19 enterprise level plan.

The plan would inform the resumption of operations by enterprises (see section 4).

## **3. COMPOSITION OF THE ENTERPRISE-LEVEL COVID-19 TASK FORCE**

The Task Force would comprise equal representation of management and workers representatives. Management representatives should ideally include top management, HR Manager, Production Manager, etc. Worker representatives would be identified by the collective bargaining agent/union, if there is one present. In the absence of a union, the workers' representatives should be nominated, through consensus, by the various units / sections / divisions / departments making up the enterprise. In the absence of trade union representatives, where the enterprise has a functional workplace cooperation committee or safety committee, then the workers' representatives on such committees may also serve as the workers' representatives on the enterprise-level COVID-19 Task Force.

Meetings should be chaired by a representative of top management, preferably the Chief Executive Officer / Managing Director. The decisions of meeting should be recorded in the form of Minutes.

## 4. COMPONENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE-LEVEL COVID-19 TASK FORCE PLAN

The plan would be specific to each enterprises circumstances and nature of business. It would identify actions for immediate implementation, as well those for medium and long-term implementation respectively.

It would be informed by the ILO's "*An employers' guide on managing your workplace during COVID-19*" (Annex 1).

The plan would broadly encompass the following areas:

- i) **Phasing-in of the resumption of operations:** this will require consideration of aspects including:
  - The sequence in which workers will return to work.
  - The essential operations that will resume as a priority.
  - The operations of lesser priority that may resume later.
  
- ii) **Ensuring a safe workplace:** the following issues would require consideration, amongst others:
  - Measures to ensure occupational safety and health.
  - Ensuring physical / social distancing.
  - Appropriate working arrangements.
  - Identification of workers with underlying health conditions, who would require particular safety precautions to safeguard their health.
  - Measures to rapidly assist workers who may become ill.
  - Emergency plan to put in place if cases of covid-19 are detected in the undertaking after resuming activities (including tracking down workers that have been in close contact with the infected worker(s); clear roadmap to eventually go back to essential operations and; if needed shutdown etc.).

iii) **Promoting productivity through constructive industrial relations:**

this would require attention to the following issues, amongst others:

- Measures to reduce layoffs, including through actions such as reduced working hours.
- Mechanisms to address the rapid, transparent and fair resolution of grievances.
- Measures to afford protection to temporary, contract or casual workers.

**Annexure :**

[An employer's guide on managing your workplace during COVID-19](#)

This Guide has been developed by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) as a general reference for employers and business membership organizations (EBMOs).