

**GUIDELINES FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN RED MEAT ABATTOIR INDUSTRY**

The following guidelines are provided to Red Meat Abattoirs as part of a continuous and concerted effort to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic in the world, whilst continuing red meat production as part of essential services in South Africa. Information will be updated on a continuous basis.

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# COVID-19

Disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus

## Novel coronavirus

Coronaviruses are viruses that circulate among animals but some of them are also known to affect humans.

The 2019 novel coronavirus was identified in China at the end of 2019 and is a new strain that has not previously been seen in humans.

## Prevention

### When visiting affected areas

Avoid contact with sick people



Wash your hands with soap and water



If you develop cough, use a medical face mask



Wherever you travel apply general hygiene rules



## Symptoms

FEVER

COUGH

DIFFICULTY BREATHING

MUSCLE PAIN

TIREDNESS

## Transmission

VIA RESPIRATORY DROPLETS

**2-14** days  
 estimated incubation period



### 1. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The disease is spreading at an alarming rate with 660 000 people infected and 31 000 deaths worldwide. President Cyril Ramaphosa announced lock down regulation (revised on 26 March 2020) to combat the disease whilst providing essential services in the Republic of South Africa.

## 2. HOW COVID 19 SPREADS

When someone who has COVID-19 coughs or exhales they release droplets of infected fluid. Most of these droplets fall on nearby surfaces and objects, such as desks, tables or telephones. People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects, and then touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. If they are standing within 1 meter of a person with COVID-19 they can catch it by breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by them. In other words, COVID-19 spreads in a similar way to flu. Most persons infected with COVID-19 experience mild symptoms and recover. However, some experience more serious illness and may require hospital care. Risk of serious illness rises with age: people over 40 seem to be more vulnerable than those under 40. People with weakened immune systems and people with conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease are also more vulnerable to serious illness.

There is no clear scientific evidence to show that COVID-19 may be transmitted via food. The most important transmission method is a 'droplet infection', where coronaviruses are emitted by humans into the air via droplets (sneezes and coughs), and then inhaled by others. Transmission via surfaces which have been recently contaminated is possible through smear infections, i.e. infection via mucus membranes of the eyes and nose.

## 3. RISK OF REDUCING INFECTION (General)

This COVID-19 planning guidance was developed based on traditional infection prevention and occupational hygiene practices. It focuses on the need for employers to implement engineering, administrative, and work practice controls and personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as considerations for doing so

The World Health Organisation has advocated basic measures for individuals to follow, to reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19. As indicated in Figure 2, these include frequent washing of hands with the recommended sanitiser or soap, correct coughing and sneezing techniques and avoiding contact with sick individual



#### 4. CLASSIFYING WORKER EXPOSURE TO SARS-CoV-2

The level of risk depends on the ability in our workplace environment to identify and isolate sick workers, the need for contact of workers within 2 metres, or requirement for repeated or extended contact with persons to be or suspected of being infected with SARS-CoV-2.

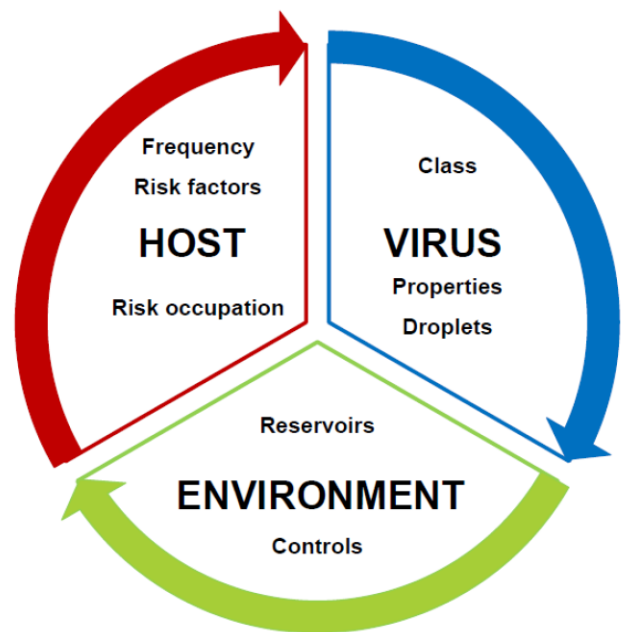
#### 5. IMPLEMENTING WORKPLACE CONTROLS

The legislation governing workplaces in relation to COVID – 19 is the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Act 85 of 1993, as amended, read with the Hazardous Biological Agents Regulations. Section 8 (1) of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, Act 85 of 1993, as amended, **requires the employer to provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees.** Specifically, section 8(2)(b) requires steps such as may be reasonably practicable to eliminate or mitigate any hazard or potential hazard **before resorting to personal protective equipment (PPE).** However, in the case of COVID-19, a combination of controls is required, although the main principle is to follow the hierarchy of controls. (TO BE REVIEWED AS NECESSARY)

### Back to basics....

### Hazard identification & Risk assessment

- A risk assessment should be conducted in the workplace to determine the **RISK** of **EXPOSURE** to **COVID-19** and be **communicated to all workers.**
- This should be assessed with all other hazards
  - Biological, Physical, Chemical, Ergonomic
  - Psychosocial - exposure to long working hours, psychological distress, fatigue, occupational burnout, stigma, physical and psychological violence



**Different workers have different risk exposures: based on job specific risk assessments, consider the following:**

#### 6. CURRENT WORKPLACE CONTROLS AT THE ABATTOIR

Food safety practices in abattoir and deboning plants should be continue to be delivered to the highest hygiene standards including the use of some additional personal protective equipment and improved control on handwashing, coughing practices and social distancing. Although some of the recommended practices may impact on production speed, It is imperative to have documented and controlled practices in places to minimise to risk of COVID 19 spread during the provision of an essential service.

#### 7. RED MEAT REGULATIONS

The red meat regulations provide for measures to promote safe meat production but will also reduce the risk of virus spread between personnel. This include:

##### 7.1 STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) hand washing facilities
- 2) sterilizer adjacent to a hand washbasin
- 3) toilet and hand wash facilities
- 4) an entrance for personnel must be provided and must be designed as an ante-chamber for cleaning purposes and must be provided with hand wash-basins, soap dispensers, hand drying facilities, a boot wash, apron wash and hooks, and a refuse container
- 5) change room, shower, toilet as well as hand wash facilities
- 6) dining facilities with tables and chairs or benches and must be situated so that personnel do not sit or lie on the ground or soil their protective clothing during rest periods;
- 7) a storage facility or room for items needed in the daily slaughter process; rooms or facilities must be provided for –
  - (i) storage of cleaning equipment and materials;
  - (ii) cleaning and sterilization of movable equipment; and
- 8) a facility where meat transport vehicles must be sanitized must be provided.
- 9) In cutting plants sterilizers with water at 82°C, as an alternative, a valet system where handheld equipment is collected on a regular basis and sterilized in a central sterilizing facility may be used, with the understanding that strategically placed emergency sterilizers are still required; and
  - (i) extraction facilities for vapour control must be provided.
  - (ii) extraction facilities for vapour control must be provided.
  - (iii) personnel entrances must have self-closing doors
  - (iv) all working areas must – be well ventilated;
  - (v) clothing lockers in which to store private clothes separately
  - (vi) from protective clothing, ensuring that private clothes and clean protective work clothes do not make contact.
  - (vii) separate fly proof facilities in which to keep food.
  - (viii) Sterilizers must be readily accessible and must–
    - a) be placed on dressing platforms and within three meters of workstations, ad
  - (ix) hand wash-basins in rooms and areas where –
    - a) animals are slaughtered;
    - b) carcasses, meat and offal are detained;
    - c) condemned material is handled; or
    - d) meat is otherwise handled;
- 10) Hand wash-basins must be readily accessible and be –
  - (a) placed on dressing platforms and within three meters of workstations in rooms and areas where –
    - (ii) animals are slaughtered;
    - (iii) carcasses, meat and offal are detained;
    - (iv) condemned material is handled; or
    - (v) meat is otherwise handled;
  - (b) corrosion resistant;
  - (c) provided with taps that are not hand or elbow operated;
  - (d) supplied with warm running water at not less than 40 °C;
  - (e) provided with an inlet, overflow and outlet and must drain through a down pipe directly into a closed drainage system or into an open channel, but such drainage water may not flow over the floor across areas where traffic occurs; and
  - (f) fitted with a dispenser for liquid germicidal soap as well as hand drying facilities, unless the drying of hands is not necessary in the area where the basin is situated.
- 11) There must be available for sanitation purposes –
  - (a) potable or drinking water;
  - (b) hot water at a minimum temperature of 82°C in sterilizers for disinfecting hand equipment;
  - (c) water at 40°C at hand wash basins for washing of hands; and
  - (d) water at 40°C for general cleaning purposes.

And The owner must supply all the necessary equipment needed for sanitation.

## **7.2 SANITATION PROGRAMMES**

- 1) Sanitation programmes must be approved by a registered inspector.
- 2) A detailed post production sanitation programme must be in place containing –
  - (a) a list of all areas and rooms to be cleaned;
  - (b) the frequency of cleaning;

- (c) step by step cleaning procedures for each area, room or equipment including ablution facilities, meat transport vehicles and lairages;
- (d) technical sheets of chemicals used must be provided with reference to use in meat plants, active ingredients, dilution rates and applications;
- (e) results, including microbiological monitoring, to be obtained as the objective of the sanitation programme; and
- (f) job descriptions and a training programme for all cleaners.  
Programmes must be in place for continuous cleaning during –
  - (d) work periods;
  - (e) breaks; and
  - (f) shift changes.

Sanitation must commence immediately after production for the day or shift has ended, but no sanitation may commence in any area before all edible meat and animal products have been removed to prevent contamination.

A new shift may not commence before all areas, rooms and equipment have been cleaned and disinfected and an effective pre-production monitoring programme must be in place to ensure cleanliness of all facilities before production commences.

### **7.3 POTENTIAL HAZARDS**

- 1) The owner must prepare a list of all potential biological, chemical or physical hazards that may occur at each step of the process, including –
  - (a) unacceptable contamination or recontamination of a biological, chemical or physical nature;
  - (b) unacceptable survival or multiplication of pathogenic micro-organisms; and
  - (c) unacceptable production or persistence of toxins or other undesirable products of microbial metabolism.

### **7.4 PREVENTION OF HAZARDS**

- 1) The owner must prepare written hygiene management programmes (HMP) for approval by the provincial executive officer, to prevent, eliminate or reduce hazards mentioned in regulation 53 to acceptable levels and must –
  - (a) ensure that management programmes for each hazard is implemented;
  - (b) establish critical limits for control points;
  - (c) establish a monitoring or checking system for each control point; and
  - (d) prepare written corrective actions that must be taken without hesitation when a deviation is observed and such corrective action must specify –
    - (i) period when the persons responsible to implement the corrective action;
    - (ii) the means and action required for each hazard;
    - (iii) the action to be taken with regard to the meat having been processed during the the process was out of control; and
    - (iv) that a written record of measures taken must be kept.
- 2) a HMP for personal hygiene of workers in terms of which –
  - (i) a general code of conduct, approved by a registered inspector, for personnel and in particular for workers who come into direct contact with meat and edible products, must be available;
  - (ii) a training programme, as well as registers of attendance, for all personnel to apply the principles of the code of conduct referred to in subparagraph (i) must be available; and
  - (iii) records of surveillance and supervision including records of disciplinary action in cases of repetitive misconduct or non-compliance must be available;
- 3) a HMP for medical fitness of workers in terms of which –
  - (i) records of initial medical certification that workers are fit to work with meat and edible products, prior to employment, must be available; and
  - (ii) records of daily fitness checks, including corrective actions applied in cases of illness and injury, must be available;

- 4) a HMP for the temperature of water in sterilizers and maintenance of sterilizers in terms of which control measures to ensure the continuous availability and accessibility of sterilizers in good working order at water temperatures of 82°C, including registers for daily checks indicating frequency of checks as well as corrective action procedures in cases of noncompliance, must be available;
- 5) a HMP for the availability of liquid soap and soap dispensers, toilet paper, and disposable towels, in terms of which control measures to ensure the continuous availability and accessibility of liquid soap and soap dispensers for hand-washing purposes, toilet paper and disposable towels at pre-identified points must be available;
- 6) a HMP for sanitation and continuous cleaning including a cleaning schedule providing –
  - (i) a list of all the areas to be cleaned;
  - (ii) a list of all the rooms that have to be cleaned within every area;
  - (iii) the name of the person responsible for the cleaning of each area, section or room;
  - (iv) for each room within a particular area, a detailed description of the cleaning of each structure, including –
    - the frequency of cleaning;
    - step by step methods of cleaning;
    - data of the chemicals which are used, such as registration data, safeness, dilutions, application prescriptions;
    - the correct application of the detergents such as dilution, temperatures and contact times;
    - the rinsing off of applied chemicals; and
    - the results to be obtained as an objective of the cleaning programme;
    - an addendum for each room in which the cleaning of each structure must be described in detail including aspects such as method, frequency and target results;
    - for the training of cleaning teams in the execution of these programmes;
    - for control over the storage of detergents to prevent contamination of edible products;
    - a detailed description for continuous cleaning on the processing line during processing, which must include –
      - a list of all the actions in this programme including the cleaning of moving equipment and crates; and
      - a step by step description of each action;
    - for these programmes to be approved by a registered inspector; and
    - for laboratory checks as control of effectiveness of the cleaning programmes to be instituted and documented;

## **7.5 HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONS ENTERING ABATTOIRS**

- 1) Visitors entering an abattoir
 

All persons entering an abattoir including management, visitors and maintenance personnel must be issued, by the owner, with clean suitable protective clothing complying to sub regulation 59(1).
- 2) Medical records of employees
  - (1) Before employment at an abattoir or its cutting plant, medical certification must confirm that a person is –
    - (a) healthy and physically able to work as a meat handler; and
    - (b) not a carrier of, or suffering from, a communicable disease.
  - (2) all medical records pertaining to medical examinations and daily fitness checks must be available to the provincial executive officer or the registered inspector.

- 3) Health checks
  - 1) The owner must ensure that all personnel –
    - (a) are examined daily, before starting work, for adverse health conditions such as suppurating abscesses, sores, cuts and abrasions which may pose a food safety risk, and persons so affected may not work with edible products unless such conditions are covered with a firmly secured waterproof dressing so that the risk of contamination is excluded; and
    - (b) who were ill for three days or longer, present medical certificates to indicate that they are now fit to handle foodstuffs.
- 4) Protective clothing
  - 1) Protective clothing must be light coloured, clean, in good repair and must include safety hats, hair nets, beard nets, head and shoulder capes, white gumboots and safety boots compliant with hygiene requirements and waterproof aprons as required by the work situation.
  - 2) At the start of each working day or shift, the owner must provide personnel with protective clothing.
  - 3) The owner must ensure that such clean protective clothing is stored and handled so that it does not make contact with private clothes.
  - 4) Private clothes must be kept in a locker that is reserved for that purpose only.
  - 5) Protective clothing must be changed or cleaned when it becomes contaminated by obnoxious matter or becomes dirty.
  - 6) The workers in the clean and dirty areas must wear distinctive protective clothing, respectively.
  - 7) Protective clothing must completely cover all personal clothing.
  - 8) Personnel may change into protective clothing only in appropriate change rooms and items of protective clothing left in the abattoir working areas may only be placed or hung in areas designated for these items.
  - 9) Personnel may not sit or lie on the ground in their protective clothing during rest periods and may never wear protective clothing outside the premises.
  - 10) The abattoir owner must provide laundry facilities or make use of a laundry service and
  - 11) personnel must not be allowed to take protective clothing home to be washed.
- 5) Injuries
  - (1) All cuts and minor injuries must be covered with a durable waterproof dressing, surgical gloves or rubber finger guards.
  - (2) Personnel must immediately report any injury to the owner.
- 6) Showering and washing of hands
  - (1) Personnel who handle foodstuffs must –
    - a) shower before assuming duties; and
    - b) wash hands and forearms with a liquid germicidal soap and running water immediately after they become soiled or after having used a toilet or when entering a working area.
- 7) Prohibitions
  - (1) Jewellery, including traditional objects, may not be worn in an area where edible products are handled.
  - (2) Fingernails must be short, clean and free of nail varnish.
  - (3) Eating, drinking or using or handling tobacco are not allowed in any area where meat is handled.
  - (4) Drugs, liquor or any intoxicating substance may not be brought into any part of the premises and a drugged or intoxicated person may not be allowed to enter any part of a meat handling plant.
  - (5) Personnel must refrain from any contamination actions.

## **7.6 TRAINING**

1. All personnel must be trained in hygiene procedures and personal hygiene matters by the owner, and training records must be kept.



## 8. ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES

With COVID-19, it may not be possible to eliminate the hazard, the most effective protection measures are (listed from most effective to least effective): engineering controls, administrative controls, safe work practices (a type of administrative control), and PPE. There are advantages and disadvantages to each type of control measure when considering the ease of implementation, effectiveness and cost.

### 1. Engineering Controls

Engineering controls involve isolating employees from work-related hazards. In workplaces where they are appropriate, these types of controls reduce exposure to hazards without relying solely on worker behaviour and can be the most cost-effective solution to implement.

Engineering controls for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Increasing ventilation rates in the work environment.
- Installing physical barriers such as face shields.

### 2. Administrative Controls

Administrative controls require action by the employee and employer. Typically, administrative controls are changes in work policy or procedures to reduce or minimize exposure to a hazard. Examples of administrative controls for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Encouraging sick workers to stay at home.
- Minimizing contact among workers, clients, and customers
- Minimizing the number of workers on site at any given time e.g. rotation or shift work.



- Developing emergency communications plans, including a task team for answering workers' concerns and internet-based communications, if feasible.
- Providing workers with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviours (e.g. cough etiquette and care of PPE).
- Training workers who need to use protective clothing and equipment on how to put it on, use/wear it and take it off correctly, including, in the context of their current and potential duties.
- Training material should be easy to understand and available in the appropriate language and literacy level for all workers.

### 3. Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices are types of administrative controls that include procedures for safe and proper work used to reduce the duration, frequency, or intensity of exposure to a hazard. Examples of safe work practices for SARS-CoV-2 include:

- Providing resources and a work environment that promotes personal hygiene. For example, no-touch refuse bins, hand soap, alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 70 percent alcohol (or other products with proven efficiency) disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their hands and their work surfaces.

### 4. Cleaning & Sanitizing

- WHO says that washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or using a minimum 60% alcohol-based sanitiser is still one of the best lines of defence.
- Conduct an assessment to determine the frequent touch points by personnel on site. Increase availability of hand sanitiser on site for all personnel based on assessment. Increase frequency of hand sanitation during production. Consider all personnel including drivers.

#### a) Susceptibility to disinfectants

The COVID-19 virus, as other coronaviruses are very susceptible to environmental disinfectants. Data on the susceptibility of the SARS-CoV-1 virus to disinfectants, showed that exposure to 70% ethanol for 10 minutes or 100% ethanol for 5 minutes, inactivated it. Sodium hypochlorite at specific concentrations has also inactivated the virus. 5% Hypochlorite Bleach (diluted 1:9) and hydrogen peroxide seems to inactivate COVID-19.

The Environmental Protection Agency has compiled a list of products that are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.) Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims external icon.

#### b) Environmental cleaning

Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. No additional disinfection beyond routine disinfection is recommended at this time. Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, biometric scanners, pens) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

#### c) Canteens & Ablution facilities: Increase frequency of cleaning.

#### d) Linens, Clothing, and Other Items That Go in the Laundry

Do not shake dirty laundry; this minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.

- Requiring regular hand washing or using of alcohol-based hand rubs. Workers should always wash hands when they are visibly soiled and after removing any PPE.
- Display handwashing signs in restrooms.

## 5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

While engineering and administrative controls are considered more effective in minimizing exposure to SARS-CoV-2, PPE may also be needed to prevent certain exposures. While correctly using PPE can help prevent some exposures, **it should not take the place of other prevention strategies.**

Examples of PPE include: gloves, goggles, face shields, face masks, gowns, aprons, coats, overalls, hair and shoe covers and respiratory protection, when appropriate. During an outbreak of an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, recommendations for PPE specific to occupations or job tasks may change depending on geographic location, updated risk assessments for workers, and information on PPE effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Employers should check the NICD website regularly for updates about recommended PPE.

All types of PPE must be:

- Selected based upon the hazard to the worker.
- Properly fitted (e.g., respirators).
- Consistently and properly worn when required.
- Regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary.
- Properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.

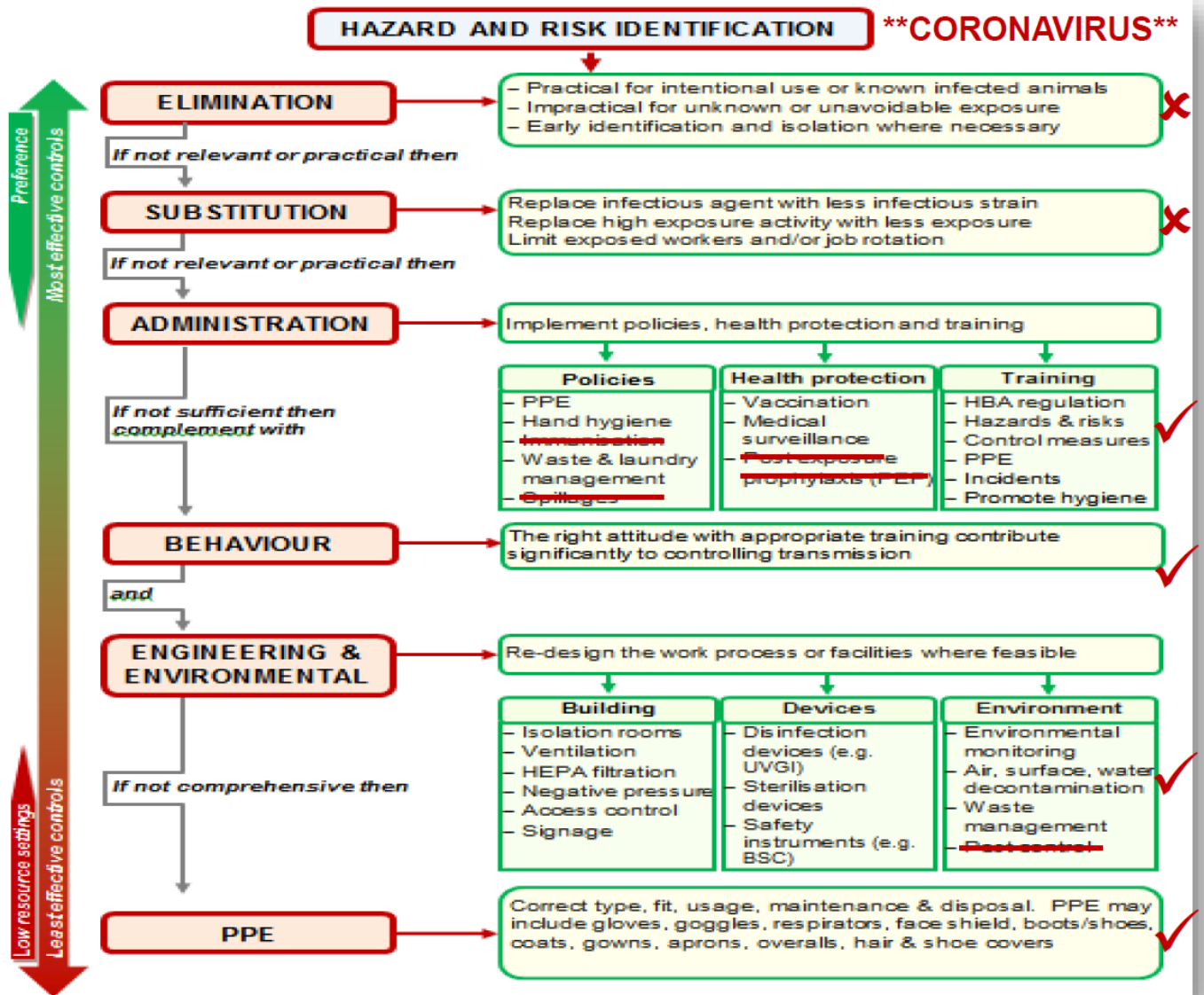
Employers are obligated to provide their workers with PPE needed to keep them safe while performing their duties. The types of PPE required during a COVID-19 outbreak will be based on the risk of being infected with SARS-CoV-2 while working and job tasks that may lead to exposure.

Workers, including those who work within 2 meters of patients known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 and those performing aerosol-generating procedures, need to use respirators:

- Approved N95 filtering half face respirators as a minimum used in the context of a comprehensive, written respiratory protection program that includes fit-testing, training, and medical exams.
- The appropriate form of respirator will depend on the type of exposure and on the transmission pattern of COVID-19.

The process of implanting the hierarchy of controls may be summarised in Figure 4, below. If the first step of the hierarchy is not applicable, the employer must move to the next step.





## 9. GUIDANCE TO ABATTOIR WORKERS

The following specific guidance and training is recommended for abattoir personnel:

### Numbers COVID 19 cases and deaths in the world.

The disease is spreading at an alarming rate with 724 000 people infected and 34 000 deaths worldwide.

#### 9.1 Methods of disease spread

- The most important transmission method is a 'droplet infection', where coronaviruses are emitted by humans into the air via droplets (sneezes and coughs), and then inhaled by others.
- Transmission via surfaces which have been recently contaminated is possible

#### 9.2 Lockdown regulations

President Cyril Ramaphosa announced lock down regulation (revised on 26 March 2020) to combat the disease whilst providing essential services in the Republic of South Africa.

#### 9.3 Important information at work

1. Do not travel to your workplace if you feel ill, but contact your employer telephonically or by message for further guidance
2. Adhere to the lockdown regulations when travelling to work and whilst at home.

3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
4. Travel in private clothes that are freshly washed and ironed (or sun dried)
5. **Remain at least 1.5 metres apart** when entering the workplace
6. Wash or sanitize hands before receiving clean PPE.
7. Do not shake or place private clothes remaining in the locker facilities before storage
8. Do not touch surfaces unnecessary; do not allow contact of PPE with private clothes to be left in locker.
9. **Remain at least 1.5 metres apart** when entering the abattoir whilst washing boots, washing hands and sanitizing hands
10. When entering or leaving the facility wash hands for at least 20 seconds on the manner prescribed.
11. Clean surrounding surfaces often as prescribed
12. Cover your Cough or sneeze with flexed elbow or tissue **but not in your hands. Discard the tissue immediately.**
13. Report any signs of illness immediately while at work.

## 10. DEALING WITH SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED CASES

- Source: NICD
- Asymptomatic spread of COVID-19, if it occurs is likely very uncommon.
- Definition: Close contact: A person having had face-to-face contact or was in a closed environment with a COVID-19 case; this includes, amongst others, all persons living in the same household as a COVID-19 case and, people working closely in the same environment as a case.
- **Staff who may have been exposed to a suspected case of COVID-19.** If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited.
- In particular, there is no need to close the workplace or send other staff home at this point. Most possible cases turn out to be negative. Therefore, until the outcome of test results is known there is no action that the workplace needs to take.
- **Staff who may have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19.** All close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case are required to self-quarantine at home for 14 days while being monitored for symptoms. They may not attend work.
- **Staff who have interacted with a healthy contact of a confirmed case** should not be excluded from work.
- **Staff who are NOT contacts of a confirmed case** should not be prevented from attending work. Family and friends who have not had close contact with the original confirmed case do not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities such as attending childcare or educational settings or work, unless they become unwell.

1. Action to be taken when a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in your facility or has recently been in your facility

If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken with advice from the public health officials. In most cases, closure of the facility will be unnecessary. This decision will be facility specific, based on various factors such as establishment size and staff mixing.

Contact others that have been in close contact with the case directly to advise on isolation and provide them with appropriate advice.

Increase the cleaning of communal areas such as toilets.

2. How to clean establishments where there were staff or others with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath.

Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the suspected case has come into contact with must be cleaned using disposable cloths and detergents, and sanitized.

These include:

- all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids; and
- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones, etc.

### 3. Getting your workplace ready in case COVID-19 arrives in your community

- Develop a plan for what to do if someone becomes ill with suspected COVID-19 at one of your workplaces – The plan should cover putting the ill person in a room or area where they are isolated from others in the workplace, limiting the number of people who have contact with the sick person, and contacting the local health authorities.
- Consider how to identify persons who may be at risk, and support them, without inviting stigma and discrimination. This could include persons who have recently travelled to an area reporting cases, or other personnel who have conditions that put them at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. diabetes, heart and lung disease, older age).
- Tell your local public health authority you are developing the plan and seek their input.
- Promote regular teleworking across your organization. If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community the health authorities may advise people to avoid public transport and crowded places. Teleworking will help your business keep operating while your employees stay safe.
- Develop a contingency and business continuity plan for an outbreak in the communities where your business operates – The plan will help prepare your organization for the possibility of an outbreak of COVID-19 in its workplaces or community. It may also be valid for other health emergencies.
- The plan should address how to keep your business running even if a significant number of employees, contractors and suppliers cannot come to your place of business, either due to local restrictions on travel or because they are ill.
- Communicate to your employees and contractors about the plan and make sure they are aware of what they need to do, or not do, under the plan. Emphasize key points such as the importance of staying away from work even if they have only mild symptoms or have had to take simple medications (e.g. paracetamol, ibuprofen) that may mask the symptoms.
- Be sure your plan addresses the mental health and social consequences of a case of COVID-19 in the workplace or in the community and offer information and support.
- For small and medium-sized businesses without in-house staff health and welfare support, develop partnerships and plans with your local health and social service providers in advance of any emergency.
- Your local or national public health authority may be able to offer support and guidance in developing your plan.

#### ***Remember:***

*Now is the time to prepare for COVID-19. Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference. Action now will help protect your employees and your business.*

### **11. PERSONNEL AWARENESS AND TRAINING**

Ensure that that posters and notices are displayed to emphasize the precautionary measure applied at your facility. Ensure that documented training is available at your facility on these back ground and measures

#### **• Further Information**

For more information on SARS-CoV-2 you can contact the Department of Health on: [www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za)  
In the case of suspected exposure contact the coronavirus hotline in South Africa:

**0800 02 9999**

• The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) provides the latest information about COVID-19 and the global outbreak: <http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/covid-19-communication-resources/>

On the link provided above, click on COVID-19 Technical Resources for more information on the COVID-19.

• National lockdown: If you have a complaint against the police, these are the numbers to call Jenni Evans. The Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) has issued emergency numbers for complaints against the police during the Covid-19 lockdown. IPID's services are still ongoing during the lockdown, spokesperson Sontaga Seisa said. A limited number of investigators are on standby in all nine provinces, and provincial management will ensure that their work continues.

The numbers to lay a complaint against the police are:

Eastern Cape: 082 592 9888

Free State:063 225 6081

Gauteng:076 455 5718

Limpopo:078 871 4811

KwaZulu-Natal: 079 895 2741

Mpumalanga: 072 881 4196

Northern Cape: 064 624 8203

North West:078 163 6874

Western Cape: 073 890 1269

## **12. REFERENCES**

1. Department Employment and Labour Workplace preparedness: COVID -19 (SARS-CoV-19 virus)
2. World Health Organization; Getting your Workplace ready for COVID-19 19 March 2020
3. SA Government - <https://www.gov.za/NovelCoronavirus>
4. NICD - <http://www.nicd.ac.za/diseases-a-z-index/covid-19/>
5. UK Government COVID-19: guidance for employees, employers and businesses, updated 17 March 2020
6. Red Meat Regulations