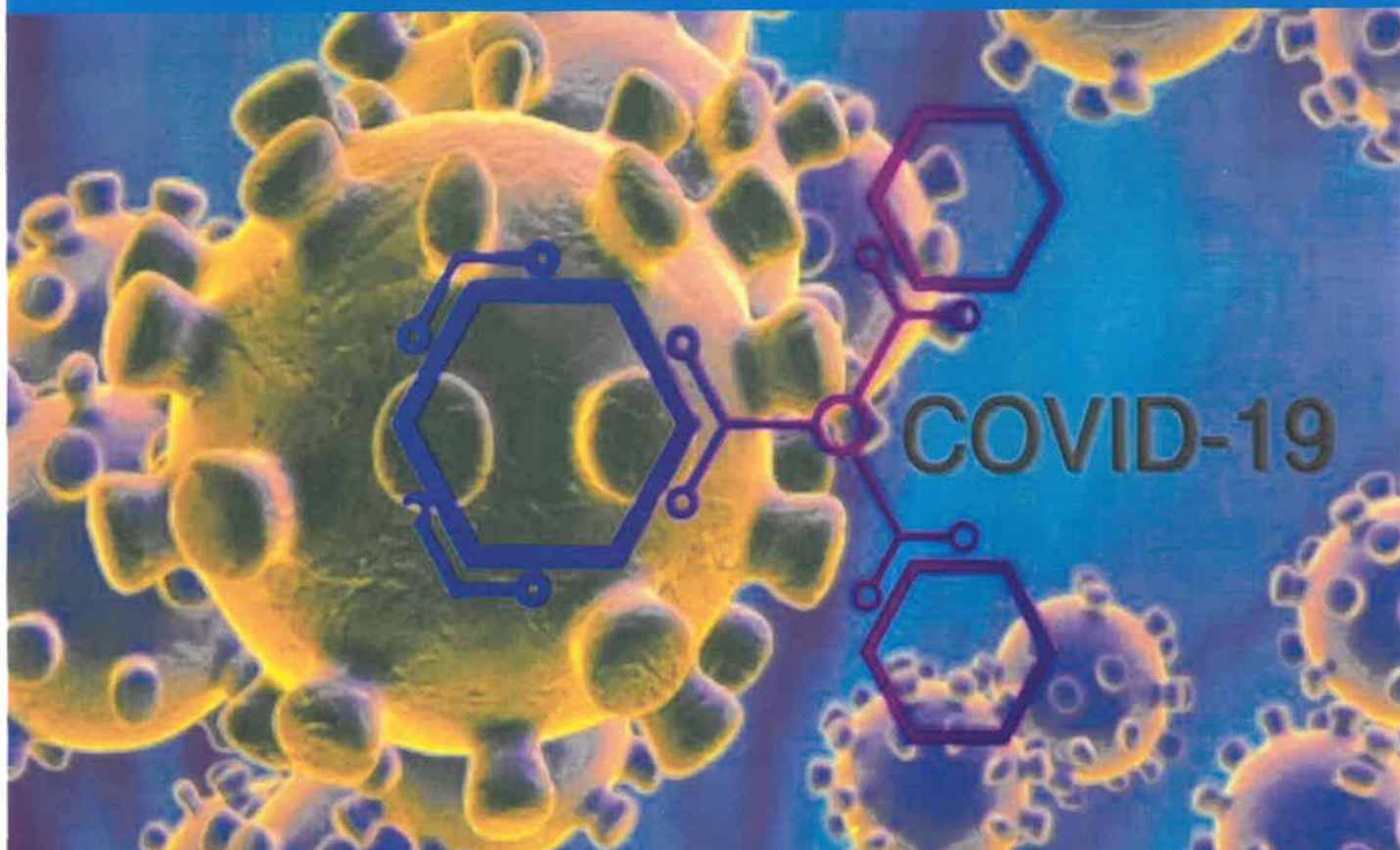


FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL PUBLIC AUDITOR



**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PREVENTATIVE
PLAN AND GUIDELINES**



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Message from the Public Auditor

Monday, March 30, 2020

Memorandum

To: All ONPA Staff

From: National Public Auditor

Subject: ONPA COVID-19 Preventative Plan and Guidelines

In response to the current health crisis caused by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, our Management team in accordance with the advice of the Office of Personnel, has developed the “**ONPA Covid-19 Preventative Plan and Guidelines**”. This is the first version of the document which may be revised as the situation change in the future.

This document contains the plans that ONPA has for managing its resources including human capital during the period of this COVID-19 pandemic. It also includes our commitment to comply to the advice of the World Health Organization and our national government and health department.

In this time of crisis, health becomes a priority for all of us. Thus, we must make adjustments to our work to ensure that the health and safety of the staff and family members are guarded. Albeit all of this, we can be flexible with timeliness in our work projects but we must strive at all times to maintain quality, professionalism and ethical conduct.

We will continue to work with our leaders and partners (Department of Health and the Office of Personnel among others) to best manage this crisis.

I am grateful for the dedicated Management team for putting together this document within a limited time and I urge each and every employee of the ONPA to read and understand this document and comply with it with immediate effect.

Haser Hainrick

National Public Auditor

Document Version Control

Version	Author(s)	Date	Changes
0.1	Erwihne David, Miriam Naivalu, Susana Saballe	03/27/2020	First draft
0.2	Erwihne David, Miriam Naivalu, Susana Saballe Haser Hainrick	03/27/2020	Cover page, Covering letter & a few changes to the contents including the section on “Safety” and “Conclusion”.
1.0	Management team	03/30/2020	Approved by the Public Auditor

Table of Contents

Message from the Public Auditor	i
Document Version Control	ii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 BACKGROUND ON HOW COVID-19 SPREADS.....	1
3.0 PURPOSE	1
4.0 PLANS AND GUIDELINES	2
4.1 Simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the ONPA workplace.....	2
4.2 How the ONPA will manage COVID-19 risks when engaging with clients and other external stakeholders	3
A. DISTRIBUTION OR PICK UP OF DOCUMENTS AND OFFICE SUPPLIES	3
B. ATTENDING MEETINGS AND CONDUCTING PHYSICAL VERIFICATION	3
C. RECEIVING GOODS AND SERVICES FROM CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS	5
4.3 How ONPA will manage the working hours, conduct & safety of employees	6
5.0 RESOURCES THAT WILL BE NEEDED	7
6.0 CONCLUSION	7
References	8

1.0 INTRODUCTION

“In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease in Hubei Province, China to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. WHO stated there is a high risk of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) spreading to other countries around the world. The WHO and public health authorities around the world are taking action to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. However, long term success cannot be taken for granted. All sections of our society – including businesses and employers – must play a role if we are to stop the spread of this disease”. (Source: WHO)

As a responsible employer and in accordance with the advice of the FSM Office of Personnel, the Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) has therefore taken the necessary steps to develop a Preventative Plan and Guidelines for our employees on safety measures at the workplace. We believe that now is the time to prepare for COVID-19 before it arrives and we will take action now to help protect ONPA employees and our organization. The guidelines by WHO has been customized to develop this document.

2.0 BACKGROUND ON HOW COVID-19 SPREADS

According to WHO, 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 one 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 go on to 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. (Source: WHO)

3.0 PURPOSE

This document aims to capture a preventative plan and guidelines for ONPA employees on:

1. Simple ways to prevent the spread of infections and COVID-19 at the ONPA
2. How the ONPA will manage COVID-19 risks when engaging with clients and other external stakeholders
3. How ONPA will manage the working hours, conduct & safety of employees

4.0 PLANS AND GUIDELINES

4.1 Simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the ONPA workplace

ONPA will carry out the following to help prevent the spread of infections at our office, such as colds, flu and stomach bugs, and protect our clients, contractors and employees:

- 4.1.1 Ensure our ONPA office is clean and hygienic
 - Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly
 - **Why?**
Because contamination on surfaces touched by employees and customers is one of the main ways that COVID-19 spreads

- 4.1.2 ONPA aims to promote regular and thorough hand-washing by employees, contractors and clients and we will:
 - Put antibacterial sanitizing hand rub bottles in prominent places around the office.
 - Display posters promoting hand-washing
 - Make sure that staff, contractors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water
 - **Why?**
Because washing kills the virus on our hands and prevents the spread of COVID19

- 4.1.3 ONPA aims to promote good respiratory hygiene in the workplace and we will:
 - Display posters promoting respiratory hygiene.
 - Ensure that face masks and / or paper tissues are available at your workplaces, for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work, along with closed bins for hygienically disposing of them.
 - **Why?**
Because good respiratory hygiene prevents the spread of COVID-19

- 4.1.4 ONPA will ensure there is social distancing observed at the workplace. We will:
 - Adjust working hours for employees by introducing rotational shift work:
 - Observe the 1-meter distance between employees during work.
 - **Why?**
Because social distancing helps prevent the spread of the COVID-19.

- 4.1.5 ONPA will commit to brief its employees, contractors and customers that if COVID-19 starts spreading in the local community anyone with even a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 C or more) needs to stay at home.
 - Employees should also stay home (or work from home) if they have had to take simple medications, such as paracetamol/acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin, which may mask symptoms of infection.
 - Make clear to employees that they will be able to count this time off as sick leave.

4.2 How the ONPA will manage COVID-19 risks when engaging with clients and other external stakeholders

According to WHO, employers and organizers of meetings and events need to think about the potential risk from COVID-19 because:

- There is a risk that people attending our meetings or events might be unwittingly bringing the COVID-19 virus to the meeting. Others might be unknowingly exposed to COVID-19.
- While COVID-19 is a mild disease for most people, it can make some very ill. Around 1 in every 5 people who catch COVID-19 needs hospital treatment.

ONPA has therefore carried out the necessary assessment and captured the following guidelines to prevent or reduce COVID-19 risks when engaging with stakeholders including clients and contractors:

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT (A)	ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED (B)	PREVENTATIVE STEPS TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE ENGAGEMENT (C)
A. DISTRIBUTION OR PICK UP OF DOCUMENTS AND OFFICE SUPPLIES		
<p>A.1 Distribution & Deliveries of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Memorandums b) Reports c) Purchase Orders (PO) & payments d) Other official documents e) Etc. <p>A.2 Picking up documents /supplies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Information for audits/investigations (big volumes only) b) Mails, c) Cheques d) Purchase Orders (PO) e) Office supplies f) I.T equipment (includes inspection/purchase) g) Etc. 	<p>No alternative option. (Refer to the preventative steps on the Column C)</p> <p>Important Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cash on Delivery (COD) should be considered for purchase of supplies. ii. Emails should be used for information requests and collection of documents for audit/investigation purpose (those with appropriate volume only) 	<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Call the recipient/client first 2) Once the recipient confirms his/her availability, then staff to prepare to depart the office. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Sanitize your hands 2.2. Wear your assigned protective gear (gloves, mask etc.) 3) Depart the office 4) Upon arrival at the point of distribution or pick up: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Do not shake hands but use the recommended gesture if needed (greetings using the arms and feet) 4.2. Maintain a safe 1meter distance while handing over or picking up the package (documents/supplies) 5) Sanitize your hands inside the car (if applicable) 6) Upon return to the office, ensure to sanitize your hand at the entrance before resuming with your work.
B. ATTENDING MEETINGS AND CONDUCTING PHYSICAL VERIFICATION		
<p>B.1 Face to face meetings and interviews</p>	<p>Option A: Send questionnaire via email</p> <p>Option B:</p>	<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Call or email the client first and clearly explain and discuss following:

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT (A)	ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED (B)	PREVENTATIVE STEPS TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE ENGAGEMENT (C)
	<p>Teleconference or Video conference.</p> <p>Option C: If Options A&B are not applicable, then refer to the Preventative Steps on Column C.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Meeting room should be big enough for all participants to observe a safe 1-meter distance apart. 1.2. Close interaction will be minimized. 1.3. Protective wear for participants who may not be feeling well (masks etc.) but need to attend the meeting. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Once the client confirms the availability of participants and meeting room, then staff to prepare to depart the office. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Sanitize your hands 2.2. Wear your assigned protective gear (gloves, mask etc.) 3) Depart the office 4) Upon arrival, discuss with the clients the ONPA's procedures during the COVID-19 period: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Do not shake hands but use the recommended gesture if needed (greetings using arm and feet). 4.2. Carry out the meeting / interview ensuring there is a safe 1-meter distance between participants. 5) Sanitize your hands inside the car before driving back to the office (if applicable). 6) Upon return to the office, ensure to sanitize your hand at the entrance before resuming with your work.
<p>B.2 Requests for and collection of information related to audits and investigations.</p>	<p>Option A: Send requests via email and telephone. Client to send scanned copies of the documents via email (if the volume of the documents allows it)</p> <p>Option B: Request for delivery (if the volume is big and cannot be sent via email)</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>B.3 Fieldwork verification and observation including walkthroughs</p>	<p>No alternative option. (Refer to the preventative steps on the Column C)</p>	<p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Call the client first 2) Once the recipient confirms availability, then staff to prepare to depart the office. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Sanitize your hands 2.2. Wear your assigned protective gear (gloves, mask etc.)

TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT (A)	ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED (B)	PREVENTATIVE STEPS TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE ENGAGEMENT (C)
		3) Depart the office 4) Upon arrival at the client's site: 4.1. Do not shake hands with the clients but greet them using the recommended gesture (using your arm or feet) 4.2. Discuss with the client the need to maintain a safe 1-meter distance while at the site. 5) Sanitize your hands regularly while at the site (use the sanitizer inside the office car that you travelled in if there is none available at the site) 6) Upon return to the office, ensure to sanitize your hand at the entrance before resuming with your work.
C. RECEIVING GOODS AND SERVICES FROM CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS		
C.1 Receiving of goods and services including but not limited to the following: a) Cleaning services b) Air Conditioning services c) Telecom services d) Utility services e) Bottled Drinking water f) Etc.	No alternative option. (Refer to the preventative steps on the Column C)	Steps: 1) Call/write all relevant contractors or suppliers first and clearly explain the new procedures (covid-19 period) below for delivery of service/goods at ONPA: 1.1. Contractors should be wearing masks and gloves before entering the ONPA office (if these are not available, then ONPA must supply the items to the contractor upon their arrival before they enter the office) 1.2. Contractors must sanitize their hands first at the entrance of the ONPA office. 1.3. Contractors must observe the 1-meter distance to the next person while inside the ONPA office. 1.4. Every ONPA staff that has direct contact with the contractor/suppliers should be wearing protective gear while receiving the goods or while verifying the service provided.

4.3 How ONPA will manage the working hours, conduct & safety of employees

A) Strategies for working hours and continuity of work:

Considering the need to observe social distancing and a safe 1-meter distance to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the ONPA Management team has decided that it will be appropriate to adjust the working hours for working in the office. The following strategies have been adopted:

1. Effective March 26, 2020 and until further notice, the ONPA employees will work in two (2) rotation shifts in the office – one group in the morning and the 2nd group in the afternoon. The remaining four (4) hours will be “work from home”. This is to reduce the number of persons inside the office at any point in time so as to achieve a more effective social distancing scheme.
2. Management of each divisions of ONPA will develop a schedule for their respective staffs to fit in the agreed rotational shifts.
3. Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders must ensure that each employee is assigned clear tasks and timelines when they are on a “work from home” for the rest of the day after their 4 hours office duty.
4. All efforts must be made to ensure that the health and safety of employees, families and clients of ONPA are protected.

B) Code of Ethics and Conduct

Employees of ONPA must ensure to observe and comply to the Code of Ethics and Conduct at all times irrespective of whether they are working in the office or working from home.

Maintaining a high standard of professionalism and ethical conduct is the role of each employee of the ONPA.

C) Safety

A safe work environment with adequate safeguards encourages employees to focus on their works instead of the danger or hazard. This means that the employer must make sure the workplace is safe and without risks to the health of its workers.

With the risk from this COVID-19 pandemic, the ONPA management developed this plan and guidelines so as to minimize the risk and to make the workers feel more confident every time they are at work.

With the introduction of rotational working hours between the office and from homes, it is the responsibility of each employee to ensure their own safety while working from home.

5.0 RESOURCES THAT WILL BE NEEDED

The following supplies, apart from the I.T and other equipment required for normal work, will be required to ensure that this Preventative Plan and Guidelines are effectively fulfilled. The Admin team must ensure there are effective controls in place to prevent the risk of theft or fraud of ONPA supplies:

1. Hand Gloves
2. Surgical Masks (for employees who may have symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, etc.)
3. Antibacterial hand sanitizers (at prominent locations within the office and inside the office car)
4. Hand wash (soap / water)
5. Paper towels
6. Trash bags
7. Cleaning equipment
8. Any other equipment as the need arises.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This ONPA Preventive Plan and Guidelines is for strict enforcement and compliance once approved by the Management Team and cascaded to the entire organization.

References

1. World Health Organization – Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19
https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7_6