

# COVID-19 and work: Staying healthy and safe at work during the COVID-19 pandemic



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Workplaces have played an important role in both the spread and mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world. Being provided a healthy and safe workplace throughout the pandemic and beyond is a human right. Maintaining open, safe and healthy workplaces is of vital importance to protecting livelihoods, wellbeing and public health. Critical public health measures can help protect workers, their clients, and the community at large. Through an introduction and 5 modules, this course aims to guide workers and their representatives, business leaders, employers, managers and occupational health and safety professionals on how to protect themselves and their workplace during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modules 4 & 5 of this course were produced in collaboration with the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).

*Photo credit: WHO / Blink Media - E. Jabi*

 Self-paced

 Language: English

 COVID-19

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## Course information

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**Overview:** This course is intended to guide workers and their representatives, business leaders, managers, as well as occupational health and safety professionals in protecting their workplace during the COVID-19 pandemic. The course is comprised of an introduction and 5 video modules narrated by experts in infection prevention control and occupational health and safety. The course begins with a primer on what is SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, how it is transmitted at work and what work environments are at highest risk of exposure. We will discuss the “hierarchy of control” and how to apply it to protect your workplace from COVID-19. We will review the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), environmental disinfection and social distancing measures at work. In the second module, we will discuss how to assess risk level at the workplace. The third module will provide tools on how to screen workers, identify clusters early, and how to respond to clusters in an effective, efficient and ethical manner. The fourth module will focus on how to stay healthy and safe when working from home, including the physical and psychological effects of telework. Finally, we will discuss preparations for returning to work, how to execute a phased reopening and return to normal operations that protects everyone at the workplace.

**Learning objectives:** By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- explain what SARS-CoV-2 is (the virus which causes COVID-19), how it is transmitted at work and which workers are most likely to be affected;
- apply infection prevention and control (IPC) principles at your workplace;
- apply the hierarchy of control to COVID-19 at work;
- understand and contribute to worksite risk assessment for COVID-19 exposure;
- describe how to respond to an outbreak at your workplace;
- explain how to manage the health and safety of yourself and your workers throughout periods of worksite closures and teleworking; and
- explain how to safely return to the workplace.

**Course duration:** Approximately 2 hours.

**Certificate:** A Record of Achievement certificate will be available to participants who score at least 80% of the total points available across all quizzes.

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## Course contents

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### Introduction:

This introductory module provides an overview of the course and key concepts.

### Module 1: Basics of COVID-19 infection prevention and control in the workplace:

By the end of this module, you will be able to: describe the hierarchy of controls in the workplace; and apply infection prevention and control (IPC) principles to reduce transmission at work.

### Module 2: Assessing risk of transmission at work:

By the end of this module, you will be able to: describe aspects to consider in assessing risk of exposure at work; characterise exposure risk as low, medium or high; and identify your personal risk profile.

### Module 3: Responding to COVID-19 at your workplace:

By the end of this module, you will be able to: identify and quickly respond to outbreaks of COVID-19 cases at the workplace through screening and contact tracing.

### Module 4: Safer and healthier teleworking: Advice and techniques:

By the end of this module, you will be able to: describe the importance of teleworking in mitigating the transmission of COVID-19 at the workplace and in the community; demonstrate an understanding of how teleworking can impact on organizational risk and describe the role of the employees and managers in facilitating safer teleworking; describe the psychological and physical impacts that you as a teleworker may be subjected to during a period of long-term teleworking; and describe and implement strategies to reduce the psychological and physical impacts you have reviewed.

### Module 5: Reopening your workplace:

By the end of this module, you will be able to describe: actions, based on the hierarchy of control, that can be used to ensure workplaces are COVID-19 safe; the considerations of a COVID-19 safe cleaning regime; the actions that an organization can/should take in preparation for a return to work after a period of absence caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and how organizations can approach their needs holistically.

## Enroll me for this course

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The course is free. Just register for an account on OpenWHO and take the course!

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Learners enrolled:

**5249**

## Certificate Requirements

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- Gain a **Record of Achievement** by earning at least **80%** of the maximum number of points from all graded assignments.

## About OpenWHO

OpenWHO aims to equip all frontline responders with the knowledge they need to better contain disease outbreaks and manage health emergencies. It also aims to foster discussions, feedback and sharing of expert knowledge on public health.

