

**WE HAVE THE  
RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE.  
WE ACHIEVE SAFE  
WORKPLACES TOGETHER.**

**IndustriALL - UNI Safety Campaign  
for the Global Pulp, Paper, Graphical  
and Packaging Sectors**

**COVID-19 presents new challenges  
for health and safety in the workplace,  
but one thing has not changed –  
unions make work safer!**

## **▶ THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE**

We as workers and unions throughout the global pulp, paper, graphical and packaging sectors are coming together to underline our Right to Participate in the safety management of our workplaces.

This follows two successful global actions around the Right to Know, and the Right to Act, and comes at a time when our role is even more important than normal as we face the global pandemic.

The right to participate is the centre of an effective workplace health and safety programme. This means strong trade union and workers' involvement in workplace decision making through Joint Health and Safety Committees.

These committees that are provided by law in many countries were initially products of collective bargaining.

Who are the worker representatives on the Joint Health and Safety Committee? Workers must select their representatives, they cannot be picked by management.

Joint Health and Safety Committees and safety representatives should make sure that appropriate workplace policies, programmes and procedures are in place. All of these must be agreed upon jointly. The decisions must not be left solely to employers.

Any policies, programmes and procedures only work when they are followed. A protocol to effectively monitor their implementation should also be jointly agreed upon.

We want to ensure that our sisters and brothers go home from work every day without injury or illness. Let us value the right to participate and protect ourselves and each other.

COVID-19 makes this work even more important. See the guidance on dealing with the virus over the page.

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# What should the response to COVID-19 be in workplaces?

## ► Identify the hazard

Hazard identification and risk assessment should be done jointly.

## ► Control the risk

Since any person in the workplace – whether worker, contractor, customer or visitor – may be a carrier, then minimizing the risk means implementing the following specific measures:

## ► Personal hygiene

Frequent and thorough hand-washing with plenty of soap and water, and easily available hand sanitizing stations at strategic locations and throughout the workplace.

Encourage everyone, if they need to sneeze or cough, to use a tissue to fully cover their nose and mouth, or if none is available, to cough or sneeze into the crook of their arm.

## ► Industrial and workplace hygiene

Frequent cleaning and disinfection of surfaces with alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or chlorine bleach for a minimum time of one minute. Frequent cleaning of workplace surfaces and equipment, especially at shift-change.

Ensure good rates of air exchange (ventilation).

Social distancing: wherever possible, provide increased space between workers (two meters or more) and allow working from home and flexible schedules or staggered shifts where possible to reduce the number of workers who come in close contact with each other.

Workers in high-risk categories because of age or pre-existing medical conditions should be particularly accommodated.

**Joint Health and Safety Committees should set protocols for: Handling sick persons or suspected cases of infection; Personal protective equipment; Ensuring adequate social protection.**

Everyone in the workplace must understand that even mild symptoms, like a cough and a slight fever, means “stay at home”. This message should be reinforced as strongly as possible.

Workers must be guaranteed that their pay will be kept whole in case of absence for illness; otherwise the risk is high that some will report for work even if ill, and spread the virus.

Employers must have a plan to handle the situation of someone developing symptoms while at the workplace until they can be safely transferred to medical care.

Once an employee has tested positive the employer should have a procedure in place for contact tracing in an effort to notify individuals who may have been exposed.