

## COVID-19 – Recommendations for Stock Clerks

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to follow INSPQ directives in order to prevent contamination. The following procedures will help you apply these directives. ASSTSAS is not the issuing body, we have simply translated the directives into work procedures. Our recommendations come from the reading we have done up to April 13, 2020 and may change going forward.

As stated in the INSPQ reference documents, safety measures to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace will be adapted to reflect the epidemiological situation in each region. To protect the health of employees and anyone who comes into the workplace, employers and workers are asked to follow the directives.

The INSPQ recommendations are not specific to procurement departments, but principles such as social distancing and physical separation should be followed and tailored to each facility, taking into account space, equipment, work organization, etc. The best explanation of the general measures that should be implemented in all storage areas or stores in hospitals and long-term care facilities (CHSLD, RPA) is in the document *Mesures de prévention en milieu de travail : recommandations intérimaires*. We recommend that you read it.

INSPQ. (April 6, 2020). COVID-19 : Mesures de prévention en milieu de travail : recommandations intérimaires. <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2911-mesures-milieu-travail-covid19>

### Receiving and shipping

- Set up a quarantine area where goods can be held for a period of time based on the coronavirus viability on different surfaces, and then placed in storage.

Type of surface	Viability
Plastic	72 hours



Stainless Steel	48 hours
Cardboard	24 hours
Copper	4 hours

Source: *New England Journal of Medicine*

- Set up stable teams to reduce the number of people interactions with external workers (delivery people, truck drivers, etc.).
- Allow only authorized personnel into the warehouse (e.g. put up a sign).
- Organize tasks so that delivery people and suppliers can leave goods in a designated area at the entrance, to reduce traffic inside the warehouse.
- Place goods on a clean surface, maintaining the 2-metre distance between individuals.
- Modify work methods (e.g. designate narrow aisles as one-way aisles, or only allow one person at a time in the aisle).
- Avoid exchanges of paper and signing of documents as much as possible (e.g. purchase orders).
- If a signature is required, take the following precautions:
  - Place the documents on a clean surface so they can be handed over and retrieved while maintaining the two-metre distance between individuals. Don't touch documents any more than you need to.
  - Sign the document with your own pen.
  - Wash your hands.
- Try to use digital documents and limit the sharing of paper documents.
- Don't exchange pencils, bar-code readers or other work tools.
- Regularly clean and disinfect shared materials in accordance with the facility's directions.

### **Load handling**

- Set up an alcohol-based (60% - 70%) hand sanitizer distributor or install a handwashing station at strategic locations, such as the entrance to the receiving area, near handling zones, etc.
- Don't touch your face, and wash your hands after handling boxes.
- If possible, use appropriate single-use gloves and comply with the following protocol:
  - One pair of gloves for each work activity
  - To remove the gloves, follow the procedure in the ASSTSAS poster: Équipements de protection individuels (<https://asstsas.qc.ca/publication/equipements-de-protection-individuels-epi-a70>)
  - Dispose of the gloves in a nearby trash bin.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based (60%-70%) hand sanitizer.

### **Caution!**

- Wash your hands even if you were wearing gloves.
- Don't store gloves in pockets or outside the glove box.
- Reusing disposable gloves is not recommended.

### **Use of work gloves**

- Review situation to see if work gloves are truly required in the current context.
- Assign one pair of gloves per person and label them.
- Before and after using the gloves, wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based (60%-70%) hand sanitizer.
- Assign an area where each stock clerk can put their pair of gloves after use.

### **When delivering goods to other departments**

- Follow departmental instructions and social distancing rules.
- When you return to the warehouse, wash your hands.

### **For cleaning and disinfecting**

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces once per shift, or whenever a user changes, with the facility's usual cleaning products. Follow the manufacturer's directions.
- If needed, check the list of products issued by Health Canada (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>) or the Environmental Protection Agency (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>).
- For shared equipment, such as carts, lift trucks, manual or electric pallet trucks, be especially careful to clean and disinfect the handles, steering wheel, towbar and hydraulic controls.
  - Use disposable or reusable wipes to clean and disinfect shared equipment after use.
  - Reusable cloths must be assigned to individuals and washed daily.
- Dedicated equipment (e.g. carts used by just one person), must be cleaned and disinfected after each shift.

### **Work clothing care**

- At the end of the shift, take off work clothes in the locker room.
- If they cannot be removed at work, take them off as soon as possible when you get home, without doing anything else beforehand.
- Don't shake out your work clothes and wash your hands after removing them.
- It is recommended that a shower be taken after work clothes are removed.
- Leave work clothes in a closed bag or wash them with your usual laundry detergent and hot water.

## References

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