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GhISEP

Ghana Institute of Safety &
Environmental Professionals

PRESS STATEMENT

WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK 2020

The Ghana Institute of Safety & Environmental Professionals (GhISEP) joins the International Labour Organization (ILO) to celebrate the annual World Day for Safety and Health at Workplaces on the 28th April 2020.

This year's focus for obvious reason, is addressing the outbreak of all infectious diseases at workplaces. Particularly, the current devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

The year's Theme is - **STOP THE PANDEMIC; SAFETY AND HEALTH AT THE WORKPLACES CAN SAVE LIVES!**

GhISEP's utmost responsibility and care, is admonishing all employees to work safely without risk to their health. And to return home without risking the health and safety of their families. GhISEP is constantly working studiously towards eliminating the hazard of infectious diseases to employees and their families. Minimizing all risks, to as low as reasonably practicable.

Furthermore, GHISEP enjoins all employers and employees to take precautionary safety measures at work, to stop the person-to-person spread of COVID-19. We are also endeavoring to facilitate a tripartite dialogue between Government, Employers and Employees to enhance safety and health at workplaces.

We humbly entreat Government, Employers and Employees, to take a closer look at our recommendations below. It is our belief that if adopted, will immediately reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Establish good communication protocols to keep workers informed about workplace conditions. Information must swiftly be disseminated using emails, text messages, WhatsApp and Telegram.
2. Encourage and support telework to reduce transportation of employees to workplaces, to minimize physical contact between employees. Employees must work from home as much as is reasonably practicable. Employees must be adequately supported with laptop computers and

internet connectivity. Special attention should be given to the vulnerable elderly employees and those with chronic illnesses.

3. Employees must be trained on effective preventive measures. And must rely on trusted sources of information from; WHO, CDC, Ghana Health Service and Ministry of Information. This will eradicate the vicious misinformation and fake news galore on social media. All health and safety preventive measures must be adhered to; frequent washing and sanitizing of hands, social distancing at least 2 meters apart, wearing of face masks (certified and approved by Ghana Standards Authority) and also frequent cleaning of surfaces.
4. Strict adherence to the directives given by H.E. the President and Ghana Health Service '**NO MASK - NO ENTRY**', All SIGNAGES must be visible at the entrance to all workplaces and strictly enforced. And employees screened for symptoms and signs of COVID-19 with administered questionnaire and non-contact thermometer.
5. Avoiding travel as much as is reasonably practicable by utilizing video conferencing and other forms of communication. If one must travel, strict precautions should be taken before, during and after the trip; including access to healthcare at the destination in the event that the employee takes ill.
6. Managing infected employee absentees; there must be more flexible sick-leave policies, active monitoring of employee absenteeism and adjusting daily operations accordingly. Providing access to healthcare services via telephone/video conferencing and cross-training staff for critical job functions.
7. Developing policies that prohibit stigmatization of workers that have contracted or recovered from COVID-19, or other infectious diseases. Stigma is unacceptable and promotes under-reporting which would result in further undetected spread.
8. Adherence to all Government's guidelines is crucial. We encourage the Government to consult employers and employees on health and safety policies. Thus, attracting valuable inputs to facilitate a tripartite solution that will best protect workers and their families.

We highly appreciate Government's diligent efforts and zeal to curtailing the spread of COVID-19. All OSHE Professionals must play a pivotal role in steering their organizations to protect its employees and their families, to communicate accurately and effectively and ensure business continuity during this COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

As we celebrate the World Safety Day at Workplace today, we remain hopeful that COVID-19 will soon be a THING IN THE PAST!

Observe all Safety & Health Protocols - *SOCIAL DISTANCING, REGULAR HAND-WASHING & WEARING OF CERTIFIED FACE MASKS TO CURB SPREADING OF COVID-19!* KEEP SAFE AND SAVE LIVES!

Signed

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