

I/13492/2020

F. No. 9-2/2019-PD.II(E366891)  
 Government of India  
 Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution  
 Department of Food & Public distribution  
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Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi - 110001  
 Dated the 18th March, 2020

To

Principal Secretary/Secretary,  
 Food & Civil Supplies Department,  
 All States/UTs

Subject: Preventive measures to be taken for containing the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)  
 - reg.

Sir/Madam,

In order to contain the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), certain precautionary measures are required to be taken by all State/UT Governments.

2. After detailed examination and discussions on the matter, advisory/guidelines have been drawn up in this Department. While implementing these measures, it is important to educate the all concerned including all FPS dealers, beneficiaries and other field functionaries to ensure their cooperation and to avoid any panic. It is reiterated that the suggested preventive measures to lessen the impact of COVID-19 in the country are temporary. Further, you may also like to issue your own orders/advisory in this regard.

3. You are advised to take all necessary measures, which may include the following:-

- i. Social distancing may be adopted as a non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention process. Keeping a distance of one meter among the beneficiaries/persons in a queue, if any, at FPSs should be maintained.
- ii. As seen in media interviews, various medical experts has advised the use of simple surgical masks/handkerchiefs as capable measure to prevent the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). In case of long queues at FPSs, beneficiaries may be advised to use simple surgical masks/handkerchiefs.
- iii. Ensure proper washing of hands/fingers of beneficiaries with soap and water or regular cleaning/sanitization through hand sanitizers may be done before performing biometric authentication on ePoS devices. FPS dealers shall also be advised to ensure regular sanitisation of hands while using ePoS devices.
- iv. Ensure regular supply of hand sanitisers, soap and running water at all FPSs, Godowns, etc. for the use and benefit of all the beneficiaries, etc.
- v. Days of distribution of foodgrains at FPSs may be extended up to maximum period of the month so as to reduce the crowd/queuing up of beneficiaries at the FPSs.
- vi. Presence/visits of non-essential persons at FPSs, Godowns, etc. should be avoided.
- vii. Keep communities informed consistently and constantly.

4. Further, it may be stated as per para 9 (9) of the Targeted Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015, the State/UT Governments shall allow sale of commodities other than the foodgrains distributed under the TPDS at the Fair Price Shops. In this connection, if it is seen that

I/13492/2020

there is need to distribute hygiene items like masks, hand sanitizers, soaps, etc. which are required as a preventive strategy to contain the transmission of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), State/UTs may make arrangements for their for sale at the FPSs.

5. An indicative list of do's and don'ts is also annexed for wide dissemination / awareness generation.

Encl: As above

Yours faithfully,

Digitally signed by DINESH KUMAR  
GUPTA  
Date: Wed Mar 18 14:42:19 IST 2020  
Reason: Approved

(D. K. Gupta)  
Director (PD)  
Tel: 23070429

Copy to:

- 1.) PPS to Secretary (F&PD), D/o F&PD, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi
- 2.) PS to Joint Secretary (Admn.), D/o F&PD, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

**Do's**

- a) Maintain personal hygiene and physical distancing.
- b) Practice frequent hand washing. Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub. Wash hands even if they are visibly clean.
- c) Cover your nose and mouth with handkerchief/tissue while sneezing and coughing.
- d) Safely throw used tissues, masks, etc. into closed bins immediately after use.
- e) Maintain a safe distance from persons during interaction, especially with those having flu-like symptoms.
- f) Sneeze in the inner side of your elbow and not to cough into the palms of your hands.
- g) Regularly take body temperature and check for respiratory symptoms.
- h) See/visit a doctor if you feel unwell (fever, difficulty in breathing and coughing. While visiting doctor, wear a mask/cloth to cover your mouth and nose.
- i) For any fever/flu-like signs/symptoms, please contact/call State Helpline Number(s) or the 24x7 helpline number of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare at 011-23978046.

**Don'ts**

- a) Shake hands.
- b) Have a close contact with anyone, if you're experiencing cough and fever.
- c) Touch your eyes, nose and mouth
- d) Sneeze or cough into palms of your hands.
- e) Spit in Public.
- f) Travel unnecessarily, particularly to any affected region.
- g) Participate in large gatherings, including sitting in groups at canteens.
- h) Visit gyms, clubs and crowded places etc.
- i) Spread rumours or panic.