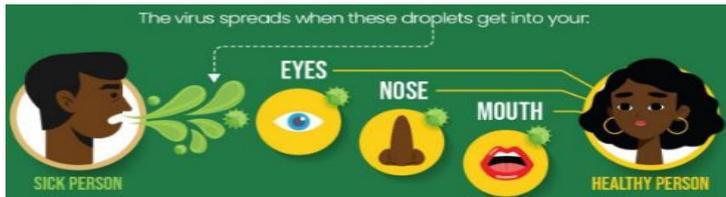


## **COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) AND LANDFILL SITES WASTE PICKERS**

The 2019 novel coronavirus or SARS-CoV-2 is a new respiratory illness that can affect your lungs and airways and make people sick especially those with low immunity. The illness is caused by a virus called Corona Virus (COVID-19) disease and can be mild similar to the common cold or more severe like pneumonia. All sections of society, including businesses, self-employed and employers, must play a role to stop the spread of this disease.

### TRANSMISSION



### COMMON SYMPTOMS



**Cough**



**Fever**



**Shortness of breath**



**Sore throat**



**Headache**

Other symptoms include:  
Body aches and pains  
Weakness or fatigue  
Severe respiratory distress

### HOW IS COVID-19 DIAGNOSED?

If you suspect you may have COVID-19, then a laboratory test would be required. Specimens collected may include combined nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swabs, sputum, tracheal aspirate or broncho-alveolar lavage. The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) has detailed information and guidelines for collecting, handling, and transporting clinical specimens from patients under investigation (PUI) to their laboratory.

### WHAT IF THERE IS A CONFIRMED CASE AMONGST WASTE PICKERS?

- ▶ Immediately inform waste pickers community leaders to determine the course of action and put relevant preventative measures.
- ▶ Community leaders should inform all the waste pickers about the confirmed cases and of their possible exposure to COVID-19 but maintain confidentiality.
- ▶ Cooperate with the contact tracing officers from the Department of Health.



# Keeping the waste pickers safe

## CORONA VIRUS AND WASTE PICKERS: REDUCING THE RISK OF INFECTION



- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing or after touching objects such as trolleys used to transport recyclable materials.
- If soap and water is not available, use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol or access water from the nearby water points provided by the local municipality.
- But remember, the hand sanitizer may not as effective as washing your hands with soap and water if your hands are too dirty or greasy.



- When coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue.
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands.



- Stay home if you are feeling sick or have symptoms like fever, cough, headache, sore throat or shortness of breath or visit your nearest clinic/hospital.
- Waste pickers who are not sick but have a laboratory confirmed covid-19 family member at home should notify the nearest clinic/hospital.
- Self-quarantine for 14 days if you have been exposed to someone with the virus.



- Avoid close contact with anyone and large gatherings by keeping a distance of about 1-2 meters away from each other whenever possible.
- Also consider rotating when accessing the landfill site to give each other enough distance.
- Stop handshaking when greeting people – use other noncontact methods.



- Social distancing is important to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Always remember that collected and sorted material may be contaminated with the virus.
- The virus can survive for hours and up to days on material like aluminium, surgical gloves and plastic, therefore it is important to wash your hands as often as possible.

For more information, contact

NICD: 080 002 9999

NIOH: [info@nioh.ac.za](mailto:info@nioh.ac.za)

[www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za)

or

[www.nioh.ac.za](http://www.nioh.ac.za)



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

*Information in this fact-sheet is correct as at 29 March 2020. Please consult NICD, NIOH and WHO websites for updated information, that we will share as and when it becomes available*