New job challenge: COVID-19

There is a lot of uncertainty following an outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This outbreak has now spread to over 100 countries around the world. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include; fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty in breathing, and other flu-like symptoms like running nose, sneezing and body weakness.

The response by the Government has been measured and impactful. Last week, on Wednesday, President Yoweri Museveni addressed the nation on the direct preventive measures of dealing with COVID-19. The workplaces (non-agricultural workplaces); such as factories, hotels, large plantations, markets, and commuter tax parks were assured to continue functioning but need to adopt Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as guided by the Ministry of Health (MOH).

COVID-19 is increasingly affecting business operations in Uganda putting millions of jobs and livelihoods at risk. Therefore, as a matter of urgency, all workplaces should fully observe SOPs and display information on COVID-19. In this unfortunate situation. It is equally important for both employers and employees of Uganda to remain calm and observe the recommended standards of operation by the MOH and WHO in dealing with this unfortunate situation. It is equally important to follow the guidance given by the President.

Social distancing should be observed at all times especially when you notice someone is coughing or sneezing. Keep a distance of at least two meters from him/her.

Avoid meetings which involve more than 10 people. If you must hold such meetings then you could use Skype, and other social media platforms and other tools for such meetings.

Companies should empower occupation safety and health committees to ensure proper housekeeping, regular cleaning of surfaces, surveillance and health promotion, installing temperature monitors, raise awareness and display information on COVID-19.

Follow the detailed guidelines issued by the MOH and be vigilant all the time for any additional guidelines that might be issued in the nearby future.

By observing the above safety measures at the workplace, we will be able to minimise the effects of the COVID virus on our businesses, which will mean that our businesses will continue to operate and guarantee the continuity of employment.

These measures will guarantee protection of jobs for all our people, including persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, and other vulnerable groups. It is important for both employers and employees of Uganda to remain calm and observe the recommended standards of operation by the MOH and WHO in dealing with this unfortunate situation. It is equally important to follow the guidance given by the President.

Together, we shall defeat COVID-19; take responsibility by following the guidelines issued by the MOH, wash your hands regularly with soap or alcohol based sanitiser, and avoid spreading false information regarding the situation.

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