FEDERATION OF UGANDA EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION FOR ALL EMPLOYERS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Introduction
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 Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) is concerned about the continuance of the covid-19 outbreak which is bound to adversely affect employers. We are aware about employers who have already temporarily laid off staff as well as those contemplating doing the same. However, we would like to encourage employers to continue operating as guided by the Government while taking the required precautionary measures. We would therefore like to suggest as follows:

Immediate actions
1. Practice compulsory hand-washing for all persons (employees and visitors) who enter or exit places of work
2. Ensure availability of soap, water, hand rubs and make sure that these are well distributed for use frequently
3. Work place hygiene should be well maintained at all times
4. Avoid shaking hands, hugging and touching each other
5. Persons experiencing cough and flu-like symptoms should be advised not to access the workplace premises and should be encouraged to seek health care immediately
6. Social distancing should be observed at all times especially when you notice someone is coughing or sneezing. Keep a distance of at least four meters from them.
7. Avoid meetings which involved more than ten people. If you must hold such meetings then you could use skype, zoom, social media platforms and other tools available for such meetings
8. Companies should empower Occupation Safety and Health committees to enforce & ensure proper housekeeping, regular cleaning of surfaces, surveillance and health promotion, installing temperature monitors, raise awareness and display information on COVID-19.
9. Follow the detailed guidelines issued by the MOH and be vigilant all times for any additional guidelines that might be issued in the near future.

More actions
1. In case the covid-19 outbreak continues and work premises are required to temporarily close or in case it no longer makes business sense to continue contractual obligations with employees in that state, we encourage employers to carry out a cost benefit analysis on how they wish to deal with employees e.g. you may require them to utilize their annual leave even in advance (before it is earned) or lay them off meaning that their terminal benefits for the period that they have worked are cleared (with the option of recalling them once the outbreak is over) or continue paying the employees’ salaries/wages as if they had actually worked among others
2. For employers that have recognized and are working with labour unions, we encourage them to engage, consult with them and come-up with an amicable resolution.
3. We encourage employers to reduce production levels and where necessary reduce on the number of shifts as well as overtime. You might also want to consider flexibility in terms of ours of work and the possibility of working remotely depending on the nature of work. It is necessary to review the engagement of temporary employees at this stage. Therefore, suspending the hiring of new staff is essential.
4. You may also consider the option of redeploying some staff members in case there are work opportunities available.
5. Contact your insurance service provider to determine what might be covered by your workplace insurance policies.
6. FUE is available in case you need to explore the option of redundancy. We do hope businesses will not have to close, however, if it becomes necessary please do not hesitate to contact us to guide you through the process of managing termination.

For further information and guidance, do not hesitate to get in touch with us on info@fuemployers.org or ed@fuemployers.org and telephone number +256392777410.

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