



19/03/2020

**Employers' federations and trade unions in the Belgian road haulage sector and logistics service providers for third parties wish to address employers, employees, the places of loading and unloading docks and the public.**

Dear colleagues, business leaders, workers and citizens,

The road haulage and logistics sector is working to ensure the supply of goods to the country and its citizens in these difficult times.

Our drivers and logistics staff, dispatchers and administrative employees are silent heroes who ensure that the shelves in the shops are filled and that e-commerce packages are delivered to the homes of the people. They also ensure that hospitals and pharmacies are supplied.

In this way, we would like to thank them expressly for their dedication!

We ask everyone to treat our employees with respect and to provide them with the necessary hygiene facilities. It is indeed unacceptable that in the present circumstances our employees do not have access to sanitary facilities at the customers' premises, loading and unloading docks, ...

Furthermore, we ask our employees to respect the imposed hygiene instructions.

Our sector is an indispensable link in the economic chain and we don't want to be put out of business!

There is great concern, and rightly so. That is why the trade unions and employers' organisations, together with the welfare experts of the FSE Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, have drawn up recommendations for the entire road haulage and logistics sector for third parties with the aim to ensuring maximum protection for ourselves and our customers.

We insist that all our employers, employees, customers and freight forwarders scrupulously follow the following instructions, which are currently being widely spread.

Employers are requested to comply with the following minimum instructions, to take the necessary measures and to provide the necessary means for this purpose. We ask everyone to follow these instructions carefully and to leave the necessary means in place, as your colleague will also need them.

We also call on everyone to give every opportunity for consultation in the companies in order to make good agreements in the companies and to work in consensus. This means that the committees for prevention and protection at work must play their role and that, if there is no committee, the trade union delegates and/or trade union officials must be involved in the consultation. Requests for further consultations with the UD or the CPPW will be dealt with without delay and with the necessary seriousness.

Recommendations :

### **A. General hygiene instructions**

The general basic instructions are as follows:

- Wash your hands regularly, long enough and thoroughly (at least 40 seconds) and use gel dispensers.
- Use new tissues each time and dispose of them in the waste after use.
- If you don't have a tissue handy, cough or sneeze into the crease of your elbow.
- If possible, keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres from third parties. In the event of double crewing, ask the occupational medical service for advice. A double crew cannot be imposed without this advice.
- Instructions at customers, terminals ... must be strictly followed.
- Taking the temperature is not a reliable indicator because not all infected persons have a fever and because the person in question may have taken fever-reducing medication.
- In case of illness, the general instructions of the authorities should be followed and in case of contamination by the coronavirus, the employer should be notified so that it can be verified with whom the person in question has had contact.

These basic instructions are crucial to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

We call on employers and loading and unloading docks to provide the necessary sanitary facilities, to make all necessary arrangements and to make additional protective means such as alcohol-based gel, disposable gloves, tissues, disinfectant towels or sprays, rubbish bags and mouth masks available as far as possible.

### **B. Contact with dock staff, customers,...**

Avoid physical contact with customers and dock staff. Maintain a distance of 1.5 metres and avoid, as far as possible, entering closed rooms where other people are present (office space etc.).

Try as much as possible to do everything digitally, by telephone.

*What about signing transport documents (CMR, delivery documents)? How to sign it safely?*

In these times of coronavirus crisis, the transport document remains an important document. It is an important proof for transport and possible damage or damage. The signing of the transport document and any remarks to be made remain very important in this respect.

Signing the transport document can be difficult in times of crisis when social distance must be observed. For this reason, it is advisable to instruct staff to use their own

writing material for signing the transport document and to provide for a signing procedure. For example, by placing the transport document on a table, signing it, distancing oneself from it, having the other party sign (with his own writing material), allowing the copies to be removed and then only taking back the transport document.

The use of disposable rubber gloves can prevent contact between hands and paper. If rubber gloves are not available, it is advisable to wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or disinfectant gel and avoid touching your face in the meantime.

### **C. Mobile working tools (pallets, forklifts, cars ...):**

- Clean all relevant surfaces (supports, steering wheel, etc.) and control buttons (radio, levers, joysticks, etc.) using the equipment provided for this purpose.
- Exceptions are only permitted with the explicit agreement of the occupational medical service.
- Regularly ventilate the (truck) cabins, small spaces, etc.

### **D. Office equipment, supply chain (power) tools ...**

- Clean common equipment for each use (handles, printer controls, keyboards, portable scanners, electronic devices ...) and certainly in case of change of user!
- If possible, personalise (office) equipment.

### **E. Common areas (refectories, rooms ...):**

- Spread out the meals over time
- Avoid as far as possible the simultaneous presence of several people in a single closed space:
- Space the chairs, leave enough space between the people (at least 1.5 metres) and do not stand in front of each other.
- Limit presence in a small enclosed space.

### **F. Leave and recuperation**

In these exceptional circumstances, everyone is asked to make an extra effort to carry out the work, but the care of sick relatives also requires the necessary attention.

The right balance must therefore be struck between the two.

The social partners call on employers and their employees to grant leave by mutual agreement using reason and common sense.

The "forced" taking of leave is prohibited.

In case there is no or insufficient work, the employer will apply for temporary unemployment in accordance with the current rules and instructions of the NEO.