

TRAINING MODULE

# Building Workers' OSH Committees in Electronics Companies during Pandemic



with the support from



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TRAINING MODULE ON  
**BUILDING WORKERS OSH COMMITTEES IN  
ELECTRONICS COMPANIES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

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*with support from*



**Training Module on Building Workers  
OSH Committees in Electronics Companies  
during the Pandemic**

Metal Workers Alliance of the Philippines (MWAP)  
Institute for Occupational Health Safety and Development (IOHSAD)

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Metal Workers Alliance of the Philippines  
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# FOREWORD

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Workers' vulnerability to OSH problems was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Workplaces have become high-risk transmission sites of the deadly COVID-19 in the Philippines. Workers in electronics factories are observed to be at high risk of contracting Covid-19 considering the closed working environment as well as the low temperature inside electronics factories. Although government as well as company guidelines have been set to prevent and control Covid 19 transmission in factories, there remain worker reports that there had been clusters if not outbreaks of Covid-19 cases. Meanwhile, despite the passage of the OSH Law in 2018, many workers remain unaware of OSH guidelines and standards including the mandate to form an OSH committee with a duly elected or union-appointed worker representative.

The necessity of building a workers OSH committee in the workplaces could not be timelier and more relevant during the pandemic. Through this mechanism, workers can take a more proactive role

in helping in the prevention and control of COVID-19 in the workplace. This also challenges the current dependence on company-initiated and government-led interventions in terms of OSH, as it puts workers at the helm while still ensuring that accountability of the company and the government are intact. Ensuring an effective and well-represented workers OSH committee also lightens the load over OSH-related tasks for labor union especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing the union leadership to focus on other pressing employees' concerns.

## HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

This training module aims to provide a valuable resource to workers, unions, as well as labour activists to build their capacity in forming workers OSH committees in electronics companies whether unionized or non-unionized. Although, this material is intended mainly for workers in electronics companies, many of the principles and steps cited in this module can be easily applied in other

industries. The intention was to make a material useful and easy to understand for ordinary workers who are eager to learn how to build workers OSH committees.

The module is divided into seven sessions according to different topics namely:

- Understanding OSH and workers' rights in the electronics sector during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Understanding occupational hazard and Covid-19 as an occupational disease
- What are workers OSH Committees?
- Setting up workers OSH Committees in unionized workplaces
- Building workers OSH committees in non-unionized workplaces
- Roles and responsibilities of workers OSH committees in electronics companies during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Planning for an effective workers-led OSH committee

These sessions follow a logical sequence. Nevertheless, each can still stand on its own and

can be taken separately by workers. Each session contains objectives, materials needed, estimated time needed to finish the topic, key questions. Keeping in mind that learning should be interactive, suggested activities are also laid out per session.

Each session has a section containing main discussion points which can be shared and emphasized by the facilitator during each session. The hand-outs in each of the sessions can also serve as reference materials for facilitators and students alike to further enrich the discussion. Facilitators can also utilize additional references and links to access these materials are found at the end of each session.

A topic on SMART planning has been incorporated in the module with the intention that in each of the trainings the participants will have a practical output to take back to his/her worksite which he/she can discuss with his/her union or co-workers, in the hopes that it will facilitate the realization (or improvement) of a workers OSH committee in their workplace.

# SESSION 1

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## UNDERSTANDING OSH AND WORKERS' RIGHTS IN THE ELECTRONICS SECTOR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### OBJECTIVES

- Understand occupational safety and health as a right integral to attaining decent work
- Identify and understand the OSH issues in the electronics sector during the pandemic
- Understand how the pandemic affects OSH rights of workers

### TIME

60 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

colored markers  
laptop, projector or smart TV  
flash cards  
flipcharts

### KEY QUESTIONS

- What is occupational safety and health?
- What are the current standards (domestic and international) that guarantee OSH as workers' rights and integral to decent work?
- What are the common OSH problems faced by workers in the electronics industry?
- How did the Covid 19 pandemic affect OSH rights of workers in the electronics sector?

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Group discussion: Ask workers about what they understand about occupational safety and health
- Group discussion: Ask workers to identify how workers' occupational safety and health has been affected by the pandemic.



## MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) deals with all aspects of health and safety in the workplace and has a strong focus on primary prevention of hazards. It refers to the adoption of rules and standards necessary to prevent sickness, injuries and health and safety risks in the workplace.
- OSH is an integral part of workers' and human rights and it is necessary in order to achieve decent work. It has long been recognized as a basic human right by the International Labor Organization and the United Nations. Multiple conventions and recommendations, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Convention No. 155 and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention No. 187 have been made available since 1981 for the adoption of OSH around the globe.
- In the Philippines, Republic Act 11058 or the OSH Law was finally passed into law in 2018. The implementing rules and regulations of this law, Department Order 198-18 was also released during the same year. The OSH law guarantees workers salient rights namely right to know, right to personal protective equipment, right to refuse unsafe work and right to report accidents. However, despite the passage of the OSH Law, the Philippines is yet to ratify ILO Convention No. 155. As a result, the PH government cannot be held accountable by the International Labor Organization for non-compliance.
- Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Filipino workers have been grappling with several occupational safety and health (OSH) issues and risks. In several worksites, work-related injuries and even deaths have been recorded annually. Awareness on existing OSH guidelines and standards also has remained generally low among workers and employers. Despite the passage of the OSH Law in 2018, workplace

- inspections have remained scarce and spread far out, covering only around 1 percent of the nearly 1 million establishments in the country. A much fewer number of establishments have company-led OSH committees with limited roles in ensuring the safety and health of employees.
- This vulnerability in terms of OSH has become even more evident when Covid-19 struck workplaces during the first quarter of 2020. Workplaces have become high-risk transmission sites of the deadly Covid-19 in the Philippines. It can be noted that the clusters of high concentration of Covid-19 cases are in regions with high concentration of workers (National Capital Region, CALABARZON, Central Luzon and Central Visayas). A number of labor organizations have reported factory shutdowns due to the COVID-19 outbreak, but such reports barely make it to the news. Still, there have been workers reports of hundreds of Covid-19 cases in electronics factories.
  - The Covid-19 pandemic affected not only OSH rights but other core labour rights with particular impact on electronics sector workers. At the global level, electronics workers have experienced a variety of issues relating to their health and safety, livelihood, and labor rights. According to the Business and Human Rights Resource Center, workers in the global electronics supply chain have experienced the following:
    - loss of work hours and wages, lack of severance pay, and inability to finance basic needs.
    - restriction on movement or not being able to return to their hometowns after their internships or employment contracts have expired
    - suspension of collective bargaining agreements, and cancellation of wage increases
    - more health and safety risks (lack of protective equipment, lack of social distancing, forced relocation of work despite the dangers of underpaid threats etc.)

## HAND-OUT 1.1 WORKERS' RIGHT TO OSH AS ENSHRINED IN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND PHILIPPINE LAWS

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) has long been recognized as a basic human right. Since 1919, the protection of the worker against sickness, disease, and injury arising out of his employment has been considered by the International Labor Organization as one of the many conditions to be addressed to achieve social justice. Since 1948, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights has acknowledged that “everyone has the right to life, to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work, and to protection against unemployment.” In fact, multiple conventions and recommendations, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Convention No. 155 and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention No. 187 have been made available since 1981 for the adoption of OSH around the globe. The 2008 Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work called upon governments

and international organizations to assume their roles in upholding OSH. And, the United Nations recognized it as significant enough to be included in the 169 targets for sustainable global development by 2030. Despite all these, we were unable to prevent 7500 deaths from occurring daily from the workplace as of 2017.

In the Philippines, after years of pushing for an OSH legislation, Republic Act 11058 or the OSH Law was finally passed into law in 2018. The implementing rules and regulations of this law, Department Order 198-18 was also released during the same year. OSH rights such as the right to know, right to personal protective equipment, right to refuse unsafe work and right to report accidents are included in the OSH Law.

Despite the passage of the OSH Law, the Philippines is yet to ratify ILO Convention No. 155 known as the

Occupational Safety and Health Convention and Labor Organization for non-compliance. cannot be held accountable by the International

## HAND-OUT 1.2 COVID-19 INFECTION AMONG WORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Based on the conservative data of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), 33,128 workers in 5,852 establishments tested positive for COVID-19.[2]. This means that around 137 workers are getting infected daily on an average. Of the total figure, 18.85 percent or 6,580 workers are in

the manufacturing sector, while 10 percent (3,318 workers) are in the financial and insurance activities sector. "Other service activities" top all other sectors at 19.86 percent of the total cases, highlighting the vulnerability of workers in front-end services which have remained partially operational in most of the quarantine period.

Table A. COVID-19 infection among workers by sector, January to August 2021

	Number of Establishments with Workers Confirmed with COVID-19	Number of Workers with Confirmed COVID-19	Percent share to total
ALL INDUSTRY	5852	33128	--
Other service activities	1393	6580	19.86
Manufacturing	1129	6246	18.85
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	538	1264	3.82
Financial and insurance activities	420	3318	10.02
Information and communication	396	1985	5.99

	<b>Number of Establishments with Workers Confirmed with COVID-19</b>	<b>Number of Workers with Confirmed COVID-19</b>	<b>Percent share to total</b>
Construction	346	1719	5.19
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	323	1543	4.66
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	292	2950	8.9
Human Health and Social Work Activities	266	2401	7.25
Transportation and Storage	191	701	2.12

In terms of regional breakdown, bulk of the recorded COVID-19 cases among workers remain concentrated in the National Capital Region with 60 percent of the total 33,128 cases as of August 2021, followed by Region IV-A (12.77 percent) and Region III (10.84 percent). These three regions are known to have high concentrations of laborers, and are hosting most of the special economic zones (SEZs) in the country.

Table B. COVID-19 infection among workers by regional breakdown, January to August 2021

	<b>Number of Establishments with Workers Confirmed with COVID-19</b>	<b>Number of Workers with Confirmed COVID-19</b>	<b>Percent share to total</b>
ALL INDUSTRY	5852	33128	--
NCR	2955	19884	60.02
CAR	31	132	0.4
Region I	88	315	0.95
Region II	72	174	0.53
Region III	806	3592	10.84
Region IV-A	958	4232	12.77
Region IV-B	57	378	1.14
Region V	40	258	0.78
Region VI	214	1053	3.18
Region VII	331	1630	4.92
Region VIII	13	33	0.1
Region IX	26	205	0.62
Region X	102	461	1.39
Region XI	53	242	0.73
Region XII	82	386	1.17
CARAGA	24	153	0.46

Working age population groups continue to comprise the majority of rising COVID-19 cases in the country. This indicates that more and more workers are getting exposed and infected with the dreaded virus.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- A copy of the OSH Law or Republic Act 11058 can be found here, url: [http://legacy.senate.gov.ph/republic\\_acts/ra%2011058.pdf](http://legacy.senate.gov.ph/republic_acts/ra%2011058.pdf) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 11058 or Department Order 198-18 is available here: url: [https://bwc.dole.gov.ph/images/Issuances/DepartmentOrder/DO198\\_18\\_IRR\\_of\\_RA\\_11058\\_\\_AnACtStrengtheningCompliancewithOSHSandProvidingPenaltiesForViolationsThereof.pdf](https://bwc.dole.gov.ph/images/Issuances/DepartmentOrder/DO198_18_IRR_of_RA_11058__AnACtStrengtheningCompliancewithOSHSandProvidingPenaltiesForViolationsThereof.pdf)
- IndustriALL explains in this primer the workers' right to refuse unsafe work, url: [http://admin.industrialunion.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Covid-19/right\\_to\\_refuse\\_eng.pdf](http://admin.industrialunion.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Covid-19/right_to_refuse_eng.pdf)
- The ILO Decent Work and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be found here: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--europe/--ro-geneva/--ilo-lisbon/documents/event/wcms\\_667247.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--europe/--ro-geneva/--ilo-lisbon/documents/event/wcms_667247.pdf)
- Mayday Multimedia Video produced a video for the International Workers' Memorial Day during the pandemic. Watch it here: <https://www.facebook.com/maydaymultimediaPH/videos/2014197442064368>

## SESSION 2

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# UNDERSTANDING OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD AND COVID-19 AS AN OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

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### OBJECTIVES

- Understand the concept of occupational hazard and risk
- Understand how hazards are prevented or controlled in the workplace
- Understand the novel coronavirus as an occupational hazard and Covid-19 as an occupational disease

### TIME

60 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

colored markers, adhesive and colored notepads or sticky notes, laptop, projector or smart TV flashcards, flipcharts

### KEY QUESTIONS

- What is a hazard? What is a risk?
- How do we handle hazards in a workplace?
- Why is the novel coronavirus considered an occupational hazard? Why do workers have an increased risk of contracting the virus at work?
- What do we need to know about Covid-19? How is it transmitted?
- Why is Covid-19 considered an occupational disease? Are there any particularities in an electronics factory?
- How do we control and prevent Covid-19?



## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Using two sets of flipcharts, ask participants to write and paste on the flipcharts what they think are the hazards and risks in their workplace.
- Myth busting: Using flashcards, ask participants whether the information about Covid 19 written is true or false.

## MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- In the OSH language, a hazard is something that can cause harm and a risk is the chance - whether high or low - by which that hazard will actually cause harm to somebody. In every workplace, there are hazards and risks to safety and health and workers. For example, hazards in the workplace may look like badly stacked pallets, oil on the floor, trailing wires in the office, and the use of obnoxious chemicals for manufacturing procedures. Risks, meanwhile, refer to the chances that these hazards will lead to sickness, injury or death.
- There is a so-called “hierarchy of controls’ which describes the different ways of handling hazards in the workplace vis-a-vis their effectiveness. This hierarchy of controls is best illustrated by an inverted pyramid wherein the topmost method (i.e. elimination of hazard) is deemed as the most effective means of controlling hazards in a workplace. Depending on the situation and available resources, the manner of controlling a specific hazard may be different.
- The novel coronavirus is considered an occupational hazard because workers are exposed to the virus everytime they go out of their homes and throughout the whole time they are at work. Workers’ risk of getting infected by the virus is increased because 1) there is community transmission of Covid-19 2) workers are frequently exposed to public (when they travel going to or from work) or the other workers in the factory where the presence of the

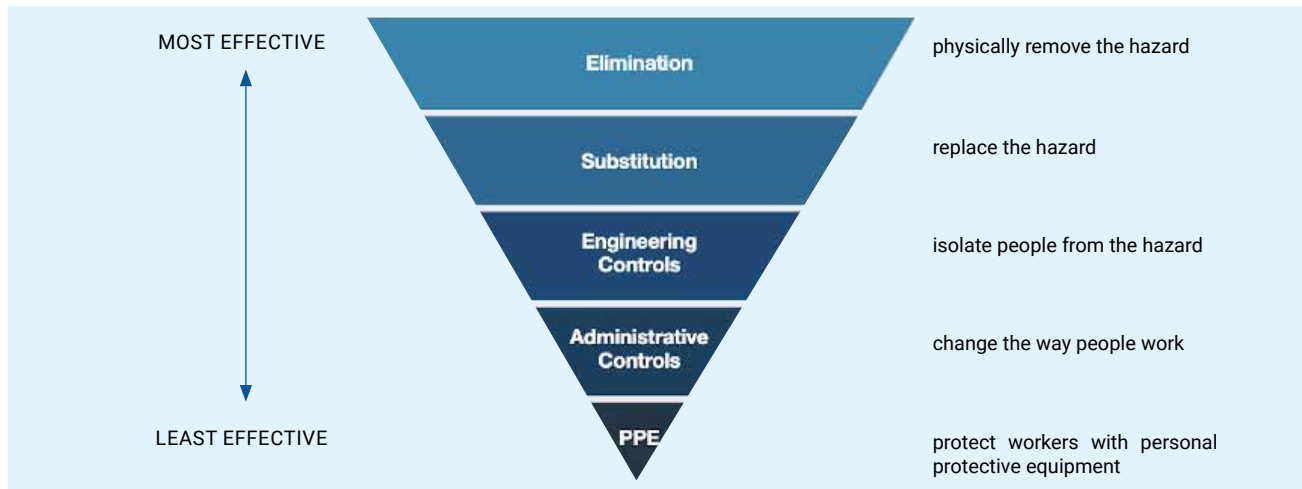
Covid-19 virus cannot be totally eliminated 3) electronics factories are enclosed spaces with low temperature where the virus can thrive and stay for hours.

- Covid-19 is the disease resulting from an infection of the novel coronavirus. Transmission of Covid-19 happens primarily between person to person contact through respiratory droplets. Most common symptoms of the Covid 19 include fever (not necessarily high), dry cough, tiredness or fatigue, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing among others.
- It is important for the workers to fully understand how COVID-19 is transmitted from one person to another. Transmission occurs most often in indoor, crowded, and inadequately ventilated spaces, where infected persons spend long periods of time with others. This suggests COVID-19 transmission is particularly effective in crowded, confined indoor spaces where there is poor or no ventilation.
- On April 2021, the Employees Compensation Commission issued a resolution recognising Covid-19 as an occupational disease. This means that contracting Covid 19 can be considered work-related. As a result, workers who got ill of Covid 19 are now eligible to claim compensation once they are able to demonstrate that their Covid 19 is work-related.

## HANDOUT 2.1 HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

The idea behind the hierarchy is that the control methods at the top are potentially more effective and protective than those at the bottom. For instance, physically eliminating the risks of getting infected in the workplace can mean transitioning to remote work or work-from-home arrangement. For engineering controls, improved ventilation

and setting up of physical barriers can be done to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Employers also have the responsibility of providing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as disposable gowns and masks to all employees at no cost. Regular and systematic contact tracing and screening should complement these control strategies in the workplace.



## HANDOUT 2.2 COVID-19 BASICS\*

### Transmission

The virus is primarily spread through respiratory DROPLETS when an infected person speaks, coughs, or sneezes.

Transmission can also happen through contact with FOMITES that can enter the mouths, eyes or noses of people as well as surfaces up to one (1) meter away, and can survive for at least three (3) days depending on the material.

The World Health Organization recently added AIRBORNE transmission via micro-droplet suspension as one of the modes of transmission of COVID-19.

Studies reveal that airborne transmission may be possible in healthcare settings, during

aerosol-generating procedures (i.e. nebulization, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, endotracheal intubation, suctioning of secretions, etc.), and in small, closed, and confined spaces with little or no ventilation.

### Symptoms and Incubation

Symptoms can take up to 14 days from infection to show. The most common symptoms are:

- Fever (not necessarily high fever)
- Dry cough
- Tiredness or fatigue
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Patients may, likewise, experience other non-specific symptoms such as sore throat, nasal congestion, headache, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting, and loss of smell (anosmia) or loss of taste (ageusia) preceding the onset of respiratory symptoms.

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\*Workplace Handbook on COVID-19 Management and Prevention

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Additional information on the definition of hazard and risk can be found in this article by the ILO [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--americas/--ro-lima/--sro-port\\_of\\_spain/documents/presentation/wcms\\_250189.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/--americas/--ro-lima/--sro-port_of_spain/documents/presentation/wcms_250189.pdf)
- A short video Covid-19 in the workplace, watch here; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dlUqIMdKR4>
- The IOHSAD submitted a proposal to the ECC on pertinent recommendations for an inclusive and speedy access to Covid-19 benefits/ compensation of workers. See here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zssHyIpcm8LgnRs9gLDSBY13Ctkigzn0/view?usp=sharing>

## SESSION 3

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# WHAT ARE WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES?

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### OBJECTIVES

- Review the foundations of democratic participation through workers committees
- Differentiate a workers OSH committee from the mandated OSH committee
- Understand why workers need to lead their own OSH committee

### TIME

45 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- markers
- post-its / flipcharts
- printed hand-outs

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to work together through committees? How does it foster democratic participation among members?
- What is a workers' OSH committee? How do workers' OSH committees differ from the mandated OSH committees?
- Why is it important for workers to build and lead their own OSH committees during the pandemic?

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- Group discussion: Ask workers what they know about committees? Why are committees important?

- Group sharing: Ask participants if there is an existing OSH committee in their company as mandated by RA 11058 and share what has been their experience with it during the pandemic.

## MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Workers are empowered when they work together as a group. When an individual worker faces an issue on his/her own, s/he is almost helpless, especially when confronting his/her employer. By grouping together, workers at the minimum, gain mutual support for common issues they face in the workplace. In some companies, workers have a union. In the Philippines however, only a percentage of workers are organised in union. Whether unionised or not, workers can form committees. Through committees, workers are able to exercise democratic participation and democratic decision making. Through committees workers are also able to share the responsibility and accountability, instead of simply passing the burden to a particular individual, say a leader.
- RA 11058 mandates the formation of an OSH committee with representatives from the employer and at most two workers' representatives, either as selected by the union or elected by the workers, if there is no union.
- A workers OSH committee is different from the OSH committee mandated by RA 11058. A workers OSH committee is initiated, composed of, and led by workers themselves. It functions separately and independently from the OSH committee established by the company – the one stipulated in Republic Act 11058 or the OSH Law. It can work in partnership with the company-led (mandated) OSH committee, and can include the workers' representatives in the company-led OSH committee as its members.

It is composed entirely of workers, and is open to all kinds of workers regardless of employment status.

- The workers OSH committee is envisioned to provide a platform for workers to proactively craft, update and recommend OSH guidelines, especially in the context of public health emergencies. It seeks to draw inputs and synthesize recommendations from workers themselves on how to safeguard each other from occupational risks and diseases. In cases of sickness or injury of employees, it can also function parallel to the existing company-led (mandated) OSH committee in coming up with a report and recommendation to the company and relevant government agencies.
- In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the workers OSH committee can introduce much needed interventions at work and initiate cooperation with the management to prevent the spread of infection in the workplace, ensure proper health protocols, conduct learning sessions on relevant circulars issued by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), among other roles.



## HAND-OUT 3.1. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEE AND MANDATED (COMPANY-LED) OSH COMMITTEE

While the company-led OSH committee can only have up to two workers as members/ workers' representatives, the workers OSH committee can be composed of at least five members. The membership is envisioned to expand to ensure that at least three (3) workers will represent each department and each shift, with a good mix of old and new employees. Any employee can join the workers OSH committee, provided that he or she believes that workers have the right to a safe and healthy workplace.

At the minimum, the workers OSH committee can also make recommendations to update and improve existing OSH programs and policies rather than just enforcing them. Below is a summary of the difference between the company-led (mandated) OSH committee as stated in Republic Act 11058 and the workers OSH committee (See next page)

Table 3.1 Key Difference between Workers OSH Committee and Mandated OSH Committee

	<b>Workers' OSH Committee</b>	<b>Company-led OSH Committee (as mandated by RA 11058)</b>
Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusive to workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer or representative as the chairperson ex officio;</li> <li>• Safety officer of the company or project as the secretary;</li> <li>• Safety officer representing the contractor or subcontractor, as the case may be, as members;</li> <li>• Physicians, nurses, certified first-aiders, and dentists as members, ex officio, if applicable; and</li> <li>• Workers' representatives who shall come from the union if the workers are organized or elected by the workers through a simple majority vote if they are unorganized, as members.</li> </ul>
Workers participation in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers fully own the process of decision-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited participation of workers in decision-making.</li> </ul>
Minimum functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather and update information about the OSH concerns and conditions of workers</li> <li>• Disseminate relevant and timely information on OSH</li> <li>• Make recommendations to improve existing OSH policies and protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the implementation of the company's OSH program and policies</li> </ul>

## HANDOUT 3.2 IN THE KNOW: RA 11058 OR THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (OSH) LAW

Republic Act 11058 or the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Standards Law was enacted on August 17, 2018. RA 11058 mandates the enforcement of OSH standards in all establishments, regardless of size and nature of operation (except the public sector). The law also mandates the crafting of an OSH program and OSH committee in covered workplaces.

The OSH Law ensures workers have the 1) **right to know** 2) **right to refuse unsafe work** if imminent danger exists in the workplace 3) **right**

**to report accidents** 4) **right to personal protective equipment**, which shall be provided free of charge by the employer.

Willful failure or refusal to enforce OSH standards will be penalized by up to P100,000 per day until the violation is corrected. However, RA 11058's IRR, Department Order 198-18, has pegged the maximum penalty at only P50,000 for specific violations such as failure of the company to provide PPEs or charging the cost of PPEs on workers.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Video on mandated OSH Committee: "Secion 13: OSH Committee Requirement pursuant to RA 11058 and its IRR" url <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-IS-O-af2s>

## SESSION 4

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# SETTING UP WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES IN UNIONIZED WORKPLACES

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### OBJECTIVES

- Review the importance of setting up an OSH committee even when there is already a union.
- Demonstrate the steps on how to set up workers' OSH committees in unionized workplaces

### TIME

45 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- markers
- post-its / flipcharts
- laptop and projector or smart TV
- printed hand-outs (ex. sample union resolutions, OSH committee agenda)

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Why do unions still need to form workers' OSH committees?
- What are the steps in setting up workers' OSH committees in unionised workplaces?

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

- Group sharing: Ask workers with unions to share what committees they have in their unions, how they function and what are its advantages?

## MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- Unions are organizations of workers that ensure workers rights, welfare and interests are put forward in the workplace. A union that truly represents the workers will be in the lead in identifying and addressing issues faced by the workers.
- An effective and democratic union fosters active participation of members through committees. By forming committees, the tasks and responsibilities of the union are shared by a broader number of members and member participation is increased.
- Unions typically form committees along tasks or concerns of workers. In many unions, it is commonplace to have task-based committees such as education committees, organizing committees, finance committees, welfare committees among others. In some cases, unions also form gender and women committees, youth committees, or other committees that focus on a specific issue or subgroup of the union membership. Committees that are formed with a specific function or focus, allows the union to have a deeper grasp of a particular or emerging concern for its members.
- During the pandemic, unions can be more effective in addressing OSH concerns (particularly Covid 19 issues) and ensuring OSH rights, by setting up OSH committees. Having workers' OSH committees will also allow the union to have a dedicated subgroup of workers who are on top of addressing the issues brought about the pandemic – Covid 19 outbreaks in the workplace, implementation of Covid-19 protocols, new policies concerning Covid 19 etc.
- Setting up OSH Committees in unions involves simple steps: 1) determining the mandate, size and structure of the committee, 2) calling for enlistment from general membership; and 3) holding a meeting to formalise the committee, identify its functions, elect or assign key roles, and start planning.

## HANDOUT 4.1. HOW TO SET UP A WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES IN AN ELECTRONICS COMPANY THAT HAS A UNION.

### 1. Determine the mandate, size and structure of the OSH Committee

The union, through a resolution of its general membership or its executive committee, must first resolve it will form a workers OSH committee. In the resolution, the union must determine the mandate of the committee as well as its size and structure taking into account the existing departments and shifts in the company. The committee can have at least three members per department.

### 2. Call for enlistment of committee members

The union will issue a call for enlistment for the workers OSH committee and ensure that membership will be open to everyone who is

willing and interested to perform the duties of the committee.

In case the company-led OSH committee exists, the workers' representative in the mandated OSH committee must be included in the workers OSH committee. Note that while the creation of company-led OSH committees is mandatory under the OSH Law, not all companies have such committees.

### 3. Conduct the first meeting of the OSH committee.

Once the members of the OSH committee are identified, the first meeting can take place. The following important items should be covered at a minimum:

- Reviewing the mandate of the workers' OSH committee as stipulated in the union resolution

- Setting a schedule for the committee to meet (e.g. once a month at a given date and time) that is as convenient as possible for all members.
- Determining who will be the committee officers (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, see hand-out 4.2 Description of OSH Committee Officers).
- Discussing priorities and action plan (e.g. information dissemination, development and updating of written safety programs, incident reviews, etc.).

#### 4. Review and monitoring of plan and actions

The committee can review its progress at least twice a year. The safety committee's progress should be reviewed regularly in order to evaluate the committee's success in helping the organization meet its safety goals and objectives.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Sample union resolutions on creating an OSH committee
- Sample agenda for first OSH committee meeting

## HAND-OUT 4.2. DESCRIPTION OF OSH COMMITTEE OFFICERS

The **chairperson** supervises the day-to-day OSH situation in the workplace, and by default, represents the workers OSH committee in meetings and dialogues with the management. He or she also sets the agenda for the committee meeting.

The **vice chairperson** temporarily assumes the duties of the president in the event of resignation or absence of the chairperson, and carries out responsibilities delegated by the committee

The **secretary** records the minutes of all committee meetings, and develops a system of filing and gathering reports from workers.

## SESSION 5

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# BUILDING WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES IN NON-UNIONISED WORKPLACES

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### OBJECTIVE

- Understand why it is important to build OSH committees in non-unionised workplaces
- Demonstrate the steps on how to build workers' OSH committees in non-unionized workplaces

### TIME

45 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

markers  
post-its / panel boards  
laptop and projector or smart TV

### KEY QUESTIONS

- Why should non-unionised workers in electronics factories build workers' OSH committees during the pandemic?
- What are the steps in building workers' OSH committees in non-unionised electronics factories?

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Role playing: Group workers into groups of three or four workers. Ask them to role-play how the proponent of the workers' OSH committee would talk to other workers about OSH issues in their workplace during the pandemic to recruit more workers and volunteers in the workers' OSH committee.



- Group discussion: Ask workers to identify what OSH issues in their workplace during the pandemic can be a take off point for building a workers OSH committee. Ask workers to write down their answers on the post its and paste them on the panel boards.

## **MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION**

- There is a very small percentage of workers in the electronics industry that are unionised. Workers in non-unionised electronics settings have little to no power to influence company practices and policies that will ensure workers OSH rights and welfare during the pandemic. Building a workers' OSH committee in non-unionised factories can thus help in ensuring that workers have a watch dog and workers rights and welfare are tackled especially during the pandemic.
- Workers do not need to be organised in a union before building their workers OSH committees.
- Some basic principles in organising must be taken in consideration when building OSH committees of workers in non-unionised factories. These include 1) identifying OHS issues or concerns of workers, specifically related to Covid-19 that will be the basis for forming an OSH committee 2) keeping the OSH committee off the radar of the management until there is a sizeable number of workers who are willing to be part of the workers OSH committee.
- Steps in building workers OSH committees in non-unionised workplaces include 1) identifying OSH and Covid-related issues and concerns of workers 2) identifying potential members of the OSH committee 3) forming the core group 4) enlisting more members of the workers' OSH committee and 5) conducting the first meeting.

## HAND-OUT 5.1. BUILDING OSH COMMITTEES IN NON-UNIONIZED FACTORIES

### 1. Identify OSH-related concerns of workers in the workplace

Before getting started in building an OSH committee, it is important to identify what are the OSH concerns of workers, particularly the ones related to the pandemic. When workers are able to identify the OSH (work-related Covid-19) issues of workers, then there is a strong basis to build an OSH committee.

In an electronics company, there are plenty of Covid 19 issues that can be a starting point. These include poor implementation of Covid-19 protocols, absence of workers representative in the mandated OSH committee, non-existence of mandated OSH committee, lack of support for workers in quarantine, Covid-19 outbreak in the workplace, access to compensation etc.

For workers intending to build their OSH committee, it is important to identify these issues first. These can do this by informally having conversations with co-workers, by conducting formal or informal about Covid 19 and OSH etc.

### 2. Identify possible members of the OSH committees and the core group

While discussing OSH issues with co-workers, possible members of the OSH committees and the core group can also be identified. In identifying possible members of the core group, there are three important things to remember: Members of the core team must be reliable; they should think positively about the goal of building an OSH committee; they can somehow influence other workers to join the committee.

### 3. Form the core team and call for volunteer/ members

Once members of the core team are identified, they can set up a meeting and plan on how to increase the members of the OSH committee. The core team can call for volunteers to address immediate OSH concerns through different platforms, depending on the situation or circumstances in the workplace.

The call for volunteers can be posted in the employee bulletin board if the company management finds the workers' initiative a welcome change. However it is also possible that the company may not be open to workers building an OSH committee. In this scenario, the call for volunteers can be issued in discreet ways such as through referral from reliable contacts and holding preparatory meetings outside the company's premises. The core team can also ask guidelines and recommendations from unions and labor organizations in setting up the workers OSH committee.

### 4. Conduct the first meeting of the OSH committee.

Once a sizable number of workers have signed up (minimum of 10 depending on the size of the company), the first meeting can take place. The following important items may be discussed:

- Agreement on the functions and priorities of the workers OSH committee that will be formed (information dissemination, incident reviews, updating of written safety programs, etc.)
- Orientation of volunteers as initial committee members
- Determination of the regular schedule for the committee meeting that is as convenient as possible for all members
- Selection of the coordinator as leader of the workers OSH committee.

In the subsequent meetings, the committee can select the permanent officers of the committee (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary).

The **chairperson** supervises the day-to-day OSH situation in the workplace. He or she also sets the agenda for the committee meeting. In the absence of a union, he may represent the workers OSH committee in meetings with the management.

The **vice chairperson** temporarily assumes the duties of the president in the event of resignation or absence of the chairperson, and carries out responsibilities delegated by the committee

The **secretary** records the minutes of all committee meetings, and develops a system of filing and gathering reports from workers.

## 5. Review functions and achievements

The OSH committee can review its progress at least twice a year. The safety committee's progress should be reviewed regularly in order to evaluate the committee's success in helping the safety goals and objectives set by the committee.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- When identifying issues and members of the core group of the workers OSH committee, it may be helpful to review "What's an organizing committee" url: <https://guide.unitworkers.com/whats-an-organizing-committee/>

## SESSION 6

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# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES IN ELECTRONICS COMPANIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### OBJECTIVES

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of workers OSH committees in electronics companies during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Learn ways of how to fulfill these roles and responsibilities

### TIME

90 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- markers
- post-its/ panel boards
- laptop and projector or smart TV

### KEY QUESTIONS

- What are the roles and responsibilities of a workers' OSH committee in electronics companies during the Covid-19 pandemic
- What are some of the ways that these roles and responsibilities may be fulfilled? What are some example activities that can be done by the OSH committee?

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Group work: Divide workers into two groups. Ask one group of workers to list down on sticky notes what they think workers OSH committees should be doing during the pandemic. Ask the other group to identify which tasks come together.

- Group discussion: Ask the participants what tasks of workers OSH committees are unique during the pandemic.

## **MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION**

- During the Covid-19 pandemic, the key task of workers' OSH committees of workers is to ensure that workers OSH rights are upheld and Covid-19 pandemic-related concerns are addressed. Workers' OSH committees have several roles and responsibilities in line with this key task which may include but may not be limited to the following:
  - raise awareness of workers about Covid 19 and OSH and disseminate timely relevant information
  - document and monitor Covid-19 and other OSH-related situation in the workplace
  - help in the implementation of health protocols in the workplace
  - review and assess existing Covid-19 related policies in the industry, in the workplace
- lead in the campaign for workers health and safety during the pandemic in the workplace and possibly in a broader context (i.e. in the industry, sector in the country)
- lead in seeking redress for Covid-19 related issues in the workplace
- Raising awareness of workers may involve holding webinars and training sessions to workers and members of the OSH committee about basic information on Covid-19, how it can be prevented and controlled in the workplace as well as updates on relevant standards and protocols issued by the company, the government or other authorities. Information dissemination may involve providing regular updates related to Covid-19 to workers through bulletin boards, flyers, or social media platforms. (See Hand-out 6.2. for list of possible webinars and trainings as well as possible resource speakers)

- Documenting and monitoring involves getting up-to-date information from co-workers about the issues and problems they face in relation to OSH and Covid-19 in the workplace. This also involves monitoring new issuances made by the management as well as the government with regards Covid 19. Effective documentation and monitoring necessitates data gathering from workers and writing summary reports of information gathered from workers. The OSH committee may develop a Covid-19 complaint or grievance form that may be filled out by workers or members of the OSH committee who have interviewed workers who raised concerns regarding Covid-19 in the workplace (See Hand-out 6.3. Sample Covid-19 complaint form).
- Helping in the implementation of Covid-19 protocols may require members of the workers' OSH committee to have trained worker-safety officers or contact-tracers that will work with the company-led OSH committee of the company to implement Covid-19 health protocols in the workplace. (See Hand-out 6.4. Contact Tracing)
- Reviewing and assessing existing Covid-19 related policies in the workplace, in the industry or in the broader community requires regular discussion and consultation with workers about new policies being implemented and how it affects or will affect them. The workers' OSH committee may hold monthly huddle sessions with co-workers to discuss Covid-19 policies, how it has been implemented in the workplace and what has been the experience and impact on workers (See Hand-out 6.5. for list of policies related to Covid-19 in the workplace). During the huddle sessions, workers may also start discussing recommendations and alternative policies, standards or practices.

- Leading in the campaign for workers health and safety during the pandemic in the workplace and/or in a broader context (i.e. in the industry, sector in the country) requires that workers' OSH committee engages with the management and/or other stakeholders to forward concerns of workers and clinch positive changes in practices and in policies. The goal of the campaign may vary depending on the situation. Some examples are pushing for paid quarantine provisions in the collective bargaining agreement, changing specific company policies, or campaign goals may be broader such as pushing for industry standards to protect electronics workers from Covid or seeking legislation of paid pandemic leave for all workers. In workplaces where there is a union, the workers' OSH committee may work with the other union committees (campaign committee, CBA committee) or union leadership when it decides to lead a campaign. Campaigning activities may include holding dialogues with stakeholders combined with group actions (social media actions, noise barrage, picketing etc).
- Leading in the endeavour to seek redress for Covid-19 related issues in the workplace means that the workers OSH committee also utilizes existing legal remedies to ensure that workers OSH rights are protected during the pandemic. The workers OSH committee can for file for OSH inspection from the labor department if workers deem that the company is violating OSH standards. Another thing that the workers OSH committee can do is to take the lead in assisting workers claiming Covid-19 compensation from the Employees Compensation Commission.



## HAND-OUT 6.1. SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WORKERS OSH COMMITTEE WITH SAMPLE GOALS, ACTIVITIES, STAKEHOLDERS, TIMELINE OR FREQUENCY

<b>Role and responsibility</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Possible Activity/ies</b>	<b>Who will be involved?</b>	<b>Suggested time frame</b>
Raise awareness and disseminate information	Raise awareness about Covid 19 protocols and OSH rights	Webinar about OSH rights and DOLE-DTI guidelines and company policies on Covid 19 protocols	Workers OSH committee, Education committee, Resource persons from DOLE, management representative or NGOs	Two hour session / Once or twice a month
	Provide information about vaccinations	Flyers or social media posts about Covid-19 vaccine	Workers OSH Committee	Once a month
Document and monitor Covid-19 situation	Document OSH rights violations in the workplace	Feedback form or Covid-19 complaint form	Workers OSH Committee and workers	Regularly
Help implement Covid-19 protocols	Help implement social distancing and sanitation	Orientation of volunteers on how to implement social distancing, proper mask wearing and sanitation	Workers OSH Committee, worker volunteers and resource persons from company representative or health professional	1 hour training every 3 months
Review and assess existing protocols	Review company policies and practice on Covid 19	Collect copies of existing company policies on Covid 19 Huddle / Consultation with workers	OSH committee, Union officers	1 hour session at least once a month

<b>Role and responsibility</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Possible Activity/ies</b>	<b>Who will be involved?</b>	<b>Suggested time frame</b>
Campaign for OSH rights amid the pandemic	Include paid quarantine leave in the CBA provisions	Consultation with workers, solidarity actions, negotiation with management	OSH committee, union officers, all workers in the company, management representatives	as needed
	Protection of workers through better industry policies	Consultation with workers and other unions in other companies, solidarity actions, lobbying with industry players	OSH committee, unions, federations, industry representatives, government representatives	as needed
Seek redress and legal remedy	Seek OSH inspection in the workplace	Document cases of violations and file complaint before DOLE	OSH committee, union, worker complainants, engage DOLE	as needed
	Ensure speedy claims for workers who contracted Covid-19	Conduct webinar about ECC, Assist workers who filing their ECC claims, Follow up on the progress of ECC claims	OSH committee, grievance committee of union, engage management representative, SSS / ECC	regularly

## HAND-OUT 6.2. LIST OF WEBINARS AND TRAININGS THAT MAY BE CONDUCTED BY WORKERS OSH COMMITTEE

Topic	Potential partner/ Resource organization
Hazard identification and mapping; crafting of solutions	Training c/o DOLE/ Occupational Safety and Health Center
OSH rights orientation, Documenting and Monitoring OSH violations	Paralegal Training c/o unions/ labor organizations
On symptom screening, contact tracing, and information drive regarding COVID-19 at vaccines	Training/ orientation c/o DOH, LGUs, and nongovernment organizations
Basic health check: blood pressure, temperature and responsiveness assessment	Training/ orientation c/o DOH, LGUs and NGOs
General symptom screening and first aid	Training c/o Red Cross
Updates and basic information about Covid 19, vaccination, and new related standards and policies	Health professionals from NGO's, DOH, DOLE, also trade unions
Processing of applications for OSH-related benefits and compensation	Employment Compensation Commission (ECC)

## HAND-OUT 6.3. SAMPLE WORKER COVID-19 COMPLAINT FORM

Name: .....

Age: ..... Sex: .....

Department: ..... Contact number: .....

Which of the following is your concern/ complaint about? Check all that applies

- implementation of Covid-19 protocols
- company policies regarding Covid-19
- contact tracing
- quarantine
- isolation
- worker benefits related to Covid-19
- loss of job/ income due ot Covid-19
- Others, specify

Can you tell us more about your concern / complaint. (Short summary, when did it happen? Who were involved?)

.....  
.....

How would you want your concern to be addressed? What outcome are you hoping for?

.....  
.....

Any more suggestions?

.....  
.....

## HAND-OUT 6.4. GUIDE TO CONTACT TRACING

### Why do we need contact tracing?

Contact tracing is one way to slow down and prevent the spread of infectious disease in the workplace and communities. Its objective is to identify individuals who are contacts of an infected person so that they can be isolated and thus prevent further infection.

While we have become familiar with it because of the COVID-19 pandemic, contact tracing is already being done to other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, measles, and cholera.

### Who are the close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case?

- Those who had face to face interaction with a person who exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 with a distance of 1 meter or less and that which lasted for more than 15 minutes
- Those who had direct physical contact with a person who exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 (e.g. through handshake, kiss, or hug)
- Those who took care a person who exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 without the appropriate personal protective equipment
- Those who will be identified as close contact according to the local risk assessment (e.g. family members who are living with the COVID-19 infected person)

For the expanded contact tracing, those who had close contacts with the COVID-19 infected person 14 days before the onset of symptoms must be identified, as the virus' incubation period (or the length of time it multiplies inside the body) can last up to 14 days.

It is important to remember that a person can still be considered a close contact even with the face mask and face shield on, as there is no assurance that they are properly worn all the time.

### Steps in Contact Tracing

1. Workers who experience COVID-like symptoms must be immediately brought to a health facility, undergo an RT-PCR test to be tested for infection and asked to isolate. The employers are responsible for coordinating and reporting to their respective Local Government Units, the employees whose health is being monitored and those who are seeking isolation.

While waiting for the result, disinfection of the physical facilities visited by those suspected of COVID-19 should be done right away; including the contact tracing of those who have been exposed to, or in close contact with those who are suspected of COVID-19.

The patient shall be asked to disclose his or her whereabouts two days prior to developing COVID-19 symptoms. If the person fails to self-isolate, he or she must also disclose his or her whereabouts 14 days after showing symptoms (or from the last date of exposure).

The patient's health declaration questionnaire should be reviewed to determine his or her symptoms; including the timeframe while they may have been infectious

The patient should recall his or her work schedule or shift and determine any office shuttle he or she might have used.

The patient must quickly identify his or her close contacts, especially those who he or she interacted with indoors without Personal Protective Equipment - face masks, etc (canteen, dormitory).

2. The company CCTV must be reviewed to locate the places the patient has been in. The close contacts in the workplace must be identified and validated.

The OSH committee can coordinate with the supervisor and Human Resources to help assist with contact tracing and produce a list of close contacts.

The OSH committee should be able to validate the list of the patient's close contacts. A close contact is a person who was within six feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24- hour period starting from 48 hours before illness began.

3. The patient must be asked if he or she can give consent to publishing the place and time he or she was in the workplace so others can determine possible COVID-19 exposure, be warned and provided with instructions for next steps.

4. All close contacts should undergo a 14-day quarantine.

Close contacts who do not exhibit any symptom should be tested between the 5th-7th day from the period when they were last exposed to the patient with COVID-19

Close contacts who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms should be tested immediately

Close contacts who were issued a negative result should still finish their 14-day quarantine period.

5. Once the patient is issued with a negative RT-PCR result, close contacts shall be allowed to end their 14-day quarantine. However, if the doctor advises a high possibility of COVID-19 in the patient even despite having a negative RT-PCR result, the close contacts should still finish their 14-day quarantine.

Contact-tracing should be finished in 1 day so that close contacts do not have to report to work the next day. This is to stop the risk of exposing other workers and spreading the infection.

## Data Privacy

The personal and sensitive information obtained from contact tracing is protected under the Data Privacy Act [10]. The law demands that patients, close contacts and their families should be informed of how their personal information will be used and how it can be protected.

Patients, close contacts and their families shall be given and should sign a declaration form before any interview for contact tracing. The names of the patients, close contacts or any identifiers, eg: Full name, address, and contact information should not be disclosed.

The patient shall also approve any or all information that will be used for contact tracing. Under the Data Privacy Act, violators shall be liable to imprisonment of one (1) to six (6) years and fine of not less than P500,000, but not more than P4,000,000.



## Reporting

COVID-19 is included in the list of Category I notifiable diseases [11]. This means that all COVID-19 cases require immediate reporting to the Department of Health within 24 hours of diagnosis by health care providers. This is why all COVID-19 cases must be reported to Local Government Units and should also be reflected in the Work Accident/Illness Report of DOLE.

## References

Department of Health Memorandum No. 2020-0439: Omnibus Interim Guidelines on Prevention, Detection, Isolation, Treatment, and Reintegration Strategies for COVID-19  
Workplace Handbook on COVID-19 Management and Prevention  
Philippine Society on Microbiology and Infectious Diseases and Healthcare Professionals Alliance Against COVID-19 Unified COVID-19 Algorithms  
Center for Disease Prevention Appendix A – Glossary of Key terms <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html>

ABC News (2021). What we know about the fleeting spread of the COVID-19 Delta variant in Sydney. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-24/covid-delta-kappa-variant-spread-in-fleeting-moment-nsw-vic/100238680>

Viral infection and transmission in a large well-traced outbreak caused by the Delta SARS-CoV-2 variant <https://virological.org/t/viral-infection-and-transmission-in-a-large-well-traced-outbreak-caused-by-the-delta-sars-cov-2-variant/724>

Center for Disease Prevention and Control (07 May 2021).

Scientific Brief: SARS-CoV-2 Transmission <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/sars-cov-2-transmission.html>

National Public Radio (27 Aug 2021). Coronavirus FAQ: How do the rules of 6 feet and 15 minutes apply to the Delta variant? <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2021/08/27/1031753581/coronavirus-faq-how-does-the-6-feet-15-minutes-rule-apply-to-the-delta-variant>

The Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 10173, known as the Data Privacy Act 2012

The 2020 Revised Implementing Rules and Regulation of Republic No. 11332 or the Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act

## HAND-OUT 6.5. LIST OF POLICIES RELATED TO COVID-19 IN THE WORKPLACE THAT MAY BE REVIEWED BY WORKERS OSH COMMITTEE

- Company policies on Covid-19 control and prevention
- Industry policies and practices on Covid-19 control and prevention (if available)
- IATF Guidelines on Covid 19 Prevention and Control
- DOLE-DTI Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Covid-19 in the Workplace
- ECC Resolution on Covid-19 as an Occupational Disease

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- An excellent resource by IndustriALL on what safety and health activists including workers-led OSH committees can do to save ourselves especially during increased risk during the pandemic, “Saving Ourselves” url: [http://admin.industrialunion.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Publications/HEALTH\\_SAFETY\\_MANUAL/health\\_and\\_safety.pdf](http://admin.industrialunion.org/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/Publications/HEALTH_SAFETY_MANUAL/health_and_safety.pdf)
- Another resource on the trade union approach in occupational health and safety in the construction industry was published by ILO “Construction OS&H Workers’ perspectives Trade Union approach” url: [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---sector/documents/presentation/wcms\\_161889.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/presentation/wcms_161889.pdf)

## SESSION 7

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# PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEES IN ELECTRONICS COMPANIES

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### OBJECTIVES

- Learn how to set SMART objectives and create a plan for an effective OSH committee
- Develop a sample plan for the workers' OSH committee using SMART objectives

### TIME

75 to 90 minutes

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- markers
- post-its
- big flip charts / panel boards

### KEY QUESTIONS

- What are SMART objectives? How can our OSH committee develop a plan that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound?
- How can we make our OSH committee effective?
- 

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Break-out groups: Group the participants into 4 to 6 members each. Give them 30 minutes to discuss and identify SMART objectives for their OSH committee and make a six month plan. Ask them to use the planning template for clearer presentation. Give each group 5 minutes to present their plans to the rest of the participants.

## MAIN POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- In order to be effective in performing its role and responsibilities, the workers OSH committee should be able to make and implement plans based on SMART objectives. SMART plans mean they are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Bound. During the pandemic, the workers' OSH committees' mission may be to ensure the workers' right to safe and healthy workplaces are upheld. Fulfilling this mission is an ongoing process and requires setting specific goals every now and then which are aligned with the roles and responsibilities outlined in section 6 of this module.
- **Specific** means that the goal is concrete, focused and well-defined. When we set a goal, we have to be able to identify what we want to happen or achieve, why a goal has to be achieved, who will be responsible for this task, when do we want it done, and how is the goal achieved.
- A **Measurable** objective means that the results of the actions can be tracked or quantified in order to check if there is progress towards our goal. The way of measuring a specific outcome or objective must be clear and understandable for everyone in the OSH committee. For example, if our goal is to raise awareness of workers about the importance of vaccines, it can be measured by the number of webinars that have been implemented by the OSH committee as well as the number of participants in each of the webinars.
- An objective is **Attainable** if it can be done within a specified period. It is important for our committee or our union to have plans and objectives that are attainable because if these plans or objectives are too distant, it will be hard to remain motivated. Vision and aspirations are different because these pertain to long-term changes that we dream for. When planning and setting objectives, it is equally important to assess our capacity and resources to achieve our goal.

- Related to Attainable is **Realistic**. A realistic plan means we have considered factors that might affect our plan and our intended outcome. This means looking at the resources (time, funds, human resources) skills, as well external factors that may affect our outcome. For example, if one of the objectives of our workers' OSH committee is to negotiate with the management a paid quarantine leave for the workers, then such a goal is more realistic if there is already an existing union in the company. Without a union, the workers' OSH committee may find it more difficult to negotiate although it can still find ways through writing a petition to the management.
- A **Time-bound** objective means that there is a specific timeframe or deadline for an objective to be achieved. Without a due date or definite timeline there is less urgency to achieve a goal.



## HAND-OUT 7.2 MAKING THE WORKERS' OSH COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE: SOME TIPS

- Make sure all members receive enough training to be effective on the committee.
- Agree on guidelines for effective communication and mutual respect among committee members
- Establish procedures for employees to report hazards or suggest safety improvements to the committee without fear of reprisal.
- Ensure that committee members have access to the worksite and to all relevant information necessary to carry out their duties.
- Make necessary preparations before holding a committee meeting. Send the agenda and other relevant committee information to committee members and other interested parties at least five days prior to the meeting.
- Develop a tracking system that enables the committee to monitor progress on safety issues.
- Conduct regular walkaround inspections to identify potential health and safety hazards.
- Identify OSH trainings and other related seminars which can assist the committee members in performing their tasks

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- A section of Module 4 of ITUC Lead Organiser's Training Course discusses on what are SMART objectives and effective management which can be applied to workers-led OSH committee url: [https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc\\_course\\_book\\_final\\_en\\_web.pdf](https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc_course_book_final_en_web.pdf)

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TRAINING MODULE

## **Building Workers' OSH Committees in Electronics Companies during Pandemic**

October 2021