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Press Release / Announcement



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COVID-19: PUNJAB GOVT ISSUES ADVISORY ON MAINTAINING HYGIENE & SANITIZATION IN BANKS

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- **Asks to promote digital transaction and maintain visiting customers proper log**

Chandigarh, April 24

Punjab Government today issued a detailed advisory on maintaining the hygiene and sanitization in banks to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. According to the advisory of the Health & Family Welfare Department, Punjab that the Coronavirus (COVID -19) transmitted in most instances through respiratory droplets, direct contact with positive persons and also through contaminated surfaces/objects. Though the virus survives on environmental surfaces for a varied period of time, it gets easily inactivated by chemical disinfectants. Thus, correct and timely information about the virus is the key to control the deadly disease, an official spokesperson said.

Giving advice to ensure social distancing of at least one meter amongst the customers, the spokesperson said that all banks should ensure that all customers are wearing a mask before entering the branch. It should also be ensured that every customer sanitizes his/her hands in the prescribed manner at the entrance of the bank branches. Apart from this, all banks have been advised to provide separate timings for senior citizens, women and other category of customers depending upon the nature of accounts they hold, he added.

Encouraging to launch a massive awareness campaign for promoting digital transactions, the state government asked the banks to use of electronic media to redress the grievances/queries of its customers, use of mobile based apps for quick information on available balances/loans etc. and minimal human interface in the physical bank branches. The banks should also display the information about digital services outside its branches for the visiting customers as also in its ATMs.

The banks have also been advised to preferably call only the staff that, for essential reasons, is required to attend the office in person. The comprehensive plan with regard to such staff who has been specifically called be drawn up which shall include the sitting arrangement by keeping a minimum distance of one meter amongst the employees, flexible timings of reporting and leaving the office, flexible timings of lunch and tea breaks in between with an objective to avoid clustering and cluttering of the staff. The staff shall be advised not to indulge in any handshakes or hugs to greet/see-off each other, the spokesperson said.

The banks have been asked to install thermal scanners at the entry gate of the bank space and the bank manager should encourage the staff to stay at home in case of any fever or other symptoms related to the COVID-19. If any staff detected with high fever during the office hours does not mandatorily mean that he/she is suffering from COVID-19. It is advised to get the staff suffering from high fever medically examined by the bank manager only by temporarily isolating him/her from the rest of the bank space. It has also suggested that the employer may encourage the workers to download "COVA APP" developed by the Government of Punjab for the correct, timely and authentic information, he added.

In case a colleague or staff is diagnosed as COVID-19 with whom one had a contact during banks, there shall not be panic. One should report to the Helpline No. 104/State Control Room No. 01722920074 / 08872090029, detailing the exact nature of exposure so as to assist the medical facility to undertake further necessary actions. The employer shall therefore maintain a complete and proper record of all employees attending the office on any particular day.

In case where a customer is visiting the bank branch, a proper log of the same may be maintained at the entry gate itself. Similarly, the day logs of the customers visiting the banks should be maintained by the banks. The log should contain the name of the customer, address and phone number. The accomplices, if any, with the customer should be discouraged to enter the banks until absolutely necessary as in case of challenged customers.

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