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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 283, *Occupational health and safety management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Infectious diseases are increasingly recognized as major challenges to health, safety and well-being. Decisions and activities relating to the prevention and management of infectious diseases affect workers within the organization and other people who visit a workplace, come into contact with workers or can be affected by the organization's activities. This document is a response to the risks that infectious diseases present to workers and other relevant interested parties (e.g. customers, the public, suppliers, workers from other organizations, family members and other personal contacts).

There is a broad range of infectious diseases with potential impacts on health, safety and well-being, which can vary from very mild to very serious depending on the nature of the infectious disease. Key characteristics of infectious diseases (see [Clause 5](#)) are a major factor in the risk posed to workers and other relevant interested parties.

Some infectious diseases are non-contagious and infect only the individual who contracts the disease and do not usually transmit from human to human (e.g. *legionellosis* or malaria), while others are contagious and have the potential to spread from a single individual to infect others (e.g. influenza, COVID-19, smallpox, hepatitis, *salmonellosis*, tuberculosis, Ebola and HIV/AIDS), up to and including a pandemic spread of the disease.

The impact in terms of severity of infectious diseases can vary from person to person depending on underlying health conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes, obesity, strength of immune system) and factors such as age, sex and socio-economic situation. Impacts can be more severe where one or more such circumstances exist.

This document provides guidelines to prevent or reduce exposure to, and transmission of, infectious agents and to manage risks to workers and other relevant interested parties from infectious diseases. It supports the principle that workers should not be required to work in settings without implementation of appropriate prevention and controls.

The guidance is generic and applicable to organizations regardless of the nature of business, service provision, size or complexity. It recognizes that many smaller organizations do not have dedicated departments or functions such as occupational health and safety (OH&S), facilities management, human resources or infectious disease specialists. More detailed information for specific functions is available from professional bodies and a wide range of national and international standards.

Organizations using ISO 45001 can use this document to improve OH&S management by relating the relevant clauses to the PDCA cycle:

- Plan: plan what needs to be done for the organization to work safely;
- Do: do what the organization has planned to do;
- Check: see how well it is working;
- Act: take actions to improve or change controls that are not effective.

Taking a system's approach facilitates the coordination of resources and efforts and will enable organizations to better manage the risk from infectious diseases, by ensuring they are included in existing OH&S processes.

This document is not intended to be a single step-by-step set of recommendations. It provides guidelines to enable ongoing continual improvement and to ensure the organization responds to incidents of infectious diseases, including epidemics and pandemics.

This document is designed to complement ISO 45001 by providing guidelines that align with the requirements of ISO 45001. This document can be used independently, by any organization, to improve OH&S performance.

# Occupational health and safety management — Guidelines for organizations on preventing, controlling and managing infectious diseases

## 1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for organizations on how to prevent or control exposure to infectious agents at the workplace and manage the risks associated with infectious diseases that:

- present a risk of severe ill health or death and can impact the health, safety and well-being of workers and other relevant interested parties;
- present a lower risk to health yet have a significant impact on the organization, its workers and other relevant interested parties.

This document is applicable to organizations of all sizes and sectors.

**NOTE** This document does not provide comprehensive guidance to those parts of an organization that implement mandated infection controls such as hospitals and medical or biological laboratories because there is an inherent potential for exposure to infectious diseases. Applicable legislation and guidance are provided by government, regulators and health authorities for specific infection controls for the protection of workers in such settings and for work activities on or with pathogenic microorganisms.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 45001:2018, *Occupational health and safety management systems — Requirements with guidance for use*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 45001 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### **workplace**

place where a person needs to be or to go for work purposes

Note 1 to entry: The organization's responsibilities for the workplace depend on the degree of control over the workplace.

Note 2 to entry: Workplaces can be inside or outside and include the worker's own home, other people's homes, personal vehicles, vehicles provided by the organization, other organizations' facilities and public spaces.

[SOURCE: ISO 45001:2018, 3.6, modified — “under the control of the organization” has been deleted from the definition, “under the OH&S management system” has been deleted from Note 1 to entry and Note 2 to entry has been added.]