

GUIDELINES OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH CONCERNING EMPLOYEES AT RISK OF SERIOUS ILLNESS FROM THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Employers are required to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety and health of their employees while they are at work.

As part of this obligation, employers must ensure that their risk assessments under the Occupational Safety and Health Act are up-to-date. This obligation continues to apply also now that the Emergency Powers Act has entered into force.

A risk assessment must be carried out by a professional with adequate expertise, which in respect of occupational safety and health is the occupational healthcare provider.

Guidelines for protecting the health of employees

The current coronavirus epidemic requires employers to take the necessary measures to protect the health of their employees.

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health has drawn up guidelines for workplaces on the prevention of coronavirus infection.

- [Guidelines for workplaces to prevent coronavirus infection \(Finnish Institute of Occupational Health\)](#)

Groups at risk of serious illness from the coronavirus

Based on the latest research data, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare has defined groups that are at a higher risk of serious illness from the coronavirus than others.

These groups include, in addition to older people, persons with a serious underlying condition that significantly impairs the functioning of the lungs, heart or immune system:

- [Groups at risk of serious illness from the coronavirus \(available only in Finnish\)](#)

Risk assessment at work

Employers must, taking due account of the current epidemic situation, assess whether their employees' risk of being infected with the coronavirus at work is elevated in comparison to the rest of the population.

The factors that must be taken into account in the risk assessment are the number and duration of close contacts and the likelihood of the close contacts having a coronavirus infection, as well as the employees' possibilities to protect themselves against the virus.

In the healthcare sector, particular attention must be paid to aerosol generating procedures. If the risk of infection is assessed to be significantly elevated, the employer must undertake occupational safety and health measures.

Read more

- [Preparedness for the coronavirus epidemic](#)
- [Official instructions issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health concerning the coronavirus epidemic](#)