
	JOINT COUNCIL OF ACTION INCOME TAX EMPLOYEES FEDERATION & INCOME TAX GAZETTED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION A-2/95, Manishinath Bhawan, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110 027	
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JCA/ Covid-19/2019-20

Dated: 18th March, 2020

To
The Chairman,
Central Board of Direct Taxes,
North Block, New Delhi.

Respected Sir,

Sub: Preventive measures for containment of the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) w.r.t employees of I.T. Department – regarding.

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Kindly refer to the above.

2. Risks to employees of I.T. Dept. due to spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Since the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus in China and subsequently around the world including India, Government of India and the State Governments have issued several advisories, initiated many preventive measures and imposed restrictions, closures invoking certain acts to contain the spread of Novel Coronavirus in India. Personal hygiene including adoption of certain practices, social distancing and quarantine or isolation in suitable cases (including self-isolation) have been suggested as key measures for containment of the spread of the COVID-19 virus, especially as India is in the third stage of the disease's spread. Any lax at this critical juncture would prove to be a catastrophe much bigger than that being faced by Italy, considering the density of population in daily travel to & fro office in all major cities of India like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, etc.

In our Department, administration in certain regions/stations is definitely trying their best by providing personal hygiene material to the employees, initiating round the clock effective cleaning and taking other measures as per Government guidelines. But several offices across the country are alarmingly lagging in this regard. However, such efforts will only partially address the huge risk faced by the employees mainly because of the risks during their travel to & fro office and visiting persons. Being a public department, it is not possible for the employees to maintain social distancing while in office. Besides, more than 95% of our employees commute to office using public transport and Govt. advisories are suggesting to avoid public transport as far as possible.

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3. Measures taken by other organisations for containing the spread of the Virus

Considering similar threats, educational institutions, theatres, malls and other places with public contact have been directed for closure in most of the states till a certain period to minimize commutation in public transport & ensure social distancing. For same reason, several organizations have allowed its employees to work from home.

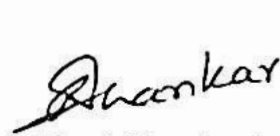

4. Measures required for protecting employees of our Department

Under the circumstances, to ensure safety and well being of employees of Income Tax Department, your goodself is requested to kindly consider the option of directing the closure of Income Tax offices across the country till 31.03.2020 or any other date, as deemed fit, especially as our Department is not providing any essential service as far as health emergency is concerned. Besides, there are provisions in the law for extension of time barring dates under the current situation, we think that such a decision would be the most appropriate in the larger public interest, considering the alarming effect due to spread of the said virus in other countries like China, Italy, UAE, Europe, etc.

CBDT through Hon'ble FM can suggest to the Union Cabinet to declare that F.Y. 2019-20 will end on 30-04-2020 instead of 31-03-2020 and F.Y. 2020-21 will commence from 01-05-2020 instead of 01-04-2020. For this an Ordinance can be brought which will be welcomed by one and all in the country. Tax measures taken by countries across the world to tackle COVID-19 crisis is enclosed for ready reference and emulation by CBDT.

We further request you to kindly direct the Pr. CCsIT of all the regions to extend all possible support to the employees and Officers in terms of supplying sanitizer, soap, mask, thermal scanner at the entry points of each office premises etc., ensuring round the clock effective cleaning, restricting the entry of visitors etc. on a war footing basis. Further, Pr. CCsIT attention may please be drawn to the DoPT advisory dtd 17-03-2020 in this regard, especially to grant leave liberally to those employees & Officers who seek any kind of leave in this scenario.

Yours truly,


(Ravi Shankar) 
(Rupak Sarkar)
Joint Convenors

Encl. As above.