

GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING

Activity Providers

First Issued June 2020



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice



Note:

This is a living document which means as Government restrictions and Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. All sectoral guidelines have been developed in line with the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business and the Return to Work Safely Protocol, based on the latest health guidance available from the Department of Health and the HSE. The links to latest guidelines will be included throughout the document.

Disclaimer

The information contained within these operational re-opening guidelines can change from time to time. It must not by itself be relied upon in determining obligations or other decisions. Users of this document must independently verify any information on which they wish to rely. It is expected that all business owners and management will have familiarised themselves with the Return to Work Safely Protocol prior to re-opening and implemented all relevant requirements.

Fáilte Ireland and Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism (IAAT), their servants or agents, do not assume legal or other liability for any inaccuracy, mistake, misstatement, or any other error of whatsoever nature contained herein. Fáilte Ireland and Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism (IAAT) hereby formally disclaim liability in respect of such aforesaid matters.

The information accessible in this document has been compiled from many sources that are not controlled by Fáilte Ireland. While all reasonable care has been taken in the compilation and publication of the contents of this document, Fáilte Ireland makes no representations or warranties, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy or suitability of the information or materials contained in this document. Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, this document will be subject to change.

Access to and use of the information herein is entirely at the risk of the user. Fáilte Ireland shall not be liable, directly, or indirectly, to the user or any other third party for any damage resulting from the use of the information contained or implied in this document.

Fáilte Ireland has endeavoured to attribute copyright or other intellectual rights to the rightful owners where such course has been appropriate. Where any attribution has been missed or overlooked Fáilte Ireland, on being informed, will correct this omission. By proceeding to use this Fáilte Ireland document you are accepting this disclaimer.

Revision History:

Version	Date Changes	Changes from previous version
1.1	09/06/2020	Document Published.
1.2	24/07/2020	Clarification for Contact Tracing requirements and information on government travel advice
1.3	25/08/2020	Updated in line with Government Public Health advice.
1.4	18/09/2020	Updated in line with Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19.

Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021

Plan for Living with COVID-19

On 15th September 2020, the Government launched its [‘Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19’](#). This is a cross-government approach to managing the pandemic for the coming 6-9 months. A numbered framework of levels has been implemented in order to manage the pandemic in the medium-term.

Each numbered level will provide clarity on what restrictive measures are appropriate around the country based on the pattern and progress of COVID-19 in a particular area at a particular time. These Levels are applied to each county based on its current COVID-19 situation.

Click on the images below for further information on each Level.



Within each set of sector specific guidelines, Fáilte Ireland have outlined the measures relating to each level so that Tourism & Hospitality Businesses can implement the required measures subject to the level of their specific region.

It will be possible for different regions and counties to be at a different Level to the National Level, depending on the incidence of the virus in that particular region or county. Businesses must ensure that they keep up to date with levels and restrictive measures in place within their county or region. To view the latest information on COVID-19 in Ireland click [HERE](#)

Protective Measures

Throughout all levels within the plan, Tourism & Hospitality businesses must ensure that ongoing protective measures are in place. The following protective measures are outlined in further detail throughout these Re-Opening Guidelines.

- Maximum Capacity
- Physical Distancing Protocols
- One-Way Traffic Systems
- Contact Tracing
- Table Service
- Face Coverings
- Cleaning & Disinfection Protocols
- Noise Control Measures





Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021

Plan for Living with COVID-19

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Social & Family Gatherings					
Social Gatherings	Outside private homes the maximum is 50 people .	Outside private homes the maximum is 6 people indoors and 15 outdoors from 1,2 or 3 households (to be determined by prevailing Public Health Advice).	No social/family gatherings should take place.	No social/family gatherings should take place.	No social/family gatherings should take place.
Weddings	Up to 100 guests permitted to attend ceremony and reception	Up to 50 guests permitted to attend ceremony and reception	Up to 25 guests permitted to attend ceremony and reception	Up to 6 guests can attend a wedding ceremony and reception.	Up to 6 guests can attend a wedding ceremony and reception.
These are Controlled Environments with a named event organiser, owner or manager.					
Organised Indoor Events	Up to 100 patrons permitted generally. Up to 200 patrons permitted in larger venues with strict 2m physical distancing.	Up to 50 patrons permitted in pods of max. 6 people . Up to 100 patrons permitted in larger venues with strict 2m physical distancing	Organised indoor gatherings are not permitted	Organised indoor gatherings are not permitted	Organised indoor gatherings are not permitted
Organised Outdoor Events	Up to 200 patrons permitted generally. Up to 500 patrons permitted in outdoor stadia/venues with minimum accredited capacity of 5,000 with protective measures in place.	Up to 100 patrons permitted generally. Up to 200 patrons permitted in outdoor stadia/venues with minimum accredited capacity of 5,000 with protective measures in place.	Organised outdoor gatherings of up to 15 people can take place.	Organised outdoor gatherings of up to 15 people can take place.	Organised outdoor gatherings are not permitted
Pubs, Cafés & Restaurants (including Hotels Restaurants and Bars)					
Pubs, Cafés, Restaurants	Open with protective measures in place. Maximum numbers within the premises linked to the capacity of the premises taking appropriate physical distancing into account.	Open with protective measures in place. Maximum numbers within the premises linked to the capacity of the premises taking appropriate physical distancing into account.	No indoor dining. Outdoor dining only limited to a maximum of 15 patrons . Take away food or delivery permitted.	No indoor dining. Outdoor dining only limited to a maximum of 15 patrons . Take away food or delivery permitted.	Take away food or delivery only.
Pubs that do not serve Food *	Open* with protective measures in place. Maximum numbers within the premises linked to the capacity of the premises taking appropriate physical distancing into account.	Open* with protective measures in place. Maximum numbers within the premises linked to the capacity of the premises taking appropriate physical distancing into account.	Open* with Additional restrictions No indoor service.	No indoor seating permitted. Outdoor seating only , limited to a maximum of 15 patrons .	Take away or delivery only.

*** Wet Pubs are permitted to open from 21st September 2020 in all counties except Dublin, where wet Pubs remain closed until further notice from Government.**



Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021

Plan for Living with COVID-19

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Pubs, Cafés & Restaurants (including Hotels Restaurants and Bars)					
Maximum Table Capacity	Bookings limited to 6 people from up to 3 households .	Bookings limited to 6 people from up to 3 households (to be determined by prevailing Public Health Advice).	<i>Awaiting further clarification from Public Health Advice.</i>	Outdoor dining limited to a maximum of 15 people only. No indoor dining.	Not permitted
Formal & Informal Events	No more than 50 attendees permitted.	Formal or informal events or parties are not permitted on these premises	Formal or informal events or parties are not permitted on these premises	Formal or informal events or parties are not permitted on these premises	Formal or informal events or parties are not permitted on these premises.
Hotels and Accommodation					
Hotels & Accommodation	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place but services limited to residents .	Open but only for existing guests, and those with essential non-social and non-tourist purposes .	Open only for those with essential non-social and non-tourist purposes .
Gyms, Swimming Pools and Leisure Centres	Open with protective measures, taking account of Public Health Advice.	Open with protective measures, taking account of Public Health Advice.	Open with protective measures in place for individual training only .	Closed	Closed
Attractions & Activities					
Attractions	Open with protective measures, maximum numbers linked to the capacity, taking account of Public Health Advice.	Open with protective measure, maximum numbers linked to the capacity, taking account of Public Health Advice.	All venues closed .	All venues closed .	All venues closed .
Activities	Open with protective measures, maximum numbers linked to the capacity, taking account of Public Health Advice.	Open with protective measure, maximum numbers linked to the capacity, taking account of Public Health Advice.	All indoor activities closed . Non-contact outdoor activities permitted with max of 15 people with protective measures in place.	All indoor activities closed . Non-contact outdoor activities permitted with max of 15 people with protective measures in place.	Closed

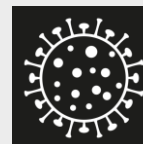


Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021

Plan for Living with COVID-19

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Outdoor Parks & Play Areas	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place.	Open with protective measures in place.
Non-Social Meetings, Training and Educational programmes	<p>Up to 100 patrons permitted generally.</p> <p>Up to 200 patrons permitted in larger venues where strict 2m seated physical distancing, one way controls for entry & exit can be implemented.</p> <p>Business/Work related meetings should take place in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol.</p>	<p>Up to 50 patrons permitted in pods of max. 6 people. (with no intermingling of pods).</p> <p>Up to 100 patrons permitted in larger venues with strict 2m seated physical distancing, one way controls for entry & exit can be implemented.</p> <p>Business/Work related meetings should take place in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol.</p>	Not permitted.	Not permitted.	Not permitted.
Nightclubs, Discos & Casinos	Remain Closed	Remain Closed	Remain Closed	Remain Closed	Remain Closed
Transport	Restrict capacity on board to enable physical distancing. Face coverings are mandatory.	Capacity should be limited to 50% to enable physical distancing. Face coverings are mandatory.	Capacity should be limited to 50% to enable physical distancing. Face coverings are mandatory.	Capacity should be limited to 25% to enable physical distancing. Face coverings are mandatory.	Capacity should be limited to 25% to enable physical distancing. Face coverings are mandatory.
Domestic Travel	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	Stay in your county or region apart from work, education or essential purposes.	Stay in your county or region apart from work, education or essential purposes.	Stay at home. Exercise within 5km of home.

Table of Contents



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

1.Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge	8	Equipment Shared by Employees	16
		Activity Equipment & Storage Facilities	16
		Changing Areas & Lockers	16
2.Business Response/Action Plan	9	8.Suppliers of Goods & Services	17
Monitoring and Supporting	9	Deliveries	17
Policies & Processes	10	Dealing with Drivers	17
Communication	10	9.Locations for Distribution of PPE	17
Training	10	Front Office	17
Cleaning & Frequency	10	Back Office	17
Staffing Resources	11	10.Employee Uniforms & Kit	18
3.Employee & Guest Health	11	Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol	18
Face Coverings	11	Physical Distancing Protocol	18
Physical Distancing	11	11.Reception Area & Back Office	18
Employee Physical Distancing	11	Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol	18
Measures to control noise levels	12	Physical Distancing Protocol	18
Providing Hand Sanitisers	12	12.Information for Activity Providers who use Equipment to Deliver the Activity	19
Site Signage	12	Physical Distancing Protocol	19
Isolation Area	12	Pre-Opening Equipment Checks	19
Employee & Guest Health Concerns	12	Providers of Tours using Motorised Water Transport	19
COVID-19 Contact Tracing	12	13.Technical & Maintenance Services	19
Control of Waterborne Hazards	12	Equipment Check Prior to Opening	19
4.Employees & their Responsibilities	13	Dishwashing & Laundry Equipment	19
Hand Hygiene	13	Air Conditioning/Ventilation in Internal Communal Buildings (where appropriate)	19
COVID-19 Training	13	Dispensers	19
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	13	Additional Recommendations	19
Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping	13	14.Restaurants/Snack Bars/Vending Machines	20
Reception/Arrival Area	13	Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol	20
5.Physical Distancing	14	Physical Distancing Protocol	20
Capacity Management	14	Guest Considerations	20
Queuing	14		
Reception/Arrival Area	14		
Back Office	14		
Transporting Guests & Equipment	14		
Delivering First Aid	14		
6.Guest Pre-Arrival / Arrival	15		
Pre-Arrival	15		
Payment Facilities	15		
Arrival	15		
7.Cleaning Products & Protocols	16		
Back Office	16		

NOTE: If your activity includes a coffee shop or food service element, please refer to the Guidelines for Re-opening Restaurants & Cafés on www.failteireland.ie.



Riailtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Fáilte Ireland
National Tourism Development Authority



1. Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge

COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge for the tourism sector.

Before re-opening, businesses will need to review how they work and employ new practices and procedures to ensure everyone stays safe. As a result, Fáilte Ireland, in consultation with Sectoral Bodies, has developed operational guidelines in line with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and the Health Service Executive (HSE).

As part of this, Fáilte Ireland has created this set of specific guidelines in consultation with Ireland's Association for Adventure Tourism (IAAT) to help Activity Providers prepare to re-open. You can be reassured that these recommendations are underpinned by advice made available from the HSA, HSE, World Health Organisation (WHO) and other relevant bodies.

Businesses must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol. The National Protocol has been developed under the aegis of the Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the compliance body and has full powers as set out in this legislation designated in relation to the implementation of the National Protocol. Non-compliance can result in the closure of a business.

The guidelines were developed based on the following considerations:

- **Restructuring operations**
Tourism businesses of all types need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to ensure physical distancing and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.
- **Putting dedicated resources in place**
Tourism businesses must ensure that they have dedicated personnel to implement and operate a robust system that prevents the spread of COVID-19. Equally importantly, businesses need to put processes in place that can deal with individual and multiple cases of the disease that may occur.
- **Adapting and enhancing hygiene practices**
Tourism businesses must adapt and implement enhanced procedures in general cleaning, storage and cleaning of equipment. In particular, they must introduce and implement touchless solutions where possible.
- **Focusing on best practice in food and beverage service**
Tourism businesses must follow best practices in physical distancing to promote the health of employees and customers
- **Food Safety and COVID-19 Safety**
There are no reports of transmission of COVID-19 via food. The main mode of transmission is from person to person. Food business operators must continue to apply their food

safety management systems, based on the principles of HACCP.

References to HACCP in this guidance are for the purposes of food safety and not the prevention of COVID-19.

COVID-19 safety management systems in the form of enhanced hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, staff training and health checks, as well as physical distancing. This is to protect against the transmission of the virus to or between staff, customers and other people who enter their premises. Any COVID-19 precautions should not compromise food safety.

For advice and information on food safety during COVID-19 and for food businesses re-opening, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) website is a useful resource which is regularly updated. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

The physical distancing measures outlined in these guidelines are applicable between people from different households. Physical distancing of 2 metres* does not apply to members of the same household.

These Guidelines have been created in line with the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. This is a document that will evolve in line with the roadmap, taking into account any changes to the restrictions or physical distancing.

While we have attempted to cover all relevant issues, you must bear in mind that this is a non-exhaustive document and it may not cover all situations you may encounter. As circumstances change, any procedures you implement must be monitored to ensure they remain up to date and in line with international best practice guidance and the Government's Public Health advice.

Guidance on International Travel

A list of locations that are currently considered safer to visit during the COVID-19 pandemic (the Green List) was identified based on the current epidemiological situation and related public health information in each location.

This list was published on 20th July 2020 and is available on the Department of Foreign Affairs website. This list will be reviewed every two weeks. Passengers arriving from these named locations will not have to restrict their movements on arrival into Ireland.

Further details on the protocols for international travel can be found [HERE](#).

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

2. Business Response/Action Plan

Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what is required to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give your employees and customers confidence that they are safe.

In developing one, the first step that the activity provider management must take is to familiarise themselves with the latest guidelines from the following sources:

- Health Services Executive (HSE)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Irish Government Departments
- World Health Organisation (WHO).

Information from these sources must help to shape your plan of action. You must also:

- **Complete a risk assessment** to identify what operational changes you need to make in your business.
- **Review of all standard operating procedures (SOPs)** to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and guests of what you are changing, what you need them to do and how you expect everyone to act and behave.
- The HSA provides templates, checklists and advice on the Return to Work Safely Protocols. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.
- A number of activities will require review e.g. workflows, operations, etc. For advice on re-opening, visit the FSAI website. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

The plan must reassure employees and guests that safeguarding their health and safety is of the utmost importance. It must also ensure that your operations continue to run in an appropriate manner.

A link for the HSA Templates and Checklists can be found [HERE](#).

You must review the plan regularly and amend it as new regulations, guidelines and procedures come into force. Experience and feedback will inform how appropriate and effective the original plan is.

For further information on the development of your Action Plan, see [HERE](#)

Monitoring and Supporting

A COVID-19 Response Team/Coordinator must be appointed to ensure new procedures are adhered to. Adherence to this protocol will only be achieved if employers and workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures

contained in this protocol in their place of work. A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to achieve success and maximum buy in.

Each workplace should appoint at least one lead worker representative charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their workplace. The person(s) undertaking the role must receive the necessary training and have a structured framework to follow within the organisation to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus. Employers should have regular and meaningful engagement with their worker representative, workers and/or their recognised Trade Union or other representative (including health and safety committee where it exists) about the measures being put in place to address the occupational exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should provide COVID-19 induction training for all workers on their return.

The number of worker representatives for COVID-19 appointed should, ideally, be proportionate to the number of workers in the workplace and this person(s) should be clearly identifiable in the workplace. Employers and worker representatives will work together to ensure that all the actions in this protocol are fully adhered to in order to ensure the suppression of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Section E of the National Protocol sets out the steps for employers and workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

These provisions include:

- Consulting with the workplace representatives in the development of a COVID-19 response plan.
- Developing/Amending policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Developing, consulting, communicating and implementing workplace changes or policies. Specific reference is made to agreeing with workers any temporary restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the COVID-19 prevention measures in the workplace. There is also provision for the lead worker representative to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

A link for the HSA Templates and Checklists can be found [HERE](#).

Policies & Processes

Management needs to review all business policies and standard operating procedures across each department to reflect operational changes. In particular, this means:

- Defining and documenting a clear plan of action in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 among guests and/or employees.
- Defining and documenting the correct and appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required. This must be in line with the Government's Public Health advice.
- Developing/updating current policy for the care of employee uniforms.
- Reviewing and updating cancellation and refund policies in line with business requirements.

Communication

You must share the plan with all employees prior to them returning to work. If it's updated at any time, you must make sure everyone knows what has changed.

- Giving guidelines to employees on how they must communicate the Action Plan to guests ensuring everyone gives the same message and there is no inconsistency.
- Make sure an up-to-date list of the contact information of all employees, including emergency telephone numbers, is always readily available across all departments of the business.
- Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest Government Public Health advice. Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and where appropriate be offered in multiple languages.
- If you don't have premises and operate in the open, you must ensure that the latest Government Public Health advice is communicated to guests when they book. This must be repeated verbally to them at the activity's starting point.

Training

The Activity Provider's management team must inform all employees of the measures being adopted to manage the threat of COVID-19. Use the most appropriate training channels to do this and make sure that employees stay at home and seek medical attention if they have key symptoms such as a high temperature, coughing or shortness of breath.

There is an obligation on employers to ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they have symptoms. This is essential to ensure that the virus does not spread.

You must organise information briefings that cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. For specific procedures, training will be required and this must be tailored to your business. However, in general you must consider training employees in relation to:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures
- Guest flow management systems
- Equipment cleaning and handling protocols
- Safety briefings and pre-arrival waivers
- Correct use of PPE
- Cleaning/disinfection regimes (incorporating front and back office areas if relevant)
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell
- Unwell guests/dealing with suspected cases/ liaising with authorities.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information

Cleaning & Frequency

- Ensure contact/touch surfaces such as table tops, work equipment, door handles and handrails are visibly clean at all times and are cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.
- Implement modified cleaning intervals for rooms and work areas. This applies especially for washroom facilities and communal spaces. Cleaning must be performed at least twice per day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Cleaning of work areas must be conducted at regular intervals. Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC [HERE](#) or from the Government [HERE](#).

Staffing Resources

Property owners/management should review rotas in line with The National Protocol E, subsection 3 which provides that full consultation on these matters is required to ensure sufficient employees are available to maintain physical distancing while completing the tasks to the required standards. Employee scheduling must ensure more time is allocated for cleaning and encourage employees to work alone if possible.

To achieve this, you should:

- Implement **phased shifts**.
- Schedule **small teams**.

- **Keep the same team combinations** where possible to limit employee interaction. This will assist should contact tracing be required.

You will also need to plan for the impact of employee absences; this may involve reallocating employees from non-essential tasks. Where appropriate, cross-training employees will help maintain staffing levels.

If you can't ensure that employees stay 2 metres* apart at all times, you must apply the Return to Work Safely Protocol [HERE](#).

3. Employee & Guest Health

The health and safety of employees and guests is the number one priority for businesses. The following steps will help ensure everyone remains fit and well:

Face Coverings

It is recommended that face coverings should be worn by employees in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres* is not possible.

Government Public Health advice recommends the wearing of face coverings if it is difficult to practice physical distancing. This may help prevent people who do not know they have the virus from spreading it to others. As part of your business risk assessment, you should determine the requirement for face coverings in all individual business activities. Ensure that guests are clearly informed of your policy in advance of arriving at your property.

Notices should be placed in prominent areas to signify the requirement to wear face coverings in certain areas if applicable to your business e.g. retail and food service areas within the activity, or if sharing a vehicle is part of the activity.

The Return to Work Safely Protocol states:

Make face masks available to the worker in line with Public Health advice. If masks are worn, they must be clean and they must not be shared or handled by other colleagues. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Government Public Health advice issued in regard to face coverings.

For guidance on the safe use of face coverings please see [HERE](#).

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing guidelines (as per the Government's Public Health advice) must be incorporated into the Action Plan for each area of the business. If they apply, specific

areas must also comply with mandatory capacity limits.

Guests must be advised to stand 2 metres* away from other groups of people who are not from the same household at all times. Careful consideration needs to be given when using communal areas, while standing in lines, using elevators, stairs or moving around.

For water-based activities like canoeing, kayaking or SUP, procedures such as 'rafting up' (roping a number of vessels together) must be avoided.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region](#), in relation to maximum capacity of groups.

Dining tables, seating and couches in public areas and other physical layouts, must be rearranged to ensure appropriate distancing. The same guidelines apply to employees: they must be reminded not to touch their faces and stand at least 2 metres* away from guests and other employees whenever possible.

Employee Physical Distancing

If you cannot arrange the required physical distancing between employees at all times, alternative protective measures must be put in place.

Minimise any direct employee contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids such as hand sanitisers, wipes etc. Ensure these are readily accessible so employees can perform hand hygiene as soon as a task is complete.

Employers and employees must keep up-to-date with the latest Government Public Health advice issued in regard to face coverings.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

Measures to control noise levels

According to the WHO, transmission of COVID-19 can occur through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected people through infected secretions such as saliva and respiratory secretions or droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, etc.

In adherence with WHO evidence, recent Public Health advice states that there must be a restriction on noise levels within the premises to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

High noise levels within a premises can impact conversation negatively and encourage guests to raise their voice to communicate thus encouraging possible transmission of the virus.

Straining to hear others due to high volumes can cause people to move closer to each other and not adhere to social distancing. To avoid this, businesses must put in place a plan and take appropriate measures to control noise levels, to ensure volumes do not rise to a level where people are required to take such measures to hear others.

Signage relating to these COVID-19 preventative measures must be displayed in visible locations to inform guests.

Intervention will be required by management in a situation where guests do not follow this advice. Business owners and management should be aware that permitting increased noise levels within their premises is an unnecessary risk as it forces guests into close proximity and encourages raised voices. Business owners and management are responsible for keeping noise at an appropriate level to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Providing Hand Sanitisers

Hand sanitisers (touchless whenever possible) must be available for guests and employees throughout the premises and also be provided by guests/instructors during the activity.

Instructors/guides must always have hand sanitiser/disinfectant wipes available for their own or guest use. For example, it would be appropriate to use them when gates are opened or closed or when passing through mountain stiles. All hand sanitisers must have a minimum alcohol content of 60%

Site Signage

You must display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout. Where feasible, television screens and monitors can communicate these messages in reception, admissions, retail and other key areas.

Isolation Area

If possible, identify an area / room where any guest or employee showing possible COVID-19 symptoms can be isolated from other people. From there, the individual can travel home to seek medical attention elsewhere. It is essential to clean and disinfect this isolation area thoroughly after it has been used.

Employee & Guest Health Concerns

Employers and employees must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

When they return to work, employees must be trained on what to do if they or a guest becomes unwell.

If an Activity Provider is alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 on their premises, a clinician from a local medical centre should be contacted. The clinician will advise on the next steps. Further information is available on the HSE website. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Note: The Activity Provider, plus individual instructors and guides, must have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres and public and private hospitals readily available in case a guest or employee falls ill.

COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Keep contact tracing records for guests. Explain that the reason for keeping these records is to provide them to Public Health for contact tracing in the event that someone becomes ill with COVID-19. The name and contact details of solo guests or one person in each party must be recorded for both walk-ups and pre-bookings.

Details must be retained for 28 days.

Control of Waterborne Hazards

It is critical that businesses review the HSA's guidance on 'Control of Legionella Bacteria During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic' and review their own systems in line with this.

This guidance highlights the requirement to continue managing Legionella control to avoid the potential for Legionnaires' disease.

The following is a non-exhaustive list relevant to the tourism sector of potential sources of aerosols which may contain Legionella bacteria: wet cooling systems (for example, cooling towers and evaporative condensers); spa pools; showers, taps and toilets; machine cooling systems; spray booth water curtains; humidifiers in food cabinets; ornamental fountains and water features; dust suppression systems; horticultural misting systems, lawn sprinklers; clinical humidifiers; sprinklers and hose reels; and power hoses.

Legionnaires' disease can be fatal and hospitalisation is generally required to treat symptoms. With the health service currently dealing with a Public Health emergency, it is vital that employers take appropriate action to maintain and operate their water systems especially wet cooling systems, so far as reasonably practicable, during this Public Health emergency.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

For further advice please visit [HERE](#).

4. Employees & their Responsibilities

The effective delivery of the operational Action Plan depends on how all employees (including management) act. Paying attention to the following issues is especially important:

Hand Hygiene

Good hand hygiene practices are vital to help minimise the spread of infections including COVID-19.

This involves hand washing with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, or the use of a hand sanitiser (if hands are visibly clean), as required and frequently.

Hands must also be washed as often as necessary and always:

- Before starting work
- Before handling cooked or ready-to-eat food
- Before eating
- After handling or preparing raw food
- After handling waste
- After cleaning duties including sweeping/mopping etc.
- After using the toilet
- After blowing nose, sneezing or coughing
- After eating, drinking or smoking
- After handling money
- At the end of a shift

This list is not exhaustive.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the FSAI.

For additional COVID-19 hand hygiene measures, hands must be washed before putting on or after removing PPE. Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the HSE

COVID-19 Training

All employees need to receive training on COVID-19 safety and sanitation protocols. More comprehensive training must be given to individuals in frequent contact with guests; these include the reception employees and instructors.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If required by their roles, appropriate PPE must be worn by employees. Each section of a business must be assessed to decide what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE must be mandatory.

As part of the business risk assessment consideration needs to be given to the level of PPE required for various tasks e.g. power hosing which can cause an aerosol affect.

Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

It's also essential to display signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing prominently in back offices.

Employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms) need to be re-organised to suit physical distancing measures and be frequently cleaned and disinfected. Staggered start times and break times can also be very helpful.

Staff meetings must be recorded and retained by the business. If physical meetings need to take place, physical distancing measures must be taken. Where physical distancing cannot be adhered to, alternative measures must be put in place.

Reception/Arrival Area

The reception area must always have a medical kit available that includes:

- Germicidal disinfectant/wipes for surface cleaning tissues.
- Face/eye masks.
Note that disposable face masks can only be used once.
- Gloves (disposable).
- Protective apron (disposable).
- Biohazard disposable waste bags.

**Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*

5. Physical Distancing

The Property Owner or Management needs to meet Public Health advice on maintaining physical distancing of 2 metres* between people. Physical distancing of 2 metres* does not apply to members of the same household. Strict management controls must be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.

Capacity Management

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region](#), in relation to capacity management. This is applicable to pre-bookings and walk-up guests.

Physical distancing of 2 metres* does not apply to members of the same household.

The Activity Provider must also ensure that Government Public Health advice on capacity limits are adhered to at all times. As well as reviewing capacity in your physical location or premises, it also needs to be considered for activities themselves. For example, you must ensure that a meet-up point is at a location where physical distancing can take place. Physical distancing should be maintained before, during and after the activity.

Physical distancing measures required throughout your business are outlined below .

Queuing

Any area where guests or employees queue must be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. This includes reception, equipment pickup areas, start and pick-up points of activity, communal areas and casual dining and drop off areas.

Use floor markings where appropriate to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice of 2 metres*, particularly in the most crowded areas. Use vertical signage to direct guests to facilitate movement while maintaining 2 metre* distance.

Reception/Arrival Area

If relevant to your business, employees should have a self-sufficient alternate workstations to ensure separation and have their own individual equipment, if required.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards / plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected

Back Office

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Governments Public Health advice must be observed in back office spaces if relevant to your Tourism Activity e.g. shared office spaces, employee locker rooms, store rooms, employee kitchens, delivery areas, stock and equipment rooms, and any other areas where employees gather and work.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Transporting Guests & Equipment

Government Public Health advice states that you should not share private vehicles with people from outside your household. If this is not possible, face coverings should be worn when sharing a vehicle.

If guests must be transported in the Activity Providers own vehicle, physical distancing must take place within it. Review seating on each vehicle, and highlight available and unavailable seating on board with signage. Keep windows open for additional ventilation and ensure guests do not open or close doors themselves. The driver must be the only person who does this.

Those transported in the vehicle should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the vehicle. Guests should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser with them.

Before and after each trip, concentrate on cleaning main contact points including door handles, the steering wheel, gear stick, fuel cap, radio and other vehicle controls. Then dispose of wipes into a contained waste bag.

Where transporting equipment, it must only be loaded / unloaded by guides / instructors who follow physical distancing protocols.

Delivering First Aid

If first aid is needed, it may not be possible to maintain a distance of 2 metres*, face coverings may be required. Employees designated as first responders must be trained on infection prevention and control principles. This must include training on hand hygiene and how to deliver first aid while using Personal Protective Equipment (including face masks).

To view Government Public Health measures currently in place, click [HERE](#).

**Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*

6. Guest Pre-Arrival / Arrival

Pre-Arrival

- Before arriving, guests must be advised on the guidelines that apply and briefed on the physical distancing protocols in place. The aim is to prevent the possible spread of COVID-19 and to avoid injuries so extra demands are not placed on emergency and healthcare services.
- Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region](#), in relation to maximum capacity of groupings both indoors and outdoors. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-up guests.
- This is also a good opportunity for Activity Providers to reassure guests of the rigorous cleaning procedures applied to equipment and facilities.
- When they book, guests should receive a digital welcome and safety information briefing. This will outline all the protocols in place and explain how guests must behave around employees, guides, instructors and other guests at the activity location. A digital briefing avoids the need to speak to people as a group at the location.
- Guests must be told to bring as much personal kit as possible e.g. water bottles, towels, wet suits, helmets, hand sanitiser etc. Activity Providers must confirm with the guest how much personal kit they are bringing.

Payment Facilities

- Guests should be encouraged to use card / contactless payment and pay in advance where possible. Online payment should also be considered.
- If handling cash, employees should be provided with gloves. Good hand hygiene is essential whether wearing gloves or not when handling cash
- Debit/credit card machines must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Arrival

- On arrival, guests must be invited to apply hand sanitiser which must be made available to them.
- To ensure that Government Public Health advice on capacity limits are adhered to at all times. You must ensure that a meet-up point is at a location where physical distancing can take place. Physical distancing should be maintained before, during and after the activity.
- COVID-19 signage must be also be prominently displayed outlining the physical distancing and hygiene practices that apply on the premises, at drop-off and pick-up areas and during the activity.
- Clear and very visible queuing arrangements must be put in place at all queuing points including equipment pickup areas, activity start points, drop off areas and dining areas. This must highlight the recommended 2 metre* physical distancing.
- Use floor markings where appropriate to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice of 2 metres*, particularly in the most crowded areas. Use vertical signage to direct guests to facilitate movement while maintaining 2 metre* distance.
- Guests should be asked to arrive already changed for the activity, if appropriate. However, they must also be allowed to use any available changing rooms if they wish to. The use of the changing areas must adhere to Government Public Health advice on capacity limits.

*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

7. Cleaning Products & Protocols

Cleaning products and protocols must be suitable and their manufacturer be approved for use against viruses, bacteria and similar risks.

It's important to follow manufacturer instructions with regard to dilution, application and duration of use. Activity Providers must review cleaning procedures within all departments and update these if any cleaning products are changed.

It's also important to work with suppliers, vendors and distribution partners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cleaning supplies and PPE.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in all public spaces to at least twice daily. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched surfaces, which must be visibly clean at all times.

Back Office

Back office areas (e.g. kitchen, locker/changing rooms, employee bathrooms etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected on a more frequent basis.

Equipment Shared by Employees

- Clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools after each use or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.
- This includes items such as phones, computers and other communication devices, keys, payment terminals, kitchen implements, tools, safety buttons, cleaning equipment and all other direct-contact items used.
- Shared food & beverage equipment in Back of House areas (e.g. kettle, microwave, etc.) needs to be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

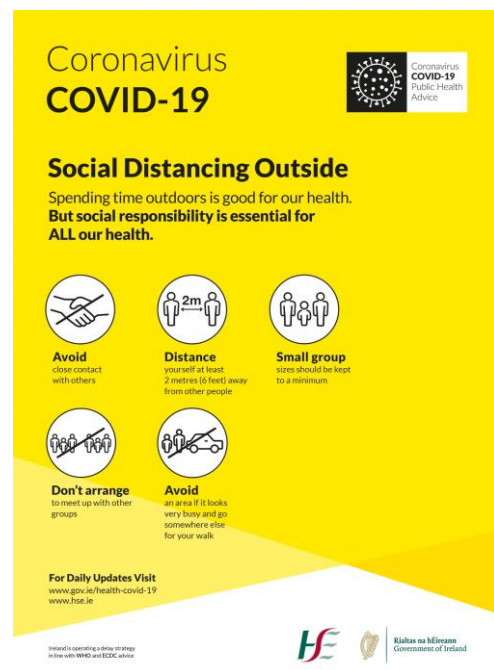
Activity Equipment & Storage Facilities

- All equipment which has been stored since before the closure must undergo cleaning and disinfection. Pay particular attention to hard equipment (e.g. sections of kayak/kayak paddles/safety equipment etc.) that would not normally require disinfection. When you clean activity equipment, make sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations. When you clean safety equipment, make sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Put a plan in place to manage cleaning of equipment before storing it.

- Arrange an equipment cleaning rota to maximise the time between its use by guests. For example, use and rotate your full stock of wetsuits.
- If possible, clean equipment with disposable wipes or hose it down with water and a disinfectant mix.
- Ensure employees wash their hands before they remove any equipment from storage.
- Employees must clean and disinfect equipment before storing it at the end of each day.
- Employees must wash and sanitise hands before and after safety checks of equipment e.g. checking that a harness is secure on a guest before rock climbing.

Changing Areas & Lockers

- Guests should be asked to arrive already changed for the activity, if appropriate. However, they must also be allowed to use any available changing rooms if they wish to.
- A strict cleaning programme of changing rooms must be put in place and maintained.
- All guests must wash their hands or use hand sanitiser on visibly clean hands before placing items in a locker. Only one guest at a time must fill a locker.



*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

8. Suppliers of Goods & Services

Deliveries

- An employee must meet each supplier when they deliver to the business.
- If possible, delivery drivers should not be allowed to enter the premises (with the exception of food deliveries which adhere to HACCP* delivery protocols). Employees must not come in close contact with the driver.
- All food items (where food service is on site) must be checked in by employees with crates and boxes remaining outside the door.

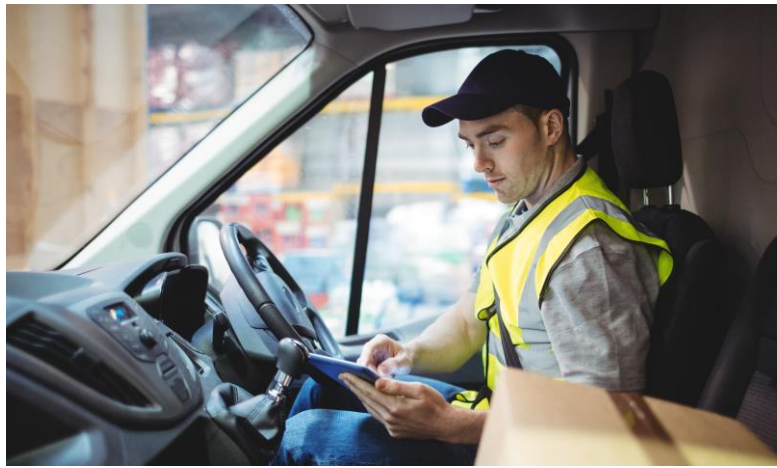
Dealing with Drivers

Delivery personnel must use hand sanitiser if they have to exit their vehicle and enter the site buildings. Signage must make drivers aware of 1) physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to employees; 2) the need to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness; and 3) the need to wear clean protective clothing.

An alcohol-based hand sanitiser must be available in the delivery area. Drivers must clean their hands before passing delivery documents or goods to employees. They must also be aware of the potential risks involved in contact transmission of COVID-19.

Hand hygiene, in conjunction with physical distancing, is also of paramount importance.

Disposable containers and packaging should be used to avoid the need to clean any returns. In the case of reusable containers, appropriate hygiene and disinfection protocols must be followed by employees.



9. Locations for Distribution of PPE

All employees must wash their hands as required and frequently (or use sanitiser if hands are visibly clean) for a minimum of 20 seconds. If required, PPE must be distributed at the following locations:

Front Office

- All of the premises' entry and exit points
- Reception
- Food & Beverage areas

Back Office

- Employee entrances
- Offices
- Food & Beverage areas

Note: Hand sanitiser must be strategically placed throughout the site. Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands. If hands are visibly dirty/contaminated they must be washed.

*HACCP is in the context of food safety and re-opening only, not COVID-19 prevention.

10. Employee Uniforms & Kit

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The policy on the care of uniforms must be updated to ensure every employee is clear on the standards of appearance and dress expected while at work. For example, they should know that uniforms have to be worn appropriately (in work only, not externally).

Physical Distancing Protocol

The business may need to organise a roster for locker/changing room times for employees to ensure physical distancing is always possible.

11. Reception Area & Back Office

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

- Cleaning and disinfecting must take place at least twice daily and whenever facilities are visibly dirty, particularly in high contact areas such as the Reception/Back Office Areas.
- This must focus on frequently touched surfaces especially counters, desks, equipment, communication devices, door handles etc.
- The sharing of office equipment should be avoided. However where shared equipment is necessary, it must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.
- Display signage explaining your cleaning and disinfection protocols to guests



Physical Distancing Protocol

- Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government's Public Health advice must be observed in shared office spaces, employee locker rooms and other relevant employee facilities.
- As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.
- Physical barriers such as sneeze guards / plexiglass and partition can be useful, particularly in back of house areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.
- A designated employee, where possible, should be stationed at the front office to control physical distancing measures.

12. Information for Activity Providers who use Equipment to Deliver the Activity

Physical Distancing Protocol

- Try to identify required sizes of wetsuits, helmets, boots, PFDs etc., before guests arrive.
- If possible, lay out separate sets of equipment (e.g. helmets/PFDs) at a safe distance to allow for physical distancing.
- Government Public Health advice states that face coverings should be worn by employees in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres* is not possible. Where close physical distancing is required for health and safety reasons (e.g. checking harness and safety equipment) face coverings must be worn by guests and employees.

Pre-Opening Equipment Checks

Ensure all equipment is tested and used before the business re-opens.

Providers of Tours using Motorised Water Transport

- If guests have to queue on the quay/jetty side, ensure they follow physical distancing protocols.
- Consider providing life vests on the jetty to reduce handling and ensure physical distancing is observed.
- Provide hand sanitiser just before guests board the vessel to ensure good hand hygiene is maintained.
- Ensure all surfaces touched while the vessel is being boarded are cleaned frequently.
- Remove the option of tea/coffee/snack bar to ensure guests are not moving around unnecessarily and physical distancing can be adhered to.
- Do not allow queuing at toilet facilities.
- If physical distancing is not possible on board, face coverings should be worn by both employees and guests when on tours using motorised water transport.

13. Technical & Maintenance Services

Equipment Check Prior to Opening

Before re-opening, test and use all equipment and follow all safety checks.

Dishwashing & Laundry Equipment

If used, dishwashing and laundry equipment must be checked. Pay particular attention to operating temperatures as well as using the correct dosage of cleaning and disinfection chemicals.

Air Conditioning/Ventilation in Internal Communal Buildings (where appropriate)

Although COVID-19 is not transmitted by air but from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, the condition of filters must be monitored and the proper replacement rate of indoor air be maintained.

The proper functioning of ventilation, air exchange, and dehumidification equipment of covered pools must also be checked.

Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour and supplying as much outdoor air as possible is recommended, either by natural or mechanical ventilation.

Ensure that air-conditioning filters are cleaned regularly according to manufacturer's instructions.

When air-conditioned air is used for ventilation, minimise recirculation as much as possible.

For information regarding ventilation in the context of COVID-19 see [HERE](#). For information about the control of Legionella, see [HERE](#).

Dispensers

- Soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices must be regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Defective units must be rapidly repaired or replaced.
- The Action Plan should include installing hand sanitiser dispensers as required throughout the premises. Pay particular attention to public areas, employee areas, locker rooms, corridors, entrances/exits to the main building, recreational facilities, food & beverage facilities etc.

Additional Recommendations

It is critical that soap dispensers are functioning to minimise the risk of viral transmission.

14. Restaurants/Snack Bars/Vending Machines

For full details on the Guidelines for Re-opening Restaurants & Cafés, please see www.failteireland.ie.

Review HACCP implementation plans in line with FSAI guidance and adapt as necessary. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

- Service stations, service trolleys, beverage stations, countertops and handrails must be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily and must be visibly clean at all times.
- Dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Condiments to be served in single-use containers.
- Menus must be single use or made of a material that can easily be cleaned. Electronic menus, phone apps and menu boards are an alternative option.
- Storage containers must be cleaned and disinfected.
- Food preparation stations must be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily and must be visibly clean at all times.
- Kitchens must be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day.
- Follow in-house standard operating procedures regarding food preparation and service. These must adhere to HACCP standards. HACCP is in the context of food safety and re-opening only, not COVID-19 prevention.
- Ensure that employees stocking vending machines are trained in personal hygiene and protection against infections. Ensure that clear signage is displayed telling employees to wash and disinfect hands before and after use of machine.
- Ensure there is safe physical distancing between guests using the vending machine(s).
- Single use containers must only to be used at vending stations.

Physical Distancing Protocol

- If your Activity has a food service area such as a Restaurant or Café, you need to reduce seating capacities to meet the Government's Public Health advice on physical distancing between each seated group of customers.
- Physical distancing is required between individuals who are not from the same household. It is not required between members of the same household.
- Supervisors to manage physical distancing at all entries, waiting areas and queues. Clear signage must also be displayed that tells people to observe physical distancing.

- Peak period queuing procedures must be put in force if visitors cannot be seated immediately.
- Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses must ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the level of their specific region](#), in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in guests.
- It is recommended that face coverings should be worn by employees in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres is not possible.
- It is recommended that face coverings should also be worn by customers when arriving to and leaving their table.

Guest Considerations

- All self-serve condiments and utensils must be removed. These must only be supplied by service employees.
- Salt and pepper supplied in sachets.
- All straws should be individually wrapped.
- Remove all 'grab and go' offerings.
- No self-serve food.
- Beverage dispensers must only use single use cups. There must be no refills using same beverage holder.
- Cashless payment systems must be used where possible.
- To view Government Public Health measures currently in place, click [HERE](#).



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

FOR TOURISM SPECIFIC BUSINESS SUPPORTS,
visit www.failteireland.ie

OR EMAIL

business.supports@failteireland.ie



@Failte_Ireland



Fáilte Ireland

#TourismTogether