

# GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING Self Catering

*First Issued June 2020*



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice





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**NOTE:** There are references in this document to individual self catering properties as well as group properties, terms such as 'Back of House' generally apply to employee facilities. Not all references will relate to individual properties. If your group property includes a food service element, please refer to the Guidelines for Reopening Restaurants & Cafés on [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)

## 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.

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## 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	26/08/2020	Updated in line with Government Public Health advice

# 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 the Irish Self Catering Federation (ISCF) to help you re-open your self catering property. 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 provide a safe environment for guests and employees and 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, they 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 should introduce and implement solutions where possible.

### ■ Focusing on best practice in food and beverage service

Tourism businesses must follow best practices in service and physical distancing to promote health of employees and guests.

### ■ 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 must not compromise food safety.

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

### ■ 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](#).

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 that 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 and the Government's Public Health advice.

## 2. Business Response/Action Plan

**Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what needs to be done to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give your employees and guests confidence that they are safe.**

In developing one, the first step that property owners, management and/or operators 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.
- **Operating procedures (SOPs)** to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and visitors 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 reopening, visit the FSAI website. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

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

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

### Monitoring & 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](#).

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

### Policies & Processes

Property owners and management need 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 use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This must be in line with the latest Government Public Health advice.
- Developing and updating current policy for the care of employee uniforms to ensure they are clean on the standards of appearance and dress expected while at work.
- 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 on the property.
- Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest HSE and Government recommendations. Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and be offered in multiple languages.

## Training

Property owners and/or management 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 ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they are displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 such as coughing, shortness of breath or high temperature.

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 must cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. In particular, make sure you cover:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures
- Correct use of PPE
- Cleaning/disinfection regimes
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell
- Unwell guest/dealing with suspected cases/ liaising with authorities.

If training is needed for specific procedures, or if your property has specific requirements, it must be included in the training programme.

## 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 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 must be visibly clean at all times.

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 Section 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 within your property.

If you can't ensure that employees stay 2 metres\* apart at all times, you must apply the Return to Work Safely Protocol. For more information see [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

## 3. Employee & Guest Health

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

### Face Coverings

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 areas and food service areas within group properties.

#### 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 department within a property. Specific areas must also comply with mandatory occupancy limits.

Guests must be advised to stand, at all times, at least 2 metres\* away from other groups of people who are not from the same household.

Careful consideration needs to be given when using communal areas, while standing in lines, using elevators, stairs or moving around the property. Ensure there are systems in place to prevent intermingling in communal areas (e.g. entrances, exits and toilet facilities).

Dining tables, seating and couches in public areas and other physical layouts must be rearranged to ensure recommended distancing.

### Employee Physical Distancing

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.

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.

Make face masks available to employees in line with Public Health advice. You should note that wearing masks is not a substitute for the other measures outlined above.

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

### Providing Hand Sanitisers

Hand sanitiser dispensers (touchless whenever possible) must be placed at all entry points to a property, at employee entrances and at specific points within the public areas of the property where hand washing facilities are unavailable.

**All hand sanitisers must have a minimum alcohol content of 60%.**

### Property Signage

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

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



\*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

## Employee & Guest Health Concerns

All 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, as a property owner or manager, you are alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 on your property, 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:** Your reception desk needs to have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres plus public and private hospitals readily available in case a guest or employee falls ill.

## COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Businesses must 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 from each booking (e.g the person who makes the booking) must be recorded for both walk-ins and pre-bookings. The person who makes the booking should be advised to keep a record of who is their group in case it is required for contact tracing in the future.

Details must be securely retained for 28 days.

# 4. Owner & Employee Responsibilities

The effective delivery of the Action Plan depends on the professionalism, conduct and behaviour of the property owner/management and employees. Paying attention to the following issues is especially important:

## Hand Hygiene

Correct hand hygiene and frequent hand washing with soap is vital to help combat the spread of COVID-19

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

Hands must 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.

It is advised that each employee carries their own pen to sign off on any record keeping that must be carried out.

## COVID-19 Training

All employees need to receive training on COVID-19 safety and cleaning protocols. You must give more comprehensive training to teams in frequent guest contact; these include the Reception Team, Maintenance & Operations and Property Security.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If required by their roles, appropriate PPE must be worn by employees. You must assess each section of a property to decide what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE is also essential.

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 effect.

## Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

On their return to work, all employers and employees must follow the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

It's also essential to display signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene as well as physical distancing prominently Back of House.

If you provide employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms), these 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 and you should review the use of clocking-in machines.

Staff meetings should be held online if possible. If physical meetings need to take place, physical distancing measures must be taken.

## Reception Area

Your reception area/or a prominent location in the property 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.

# 5. Physical Distancing in Individual & Group Properties

**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.**

## Queuing

Any area where guests or employees queue must be clearly marked for recommended physical distancing. This includes reception, public areas and Back of House.

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 Area

Employees should have a self-sufficient alternate workstations to ensure separation and have their own individual equipment (e.g. computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment)

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres\* should be maintained between employees and guests. Where 2 metres\* is not possible all other measures to protect employees and guests 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 of House for Group Properties

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Governments Public Health advice must be observed in back office spaces 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.

## Timekeeping Facilities

If queuing takes place at the machine, have clear floor markings that illustrate the recommended physical distancing between employees. See Queuing section above to ensure appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place. If you use clocking-in machines, a strenuous cleaning and disinfection regime must be put in place. In effect this means cleaning and disinfecting the machine regularly.

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. The Guest Journey – Arrival & Departure

To follow the Government's Public Health advice throughout the guest journey, properties must minimise the number of access points for arriving and departing guests. Each access point must be equipped with hand sanitiser, along with signage instructing all visitors to use it as they enter and leave.

### Signage

Appropriate COVID-19 signage must be also be prominently displayed outlining the physical distancing and hygiene practices that apply throughout the property.

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

### General Recommendations

- Before they book or arrive, guests must be made aware of the guidelines that apply.
- Physical distancing of 2 metres\* does not apply within members of the same household. Physical distancing is required between individuals that are not from the same household.
- Review check-in times to allow an extended check-in window. This will help reduce large queues of guests arriving at peak times. Encourage just one representative of each group to approach the employee/owner checking them in while the others adhere to physical distancing measures.
- Install clear markings to minimise contact between employees and guests. Queues for reception, restaurants and bars and entrances to toilets must all adhere to physical distancing requirements.
- Each guest should receive a 'Welcome and Safety Information' sheet explaining what is expected of them when interacting with employees and other guests. Guests may also find it reassuring to read about the rigorous cleaning procedures on the premises.

### Carpark & Outdoor Areas

All outdoor areas, grounds, gardens, greens, verges, roads and car parking areas within the property must be kept clean and well maintained.

This means ensuring that lidded bins are available for the disposal of gloves, masks, tissues, etc. that may be contaminated. You must ensure all rubbish bags are immediately disposed of in an appropriate external facility such as a waste removal skip.

### Payment

Guests should be encouraged to use card / contactless payment and pay in advance where possible. If handling cash, employees should be provided with gloves. Good hand hygiene is essential whether wearing gloves or not.

Debit/credit card machines must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

### Guest Hand Hygiene Amenities

Hand sanitiser must be provided at public entrances and exits and at key locations throughout the property where hand wash facilities are unavailable.



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## 7. Cleaning Products & Protocols

**Cleaning products and protocols must be suitable and manufacturer 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. Property owners and managers must review cleaning and disinfection 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.

### Public Spaces and Communal Areas

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. These include reception desks and counters, door handles, room keys and locks, ATMs, stair handrails, dining surfaces and seating areas.

### Guest Accommodation

Cleaning and disinfection protocols must be followed when cleaning guest accommodation. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched items including light switches, temperature control panels, door and furniture handles, television remote controls, toilet seats and handles, taps, telephones, kitchen appliances and flooring.

### Laundry Facilities

Where bed linen is provided for guests, all linen must be washed at a high temperature and in accordance with the Government's Public Health advice. Dirty linen must be bagged immediately to eliminate excess contact while it's transported to the laundry facility.

For more information on managing laundry, see [HERE](#).

Within guest laundry facilities where multi-use items/shared items (e.g. laundry detergent) are usually provided, these must be removed. Guests must be notified that these items may be requested or purchased.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased within laundry facilities to at least twice daily, with an emphasis on frequently touched surfaces which must be visibly clean at all times (e.g. washing machines, dryers, etc.).

### Back of House & Staff Areas

Back of House areas must also be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.

Particular attention must be paid to the employee areas, locker

rooms, employee bathrooms, delivery areas, shared office spaces and other relevant facilities as they must be visibly clean at all times.

### Equipment Shared by Employees

Clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools before, during and after each shift or anytime 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, time clocks and all other direct contact items used.

Shared food and beverage equipment in Back of House areas (e.g. kettle, microwave, etc.) need to be cleaned and disinfected after each use. The same applies to clocking-in machines which must be equipped with hand sanitisers and antibacterial wipes.

### Property Recovery Protocol

In the event of a suspected case of COVID-19, a property must be removed from service until cleaned and disinfected. The property will not be returned to service until it has undergone disinfection. Further information is available in the General Guidelines for Reopening on [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)

### Control of Waterborne Hazards

It is critical that hotels and guesthouses review the 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 and 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.

For further advice, please see HSA information [HERE](#) and HSE information [HERE](#).

## 8. Suppliers of Goods & Services

### Deliveries (laundry, etc.)

- When items are delivered to a premises, an employee needs to meet each supplier.
- 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. 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.

### Dealing with Drivers

- Drivers must use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before passing delivery documents or goods to employees. Delivery drivers must be made aware of the potential risks involved in contact transmission of COVID-19.
- Hand hygiene, in conjunction with physical distancing, is also of paramount importance.
- Businesses must ensure that food suppliers and their drivers comply with HACCP procedures. HACCP based procedures are required for food safety and not for the prevention of COVID-19.
- Drivers must ensure that all transport containers are kept clean and frequently disinfected.

- 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

If required, PPE must be distributed at the following locations:

- Entry and exit points
- Office area (if applicable)
- Cleaning and Maintenance

**Note:** Hand sanitiser will be provided in each property and at all entry and exit points of the public areas including reception, restaurants and bars, and at entrances to public toilets, etc. Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands. If hands are visibly dirty or contaminated they must be washed.

## 10. Employee Uniforms

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Develop/update current policy for the care of employee uniforms to ensure they are clear on the standards of appearance/dress expected while at work.

### Physical Distancing Protocol

If a locker or changing room is provided, mark the floors to indicate available and unavailable spaces that must be used when changing into work attire or PPE. Where necessary, it may be required to roster access times to these rooms so physical distancing takes place.

## 11. Reception Area & General Offices for Group Properties

**Appropriate COVID-19 signage must be prominently displayed that explains the physical distancing and hygiene practices currently in use throughout the property.**

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased to at least twice daily in the Reception Area. This must focus on frequently touched surfaces, which must be visibly clean at all times. These include counters, desks, equipment, communication devices, door release buttons, etc.

Where possible, the sharing of office equipment must be avoided and each workstation must be self-sufficient with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment. Where shared equipment is necessary, it must be cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.

### Physical Distancing Protocol

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Governments 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. Employees sharing workspaces should be grouped in fixed teams that are as small as is reasonably practicable

A designated employee, where possible, should be stationed at the front office to control physical distancing measures

In offices where meetings/consultations take place, the physical distancing protocol is to be adhered to and entry numbers limited

### Guest Considerations

Debit/credit card machines should be moved to the front of the counter and cleaned and disinfected after each use. The use of cashless/contactless payment systems is recommended where possible. Online payment should also be considered.

**Note:** Please apply these guidelines as appropriate to your business.

# 12. Public Areas for Group Properties

Public areas vary between self catering locations. These include recreational areas, lounge areas, public toilets, dining and bar areas.

## Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased within all public areas throughout the property to at least twice daily. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched items and surfaces which must be visibly clean at all times. These include:

- Internal and external doors (e.g. door plates, handles, releases)
- Hard surfaces (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches)
- Stair handrails
- Interior seating (e.g. arms of chairs)
- Exterior seating/benches
- Public toilets
- Smoking areas
- Public amenities (e.g. internet station, ATM machine, cigarette machine, vending machine)

Interior and exterior refuse bins must be visibly clean at all times and emptied and disinfected at regular intervals throughout the day.



## Physical Distancing Protocol

- Use floor markings inside the premises to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice of 2 metres\*, particularly in the most crowded sections of public areas. Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre\* distance.
- Display signage referring to COVID-19 physical distancing measures in visible locations (e.g. on notice boards).
- A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users within public toilets should be put in place to ensure that physical distancing takes place.

## Outdoor Public Areas

- All outdoor areas, grounds, gardens, greens, verges, roads and car parking areas within the site must be kept clean and well maintained.
- This means ensuring that lidded bins are available for the disposal of gloves, masks, tissues, etc. that may be contaminated. You must ensure all rubbish bags are immediately disposed of in an appropriate external facility such as a waste removal skip.
- In recreational areas, consider introducing a one-way system for guests. Mark any paths or walkways to maintain physical distancing.
- It is important to plan how to manage the capacity of guests in recreational areas at peak periods

\*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.

## 13. Cleaning of Properties

**All guest properties must be cleaned, disinfected and serviced after guest departure. Properties should remove the additional items and amenities they feel pose a risk, at their own discretion.**

### Accommodation Services/Housekeeping

- Accommodation Services/Housekeeping employees must wash their hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser (if hands are visibly clean), for a minimum of 20 seconds prior to servicing each property.
- To ensure effectiveness, manufacturer instructions must be followed when using cleaning products. This especially applies to their dilution, method of application and duration of use.
- Cleaning equipment must be disinfected at the end of every shift.
- Update cleaning check-lists to include high-risk and frequently touched surfaces. These include door handles, handrails, frequently touched switches and buttons, telephone handsets, television remote controls, kitchen appliances and air conditioning controls.
- Windows in rooms and other closed areas must be opened during routine cleaning.

### Bedrooms

- Guest linen must be removed from properties in a tied bag. When linen is removed from a bed, and laundered, employees must wear appropriate protective items e.g. gloves and apron when separating the linen.
- When cleaning bedrooms, particular emphasis must be placed on frequently touched surfaces which must be visibly clean at all times, such as:
  - Desks, counter tops, tables and chairs
  - Phones, tablets and remotes
  - Thermostats
  - Cabinets, cupboards, shelving
  - Doors, door handles and doorplates
  - Windows, mirrors and frame
  - Lights and lighting control
  - Closets, hangers and other amenities
- Unnecessary bed throws and cushions should be removed from beds. Extra pillows and blankets stored in the guest room closets should be removed and be made available only upon guest request.

- Bin waste from each room must be placed in a plastic bag and tied.
- All reusable information material should be removed; place critical information on single-use leaflets and/or email it.

### Bathrooms/En suite

- When cleaning and disinfecting bathrooms, particular emphasis must be placed on frequently touched surfaces, taking care to avoid splashes. These include:
  - Doors, door handles and doorplates
  - Taps, plugs and sink
  - Toilets and toilet handles
  - Grab rails
  - Tiles and flooring
  - Shower cubicles and bath
  - Bathroom vanities and accessories
  - Bathroom fixtures and hardware
- Soap and shampoo dispensers (where provided) must be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly during the room cleaning process.

### Living Space/Kitchen

- Ensure all kitchen equipment e.g. glasses, cutlery, delph, cooking utensils, etc. is washed in the correct temperature and detergent on the departure of each guest.
- When cleaning and disinfecting the living space of kitchen, pay particular attention to frequently touched surfaces, which must be visibly clean at all times. These include:
  - Tables and chairs
  - Appliances and equipment e.g. remotes
  - Thermostats
  - Cabinets, cupboards and shelving
  - Doors, door handles and doorplates
  - Windows, mirrors and frames
  - Lights and lighting controls
- Unnecessary throws and cushions should be removed from living spaces.

# 14. Recreational Areas in Group Properties

Some self catering locations offer a range of recreational areas such as internal playrooms and games rooms, TV rooms, external play areas, cinema areas, etc.

## Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

- Recreational areas must be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily. Particular emphasis must be placed on frequently touched surfaces, which must be visibly clean at all times. These include: remote controls, toys, sports equipment, etc.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers (touchless whenever possible) must be placed at all entry points. **Ensure that all hand sanitisers have a minimum alcohol content of 60%.**
- Seating areas to be cleaned and disinfected at the conclusion of each performance/event and as required.



## Physical Distancing Protocol

- Following updated Government Public Health advice, the number of people allowed to gather in a venue at one time is 6 people indoors or 15 people outdoors.
- The capacity of recreational areas needs to be managed by site owners and management to allow appropriate physical distancing between groups of guests based on Government Public Health advice.
- As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres\* should be maintained between guests. Where 2 metres\* is not possible all other measures to protect guests should be in place.
- Display signage referring to COVID-19 physical distancing measures in visible locations within the recreational areas. Install clear markings to ensure contact between guests is minimised. Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within these areas while maintaining 2 metre\* distance.

## Guest Considerations

- All recreational areas need to be reviewed to ensure hand and respiratory hygiene and adherence to physical distancing measures.
- Employees must assist in guest movement and flow to ensure physical distancing protocols are followed within all recreational areas.
- Signage referring to COVID-19 physical distancing and hygiene measures must be displayed in visible locations. Provide 'Child Friendly' signage in children's recreational areas.
- Performers must follow in-house employee hygiene policy.
- Theatre refreshment stations, where provided, must follow food & beverage protocols. Please refer to the Guidelines for Reopening Restaurants & Cafés on [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie).

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

# 15. Technical & Maintenance Services

## Water Disinfection

Maintain the concentration of disinfectant in water for consumption and in pools within the limits recommended according to international norms and standards. Preferably this should be at the upper limits of the range.

## Dishwashing & Laundry Equipment

Dishwashing and laundry equipment, both externally and in each guest property, must be checked to ensure it is operating properly. You must pay particular attention to operating temperatures, as well as using correct dosage of cleaning and disinfection chemicals.



## Air conditioning (where available)/Ventilation

- 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.
- Increasing the number of air exchanges per hour and supplying as much outdoor air as possible is recommended, either by natural or mechanical ventilation.
- Increased ventilation of rooms for at least one hour is recommended after guest check-out.
- 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](#).

## 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 must include installing units to dispense hand sanitiser as required throughout the premises where appropriate, paying particular attention to the different public areas, employee areas and locker rooms etc. These include corridors, entrances/exits to the main building, recreational facilities, restaurants and bars, etc.

## Additional Recommendations

It is the responsibility of each individual business to provide sufficient facilities throughout the premises and ensure these facilities are maintained to minimise the risk of infection.



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice

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