

Recommended Guidance for Short-term Rentals Without Shared Spaces

BACKGROUND

SARS-CoV-2 is a novel coronavirus that has emerged and caused coronavirus disease (abbreviated as COVID-19). Public health experts continue to learn about SARS-CoV-2, but based on current data and similar coronaviruses, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (those within about six feet) via respiratory droplets. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented yet, but current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials.

PURPOSE

The following guidance was created to help operators of short-term residential rentals without shared spaces in working together with guests, staff, and public health officials to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Group units with shared spaces (laundry facilities, elevators, shared kitchens, exercise/recreation rooms, dining rooms, pools/spas) have additional considerations. Use the actions that are appropriate for your unit size and make-up.

DEFINITIONS

COVID-19 is caused by a new virus. There is much to learn about the [transmissibility, severity, and other features of the disease](#). Everyone can do their part to help plan, prepare, and respond to this emerging public health threat.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

To maintain safe operations:

- Review the CDC [guidance for businesses and employers](#) to identify strategies to maintain operations and a healthy working and living environment.
- Develop flexible sick leave policies. Require staff to stay home when sick, even without documentation from doctors to alleviate the burden of healthcare systems.

- Use flexibility, when possible, to allow staff to stay home to care for sick family or household members or to care for children in the event of school or childcare dismissals.
 - Make sure that employees are aware of and understand these policies.
- Develop flexible cancellation policies for guests to encourage them to reschedule or cancel trips if feeling ill.
- Create plans to protect the staff and guests from spread of COVID-19 and help them put in place [personal preventive measures](#).
- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces following CDC guidelines using [EPA-registered disinfectants](#) more than once a day.
- Identify common areas where guests from different groups may interact (stairwells, elevators) and increase [cleaning and disinfecting](#) efforts.
- Identify a list of healthcare facilities and [alternative care sites](#) where staff or guests with COVID-19 can receive appropriate care, if needed.
- Develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff, such as [when to use personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#), when PPE is necessary, how to [properly don \(put on\), use, and doff \(take off\) PPE](#), and how to properly dispose of PPE.
 - Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including trash handling.
 - If gowns are not available (or need to be prioritized for health care facilities), coveralls, aprons, or work uniforms can be used during cleaning and disinfecting. Ensure that the laundry equipment is in good working order, and supply hot water if necessary. Reusable (washable) clothing and gowns should be laundered at the end of each shift. Wash hands after handling dirty laundry.
 - Gloves should be removed after cleaning a room or area occupied by sick people, and when changing tasks. Wash hands immediately after safely removing gloves.
- Consider putting in at least 24 hours between check-out and check-in of guests, allowing additional vacancy time for cleaners come in.

Encourage staff and guests to prepare and take [action to protect themselves and others](#)

- Encourage [social distancing](#) by asking staff and guests to stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart from others and wear [cloth face coverings](#) in any shared spaces, including spaces restricted to staff only.
 - For groups residing under one roof (whole-house/cabin, condo, etc.) this 6 feet does not apply. This measure is intended for intermingling of separate groups.
- Post signs throughout rentals to teach proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, avoidance of face touching, and social distancing. See: <https://cdh.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus-resources.php> under *Posters, Flyers, and Videos*).

- Consider any special needs or accommodations for those who [need to take extra precautions](#), such as older adults, people with disabilities, and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions.
- Use physical barriers, such as sneeze guards, or extra tables or chairs, to protect front desk/check-in staff who will have interactions with guests, visitors, and the public.
- Consider any special communications and assistance needs of your staff and guests, including [persons with disabilities](#).
- Ill guests or guests with symptoms should be asked not to arrive.
- Screening protocols prior to, or upon, arrival may be implemented

Note: Surgical masks and N-95 respirators are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. All staff and guests should wear a [cloth face covering](#) when in shared areas of the facility and maintain social distancing to slow the spread of the virus.

Communicate to staff and guests:

Identify platforms such as email, websites, hotlines, automated text messaging, newsletters, and flyers to help communicate information on:

- Guidance and directives from state and local officials, including health departments.
- How your short-term rental is helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- How additional information will be shared, and where to direct questions.
- How to stay healthy, including [videos, fact sheets, and posters](#) with information on [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and how to stop the spread of germs, [how to wash your hands](#), and what to do [if you are sick](#).
- How staff and guests can [cope and manage stress](#) and protect others from [stigma and discrimination](#).
- Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information. Communications may need to be framed or adapted so they are culturally appropriate for your audience and easy to understand. For example, there are resources on the CDC website that are in many [languages](#).

IF A GUEST IN YOUR FACILITY HAS COVID-19 (SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED):

- Have guest seek advice from a healthcare provider to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.
- Have guests notify you if feeling ill with COVID-19 like symptoms (fever, coughing, shortness of breath)

- Minimize the number of staff members who have face-to-face interactions with guests who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
 - Staff at [higher risk](#) of severe illness from COVID-19 should not have close contact with guests who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19, if possible.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING AFTER SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 EXPOSURE OF A GUEST

- If a guest was in a building while infectious (starting 2 days before onset of symptoms) and it has been less than a week since the guest was last in the building, cleaning and disinfecting is recommended.
- If it has been more than a week since the guest was last in the building, then special cleaning is not necessary.
- It is recommended to close off areas used by the guests and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection. The CDC offers guidance on how best to clean an area in which an infectious person was present. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

IF AN EMPLOYEE HAS COVID-19 (SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED)

See the [Guidance for Workplaces: Responding to Sick or Possibly Sick Employees with COVID-19](#)

Note on returning to work after COVID-19 illness: The CDC has updated their stop of home isolation criteria to at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared (up from 7 days), AND other symptoms have improved AND no fever for at least 24 hours, without fever-reducing medicine.

Resources

- [CDH Coronavirus Monitoring](#)
- [IDHW Resources for the Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [Environmental Cleaning & Disinfection Recommendations](#)
- [How & When to Wash Your Hands](#)
- [Printable Resources](#)
- [Multilingual Resources](#)

CDH Call Center (208-321-2222 M-F 8:30-4:30)

Sources: CDC, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>