



COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Hotels, Lodging, and Short Term Rentals

Release date: **June 5, 2020**

Recommended effective date
no sooner than: **June 12, 2020**

All guidance should be implemented only with county health officer approval following their review of local epidemiological data including cases per 100,000 population, rate of test positivity, and local preparedness to support a health care surge, vulnerable populations, contact tracing, and testing.



OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by employees (where respiratory protection is not required) and customers/clients,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training employees on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for the hotel, lodging, and short term rentals industries to support a safe, clean environment for workers and customers.

NOTE: Hotel, lodging, and short-term rental operations with large meeting venues, banquet halls, or convention centers should keep those areas closed until each of those types of establishments are allowed to resume modified or full operation. Property managers, timeshare operators, and other rental unit owners and operators **must only rent unoccupied units and cannot rent rooms or spaces within an occupied residence until otherwise notified.** A residence or unit that is

rented while the operator is not physically present, or has a separate exterior entrance and exit that does not require the use of shared facilities, and is otherwise unoccupied, should be considered an unoccupied unit. When allowed to reopen to modified or full operation, operators should refer to guidance on such industries as it becomes available on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#). Additional guidance relevant for hotel and lodging operations, including dine-in restaurants, bars, fitness centers, family entertainment centers, hair salons, and retail operations, is available on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#).

The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any employee rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.¹ Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their [Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus webpage](#). CDC has additional guidance [for businesses and employers](#).



Worksite Specific Plan

- Establish a written, worksite-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every facility, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas, and designate a person at each facility to implement the plan.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the facility is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among employees.
- Train and communicate with employees and employee representatives on the plan.
- Regularly evaluate the workplace for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected employee and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive employee(s) and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.



Topics for Employee Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).
- The importance of not coming to work if employees have symptoms of COVID-19 as [described by the CDC](#), such as a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).

- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol (preferred) or 70% isopropanol (if the product is inaccessible to unsupervised children) when employees cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per [CDC guidelines](#)).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
 - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
 - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
 - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Face coverings should be washed or discarded after each shift.
- Ensure temporary or contract workers at the facility are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary supplies and PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary and/or contract workers.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including employee's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).



Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift and any vendors, contractors, or other workers entering the establishment. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with workers to the extent possible. Both screeners and employees should wear face coverings for the screening.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker leaving the home for their shift and follows [CDC guidelines](#), as described in the Topics for Employee Training section above.
- Encourage workers who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home.
- Employers should provide and ensure workers use all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves where necessary.
- Employers should consider where disposable glove use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items.
- Face coverings are strongly recommended when employees are in the vicinity of others. Workers should have face coverings available and wear them when on property, in breakrooms and offices, or in a vehicle during work-related travel with others. Face coverings must not be shared. Employers are generally encouraged to provide face coverings but must provide them when required by employer rules or these guidelines.
- Housekeepers and others who must enter guest rooms should be provided with and required to wear face coverings. Housekeeping must only service rooms when guests are not present. Housekeepers should be instructed to minimize contact with guests' personal belongings when cleaning. Housekeepers should be instructed to have ventilation systems operating and/or open windows whenever possible to increase air circulation.
- Employers should encourage handwashing, with soap and water, and/or using proper hand sanitizer for employees after interactions with guests, cleaning rooms, and opening mail or handle other commonly touched items. Valet service drivers, baggage handlers, and housekeepers should wash their hands regularly during their shift and/or use proper hand sanitizer.

- If possible, baggage deliveries should be done when guests are not in their rooms.
- Hotel and lodging operators should allow housekeepers extra time to clean rooms without loss of pay to account for required precautions and to allow them to conduct more thorough cleaning and disinfection of rooms between guests.
- Hotel, lodging, and short-term rental operations should take steps to ensure guests are fully aware of the facility's new policies and procedures prior to their arrival. Recommended policies and procedures include that the hotel or lodging operator has the right to cancel reservations for parties with symptomatic visitors and that there are new check-in procedures, physical distancing requirements, and cleaning and disinfecting schedules for accommodations, amenities, and common areas like the check-in/registration area.
- Guests and visitors should be screened upon arrival and asked to use hand sanitizer and to wear a face covering. Face coverings should be provided to guests who arrive without them, if feasible. Appropriate signage should also be prominently displayed outlining proper face covering usage and current physical distancing practices in use throughout the property.



Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning in high traffic areas such as hotel lobbies, front desk check-in counters, bell desks, break rooms and lunch areas, changing areas, loading docks, kitchens, and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevator controls.
- Disinfect commonly used surfaces throughout the day and evening, including door handles, vending and ice machines, light switches, phones, washer and dryer doors and controls, baggage carts, shuttle door handles, toilets, and handwashing facilities. Disinfect surfaces during daily room cleanings. Clean dirty items before disinfecting.
- Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the employee's job duties.
- Equip workstations, desks, and help counters with proper sanitation products, including hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes, and provide personal hand sanitizers to all staff directly assisting customers.

- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed.
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, employers should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide employees training on manufacturer's directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves and other protective equipment as required by the product.
- To reduce the risk of asthma related to disinfecting, programs should aim to select disinfectant products on the N list with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid or lactic acid). Avoid products that mix these ingredients with peroxyacetic acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or quaternary ammonium compounds, which can cause asthma. Follow the [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#) recommended by the California Department of Public Health.
- Vacuum cleaners must be equipped with HEPA filters. Avoid sweeping floors with a broom; if possible, use a vacuum cleaner instead.
- To minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water, [take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.
- Avoid sharing phones, tablets, laptops, desks, pens, other work supplies, or offices wherever possible. Never share PPE. Any shared tools and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each shift or anytime the equipment is transferred to a new employee. This includes phones, radios, computers and other communication devices, payment terminals, kitchen implements, engineering tools, safety buttons, folios, housekeeping carts and cleaning equipment, keys, time clocks, and all other direct contact items.
- Discontinue the use of shared food and beverage equipment in office pantries (including shared coffee brewers). Close manually operated ice machines or use hands-free machines.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices, guest rooms, and other spaces.



Additional Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols for Hotel Operations

- All reusable collateral, such as magazines, menus, local attraction details, coupons, etc., should be removed from guest rooms. Critical information should be provided as single-use collateral and/or electronically posted.
- Kitchen items, including pots, pans, and utensils, must be cleaned between each guest stay. All dishes must be washed, including the ones in the cabinet and others that may have been left in different rooms. Provide adequate dish soap and new, unused sponges for each guest upon arrival. Consider replacing utensils with one-time use dinnerware, if feasible.
- Properly clean all appliances and kitchen areas, including refrigerator shelving, the oven stovetop, coffee-makers, toasters, pantry shelves, and other areas.
- Dirty linens should be removed and transported from guest rooms in single-use, sealed bags. Removal and cleaning of all towels and linens at the conclusion of each guest stay should include all items, regardless of whether they appear to have been used or not. These items should be bagged in the guest room to eliminate excess contact while being transported. All bed linen and laundry should be washed at a high temperature and cleaned in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).
- Consider leaving rooms vacant for 24 to 72 hours after a guest has departed.
- In the event of a presumptive case of COVID-19, the guest's room should be removed from service and quarantined. The guest room should not be returned to service until case has been confirmed or cleared. In the event of a positive case, the room should only be returned to service after undergoing an enhanced sanitization protocol in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at key guest and employee entrances and contact areas such as driveways, reception areas, hotel lobbies, restaurant entrances, meeting and convention spaces, elevator landings, pools, salons and exercise areas.



Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between and among employees, guests, and the public. These can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor markings or signs to indicate to where employees and/or guests should stand). Any area where guests or employees queue should be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. This includes check-in, check-out, elevator lobbies, coffee shops and dining, and taxi and ridesharing lines.
- Physical distancing protocols should be used in employee break areas, uniform control areas, training classrooms, shared office spaces, the employee services window (via a teller style window), and other high-density areas in order to ensure appropriate distancing between employees.
- Employee pre-shift meetings should be conducted virtually or in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing between employees. Larger departments should stagger employee arrival times to minimize traffic volume in back of house corridors and service elevators.
- Stagger employee breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Consider offering workers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (e.g., managing administrative needs through telework).
- Close breakrooms, use barriers, or increase distance between tables/chairs to separate workers and discourage congregating during breaks. Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade covers and seating that ensures physical distancing.
- Redesign office spaces, cubicles, lobbies, front desk check-in areas, business centers, concierge service areas, and other spaces to ensure workspaces and guest accommodations allow for at least six feet distancing.
- Discourage employees from congregating in high traffic areas such as bathrooms and hallways and establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic, if possible, to eliminate people from passing by one another.
- Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator and ensure the use of face coverings. Use signage to communicate these requirements.

- Require employees to avoid handshakes and similar greetings that break physical distance.
- Eliminate person-to-person contact for delivery of goods to physical offices. Avoid touching others' pens and clipboards



Additional Physical Distancing Guidelines for Hotel Operations

- Guests should enter through doors that are either propped open, if possible and in adherence to security protocols, or are automated or manually operated by an employee who is frequently handwashing and/or using proper hand sanitizer.
- Implement peak period queueing procedures, including a lobby greeter and having guests queue outside to maintain at least six feet of physical distance between persons.
- Employees should not open the doors of cars or taxis.
- Guest room service, laundry and dry-cleaning services, and amenity deliveries should be made available using contactless pick-up and delivery protocols wherever possible.
- Hotel and lodging operations with golf courses should only allow one player per cart, except for immediate family and people who cohabitate, and increase tee time spacing, and should only open once golf courses are allowed to reopen. Additional guidance on outdoor recreation is available on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#).



Additional Considerations for Short-Term Rental Units

- Property managers, timeshare operators, and other rental unit owners and operators **must only rent unoccupied units and cannot rent rooms or spaces within an occupied residence until otherwise notified**. A residence or unit that is rented while the operator is not physically present, or has a separate exterior entrance and exit that does not require the use of shared facilities, and is otherwise unoccupied, should be considered an unoccupied unit. It can be very difficult to maintain proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols when residents, tenants, and guests from different households share common items like kitchen appliances, laundry facilities, etc. Shared, temporary housing also presents challenges with physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Property managers, timeshare operators, and other rental unit owners and operators should offer self or remote check-in and checkout, where possible. Consider installing a key lockbox or smart lock with a keypad, and provide renters the appropriate self check-in instructions.
- If possible, implement standard check-in and checkout times, and avoid early arrivals or late departures to minimize the possibility of disrupting the enhanced cleaning process between guest stays.
- Appropriate signage should be prominently displayed at the property entrance and other strategic locations on the property outlining proper face covering usage and current physical distancing practices in use throughout the property.
- Take the proper steps to thoroughly clean and disinfect the rental unit after each guest stay. This includes wiping down and cleaning and disinfecting all high-touch areas, including bed rails, tables, TV remotes, headboards, countertops, kitchen appliances, refrigerator handles, stove knobs, mirrors, and other items.
- Remove all leftover recycling, garbage, and trash from the rental unit. Line all the garbage cans, which will make it easier to dispose of tissues and other waste. Empty any food items the previous guest may have left in the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry.
- All linens must be removed and laundered between each guest stay, including items that appear to not have been used. When cleaning bedding, towels, or other laundered items in rental units, wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry and discard them after each use. Wash hands with soap or use hand sanitizer immediately after gloves are removed. Do not store extra linens or in the rental unit. Provide such items only on request.
- Do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Clean and disinfect laundry hampers according to guidance above for surfaces. If possible, consider placing a bag liner that is either disposable and thrown away after each use or can be laundered after each use.
- Clean all soft surfaces based on the manufacturer's instructions. This could include items like carpet, bedding, curtains, and upholstery. Remove visible dirt and grime and then clean with the appropriate cleaner for the material. If possible, machine-wash items according to the manufacturer's directions.

- Kitchen items, including pots, pans, and utensils, must be cleaned between each guest stay. All dishes must be washed, including the ones in the cabinet and others that may have been left in different rooms. Provide adequate dish soap and new, unused sponges for each guest upon arrival. Consider replacing utensils with one-time use dinnerware, if feasible.
- After each guest stay, properly clean all appliances and kitchen areas, including refrigerator shelving, the oven stovetop, coffee-makers, toasters, pantry shelves, and other areas.
- Vacuum cleaners must be equipped with HEPA filters. Do not sweep floors with a broom; use a vacuum cleaner instead.
- Bathroom toilets, showers, bathtubs, sinks, cabinets, and shelving should be sprayed with a multi-surface cleaner approved for use against COVID-19 by the EPA. Mirrors and any glass should be properly wiped down. The bathroom floor should also be vacuumed and/or mopped.
- Equip the rental unit with additional hand soap, paper towels, toilet paper, disinfecting spray or wipes, and hand sanitizer.
- If using an external or professional cleaning company, communicate expectations and plans for cleaning and disinfection standards, and get periodic confirmation that they are being followed by the contracted company.
- Communicate with guests on the cleaning and safety measures implemented, both pre-stay and during stay, via the listing content and property information booklet. Ensure guests understand all check-in and checkout protocols and any updated building or amenity policies (e.g. changes to services in apartment buildings).
- Service requests should be considered with regard for the safety of maintenance providers and guests. To limit exposure, defer nonessential maintenance while the rental unit is occupied and handle only emergency or urgent issues as allowed by applicable law where possible.
- Ensure that any HVAC/air filters have been replaced per the manufacturer's directions. Consider whether more regular replacement of the filters is necessary. Use high filtration efficiency filters. Do not touch the surface of used air filters and remove and dispose of them with minimal disturbance using disposable gloves.
- Consider instituting a 24-72 hour waiting period after a guest checks out before cleaning the rental units.
- Any rental unit intended for large gatherings, including conferences or meetings, should not be opened until such operations can resume.



Additional Considerations for Swimming Pools and Aquatic Venues

- Hotel, lodging, and short-term rental operations with swimming pools and splash pads should take additional steps to ensure those facilities are properly cleaned and disinfected for visitor use, according to [CDC guidelines](#).
- Please note that saunas, steam rooms, and hot tubs should remain closed.
- Maintain proper disinfectant levels (1-10 parts per million free chlorine or 3-8 ppm bromine) and pH (7.2-8).
- Consult with the company or engineer that designed the aquatic venue to decide which [List N disinfectants approved by the EPA](#) are best for the aquatic venue. Ensure the [safe and correct use](#) and storage of disinfectants, including storing products securely away from children.
- Set up a system so that furniture and equipment (e.g., lounge chairs) that needs to be cleaned and disinfected is kept separate from furniture that has already been cleaned and disinfected. Label containers for used equipment that has not yet been cleaned and disinfected and containers for cleaned and disinfected equipment.
- Launder towels and clothing according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water temperature and dry items completely. Handle towels with disposable gloves and minimal disturbance, i.e., do not shake them.
- Discourage people from sharing items, particularly those that are difficult to clean and disinfect or those that are meant to come in contact with the face (e.g., goggles, nose clips, and snorkels).
- Ensure that the facility has adequate equipment for guests, such as kick boards, pool noodles, and other flotation devices, to minimize sharing wherever possible. Clean and disinfect the items after each use.
- For indoor aquatic venues, introduce and circulate outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. However, do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to staff, visitors, or swimmers.
- Change the deck layout and other areas surrounding the pool to ensure that the standing and seating areas can support physical distancing requirements. This could include removing lounge chairs or taping off areas to discourage use.

- Provide physical cues or guides (e.g., lane lines in the water or chairs and tables on the deck) and visual cues (e.g., tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks) and signs to ensure that staff, visitors, and swimmers stay at least six feet apart from one another, both in and out of the water.
- Where feasible, install impermeable physical barriers such as Plexiglas where staff and patrons must interact and physical distancing is difficult.
- Consider implementing reservations for pool use or implementing other mechanisms to support at least of six feet of physical distancing. This could include reserving full-lanes for individual lap swimming and half-lanes for individual household use.
- Ensure that lifeguards who are actively lifeguarding are not also expected to monitor handwashing, use of cloth face coverings, or physical distancing. Assign this monitoring responsibility to another staff member.
- Aquatic venues should avoid activities that promote group gatherings and should be aware of local policies on gathering requirements to determine if aquatic fitness classes, swim lessons, swim team practices, swim meets, or pool parties can be held.
- CDC's [Model Aquatic Health Code](#) has more recommendations to prevent illness and injuries at public pools.

¹ Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. The hotel, lodging, and short term rental industries must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, employers should be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.

