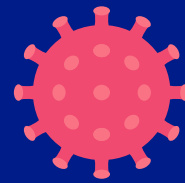# COVID-19
(Coronavirus)

Guidance for Hotels, Guest Houses and Airbnb operators in Bermuda

Based on guidelines from the World Health Organization and the Caribbean Public Health Agency, the following information is provided by the Ministry of Health for Bermuda's hotels, guest houses and Airbnb operators.

There are actions you can take immediately that will help to prevent the spread of diseases:

- Place posters that encourage staying isolated, at home or in your room, when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.

- Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles.

- Provide hand washing supplies including soap and ensure that adequate supplies are maintained.

- Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces.

Here are answers to questions you may receive from mangers, staff and guests.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some persons may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention and call in advance.

How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus.

The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others.

People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. Try to maintain at least one metre (three feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms at all is very low. COVID-19 is not spread by mosquitos, water, or food.

Should I worry about COVID-19?

Illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild, especially for children and young adults. However, it can cause serious illness: about one in every five people who catch it need hospital care. It is therefore quite normal for you to worry about how the COVID-19 outbreak will affect you and your loved ones.

You can channel your concerns into actions to protect yourself, your loved ones and our community. First and foremost among these actions is:

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19 by visiting the Government of Bermuda's website https://www.gov.bm/health-information

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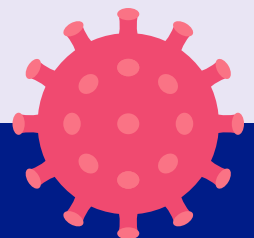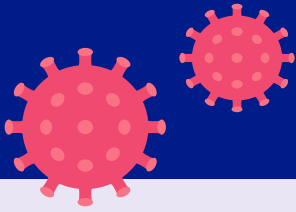
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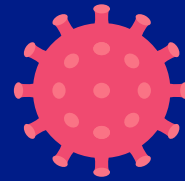
- Regular and thorough hand-washing with soap and water. If soap and water aren't immediately available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Practice good respiratory hygiene. Cover your cough or sneeze.
- If you are unwell stay at home. Do not go to school, work or attend social gatherings.

Should I wear a mask to protect myself?

Only wear a mask if you are ill with COVID-19 symptoms (especially coughing) or looking after someone who may have COVID-19. Disposable face mask can only be used once. If you are not ill or looking after someone who is ill then you are wasting a mask. There is a world-wide shortage of masks, so WHO urges people to use masks wisely.

The World Health Organization advises rational use of medical masks to avoid unnecessary wastage of precious resources and misuse of masks.

The most effective ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 are to frequently clean your hands, cover your cough with the bend of elbow or tissue and maintain a distance of at least one meter (three feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing.

What can hotels, guesthouses and Airbnb operators do to be prepared for COVID-19?

To date, there have been NO reported cases of COVID-19 in Bermuda.

There are measures that hotels, guesthouses and Airbnb owners can do to be prepared if someone in Bermuda is tested positive for COVID-19. You must:

- Stay informed about the COVID-19 situation in Bermuda. Updates will regularly be released by the Ministry of Health and can be accessed at: **www.gov.bm/health-information**.
- Reduce exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 and a range of illnesses by:
  - Frequently washing your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub;
  - When coughing and sneezing cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue—throw the tissue away immediately and wash your hands;
 - Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough;
  - If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider;
 - Stay at home when you are sick to avoid the chance of infecting others;
- Provide staff with educational materials on COVID-19 so that they are aware of the signs and symptoms, where COVID-19 is spreading, and how it is transmitted.
- Ensure your staff know how to contact a healthcare provider if they have questions or concerns;
- Ensure staff are informed about procedures for reporting guests or other staff with symptoms and exposure history compatible with COVID-19 to a health care provider. If guests or staff are suspected to have been exposed to COVID-19, who have symptoms **AND** exposure history consistent with the disease, should call an appropriate healthcare provider. Be sure to inform them of suspected exposure to COVID-19.
- Put in place procedures for separating ill guests from other guests and for minimizing the exposure of guests/staff to potentially contaminated environments while healthcare providers are contacted.

How should a suspected COVID-19 person's room be cleaned?

If a suspect case is identified, staff should feel safe to clean the environment as basic cleaning agents will sufficiently kill the virus.

- Staff should wear gloves, eye protection, a face mask, and protective gown.
- It is important to ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly.
- Thoroughly cleaning high-touch surfaces with water and detergent and applying commonly used disinfectants (such as bleach) are effective and sufficient procedures.
- Medical devices and equipment, laundry, food service utensils and medical waste should be managed in accordance with safe routine procedures.

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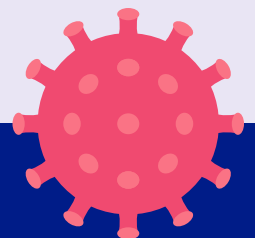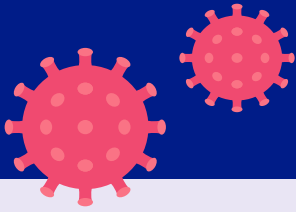
COVID-19
(Coronavirus)

- Used linen, cloths, eating utensils, laundry and any other item in contact with a guest's body fluids should be collected separately and disinfected in such a way as to avoid any contact with persons or contamination of the environment.

- Surfaces or objects contaminated with blood, other body fluids, secretions or excretions should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible using standard detergents/disinfectants.

- Manage laundry, food service utensils, and medical waste in accordance with safe routine procedures.

- Bag or otherwise contain contaminated cloths and fabrics at the point of use;

- Handle contaminated cloths and fabrics with minimum agitation and shaking to avoid contamination of air, surfaces, and persons;

- Use leak-resistant containment for cloths and fabrics contaminated with blood or body substances;

- Identify bags or containers for contaminated cloths with labels, colour coding, or other alternative means of communication as appropriate;

- Do not use laundry chutes;

- If hot-water laundry cycles are used, wash with detergent in water higher than 160°F (71°C) for at least 25 minutes;

- Wear a disposable facemask, gown, and gloves when you touch or have contact with an infected person's blood, body fluids and/or secretions, such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhea.

- Throw out disposable facemasks, gowns, and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.

- Wash your hands immediately after removing your facemask, gown, and gloves and do not touch your face.

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Updated 9 March 2020