

Virus Control for the Hotel Industry

Recommendations for virus control

1. Review and reinforce employee health policies
2. Promote additional handwashing and glove use when cleaning
3. Clean and sanitize frequently touched surfaces such as hand rails, door knobs, light switches, elevator buttons, etc.
4. Have standard operating procedures on cleaning, sanitizing, and using the proper chemicals
5. Provide hand sanitizers for customers at entrance
6. In facilities with common restrooms that have air dryers only, provide paper towels in restrooms to shut off water after handwashing and to open doors
7. Do not shake dirty laundry; minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air
8. Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.
9. Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.

Q&A

Q: Are there protocols for servicing the rooms while a patron is under quarantine.

A: If the person in the room is not masked, then there may be respiratory droplets from the cough or sneeze of the infected person. It is best for staff not to enter, if possible. A solution is to leave clean linen outside their door and have them bag up the dirty linen themselves.

Q: Can an innkeeper refuse service to someone who is known to have or have been exposed to the coronavirus?

A: Please speak with your legal counsel.

Q: When can employees clean rooms that may have been populated by a patient that was positive for coronavirus?

A: If the air changes per hours (ACHs) are around 12, then waiting 60-90 minutes should be sufficient. If ACHs are less, wait longer.

Q: What are the cleaning procedures for rooms and laundry?

A: Standard room and laundry cleaning/disinfection is likely enough. EPA has a [list of disinfectants](#) they have reviewed for efficacy to COVID-19.

If you do not have one of these products, look up the efficacy statement for the product you use and see if it covers coronavirus, influenza, herpes simplex virus, or measles. Efficacy statements are usually available on-line.

Q: How can hotels and B&Bs provide meals/snacks to their lodging guests?

A: The current guidance to hotels and B&Bs are they can stay open but communal dining areas cannot be used. Meals and snacks can be provided to guests but it is recommended the food be left outside their door rather than face to face contact.

Q: I was exposed to a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case. Do I need to self-quarantine for 14 days or can I continue to work in the restaurant or lodging industry?

A: The recommendation is to self-quarantine at home for 14 days after the most recent exposure to the case and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath). If you have symptoms, please call your primary care provider for instructions. If after 14 days, you are still without symptoms, you have successfully completed the self-quarantine and can return to work.

Q: I was exposed to someone who was exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 case. Do I need to self-quarantine or can I continue to work in the restaurant or lodging industry?

A: Yes, you may continue to work in the restaurant or lodging industry. Monitor for symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you have symptoms, immediately call your primary care provider for instructions and self-quarantine at home.

Q: Since service industry employees have ongoing contact with the public, are there any special precautions these workers should take to avoid becoming sick with a respiratory illness such as wearing masks?

A: [US CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings](#) in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. The use of facemasks is crucial for health workers and people who take care of someone with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

CDC recommends everyday preventive actions for service industry workers and customers:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Additional Resources:

Maine CDC COVID-19 website: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/coronavirus>

U.S. CDC COVID-19 website: [Business and Employers Section](#)

