



# COVID-19 infections caused by coronavirus SARS-CoV-2

## Instructions for the employees of quarantine facilities

### Hand washing – hand hygiene

Repeat each step of the hand washing procedure at least five times



1

Rub hands palm to palm



2

Rub right palm over left dorsum and vice versa



3

Rub thoroughly between all fingers



4

Rub fingertips and fingernails of both hands together thoroughly



5

Rub thumb of each hand thoroughly



6

Rub each palm thoroughly

11 September 2020

# Contents

- Acronyms ..... 3
- The purpose of the quarantine facility and selection of users ..... 3
- Checklist for the employees of quarantine facilities as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic..... 3
- First responses to suspected COVID-19 ..... 4
- Basic infection prevention ..... 4
- Interaction with quarantined persons..... 4
- Limits to the travel and activities of quarantined persons in the quarantine facility ..... 5
- Interaction with persons in isolation ..... 7
- Limits to the travel and activities of persons in isolation in the quarantine facility ..... 8
- Monitoring those who come into contact with the sick ..... 10
- Disinfecting an area where an ill person has stayed ..... 10
- Treatment of equipment that is non-disposable ..... 11

## Acronyms

Acronym	Name
<b>112</b>	Emergency telephone number, co-ordinated emergency call centre for all of Iceland
<b>1700</b>	Læknavaktin (medical hotline) – co-ordinated health services hotline
<b>Avd-RLS</b>	Civil Protection Department of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police
<b>COVID-19</b>	Infection of the respiratory tract caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2
<b>RKÍ</b>	The Icelandic Red Cross
<b>SVL</b>	Chief Epidemiologist
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

## The purpose of the quarantine facility and selection of users

A quarantine facility is a location where individuals who are not permanent residents can stay while in quarantine or isolation and for those who, for some reason, cannot be quarantined or in isolation at home but do not need to be admitted to hospital. All those who are admitted to the quarantine facility are referred there by the health care service which decides on admissions into a quarantine facility with RKÍ according to specific guidelines. Notification of the admittance/expected guest is sent to a defined telephone number, and in addition, the RKÍ steward is notified. The steward phones 1700 if further information is required.

### Selection of persons to be admitted to the quarantine facility:

- 1) Foreigners who are not permanent residents in Iceland and who have been exposed (quarantine) or infected (isolation).**
- 2) Individuals who are residents in Iceland and cannot remain at home, e.g. in cases where an immunosuppressed person resides in the same home.**

## Checklist for the employees of quarantine facilities as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic

### Where persons are quarantined due to the risk of COVID-19 infection, each employee must:

- Know the symptoms of COVID-19 infection and the virus' mode of transmission.
- Familiarise themselves with and pass on information to their clients about [quarantine](#), [isolation](#) and [COVID-19](#) which the Chief Epidemiologist has prepared.
- Take basic infection prevention measures in all their work and employ further epidemiology measures when appropriate (page 5).
- Inform the RKÍ steward of any suspicion of COVID-19 infection in clients.
- Be ready to help sick clients obtain medical services if necessary.

## First responses to suspected COVID-19

The symptoms are, for the most part, similar to those of influenza: cough, fever, difficulty breathing, bone and muscle pain and tiredness. Also cold-like symptoms and sore throat. COVID-19 can also cause serious illness with lower respiratory system infections and pneumonia, often seen as breathing difficulties on the 4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> day of illness. If any new infection caused by COVID-19 is suspected within the quarantine facility, the health services must be contacted in telephone No. 1700 or, where appropriate, the direct telephone line of the physician on call who is responsible for services in the area.

In an emergency call 112, making sure to mention suspected COVID-19 infection.

## Basic infection prevention

Basic infection prevention should always be employed toward everyone, irrespective of whether or not a person appears to be ill.

### **Basic infection prevention includes the following:**

- General hand cleaning, i.e. hand washing and/or the use of disinfectants.
- **Easy access to hand washing facilities and disinfectants.**
- Easy access to disposable gloves when cleaning or caring for the sick. Gloves should be removed as soon as the task is completed, and hands are to be disinfected.
- Use disposable gloves, coats and disposable wipes when cleaning up blood, vomit or other body fluids. Such items are to be placed in a plastic bag which is then closed and placed in another bag, should the outside of the first bag have become contaminated, before throwing into general waste.

**Keep this protective clothing on hand in the quarantine facility for the use of those who need to interact closely with ill individuals. Make sure that all frontline employees have been educated about the use of:**

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable coats
- Protective masks
- Dry disinfectant powder, scattered over liquid infectants to change it to gel-like material
- Disinfectant solution for surface cleaning (Virkon)
- Plastic bags for contaminated waste
- Paper towels
- Signs and ribbons to delineate infected areas (optional)

## Interaction with quarantined persons

It is important to limit contact between quarantined persons and others, including those working in the quarantine facility. Quarantined persons are, according to definitions, not ill and therefore not considered infectious, but can fall ill suddenly and have very mild symptoms to begin with. They are at such time infectious but may not realise that they are beginning to fall ill. The employees of the quarantine facility, therefore, should:

- Stay at least 1–2 m from quarantined individuals to the extent possible.
- Use careful hand cleansing (wash hands with soap or disinfectant) on a regular basis, particularly after accepting items from quarantined persons; touching shared surfaces, such as lift buttons and door handles; before eating, etc. It is very important to use disinfectant or wash hands before the employee touches his/her face, for whatever reason.
- Gloves must be used for dirty tasks but can provide a false sense of safety if they are not removed immediately on completion of the task. It is not appropriate or useful to wear gloves all day long if the hands are not cleaned on a regular basis.
- Provide persons with respiratory system symptoms with face masks and put one on yourself as well as a disposable coat and disposable gloves if you need to assist an ill person, see below as regards the illness of quarantined persons.

When cleaning a quarantine facility, special care must be taken to wipe all shared surfaces, such as light switches, door handles, lift buttons, stair rails, etc., preferably more often than once a day. Persons residing in the quarantine facility should preferably be responsible for closing their own trash bags and possibly carrying them to the rubbish storage room. This, however, is subject to circumstances, and special care must be taken to ensure that those who handle waste from rooms are not infected.

The virus does not live for long on surfaces, and there is no significant infection risk from recycling containers and the like, although care should be taken when handling such items and hands cleaned properly on completion of tasks.

It is important that quarantined persons have access to sufficient lavatory paper, etc., although there should not be significant extra volumes in each room, as such supplies may have to be destroyed if contaminated if the person in question falls ill while in quarantine.

## Limits to the travel and activities of quarantined persons in the quarantine facility.

See also [Instructions for quarantined persons](#).

- Quarantined persons should remain in their rooms as much as possible in the quarantine facility and have direct contact with as few people as possible.
- Quarantined persons may go out on balconies or out to the garden near the room/building if such are for the private use of the quarantine facility. If there are other persons there who are staying in the quarantine facility, the quarantined person shall remain at a distance of at least 1–2 m. This also applies even if those present are also quarantined if such persons are not related/associated persons who are sharing facilities while quarantined.
- Quarantined persons may take walks but must remain at a distance of at least 1–2 m from other pedestrians. If there are difficulties in communicating with the quarantined person and it is not certain that he/she will understand or comply with instructions, e.g. due to language barriers or little inclination to co-operate as regards epidemic prevention, such walks may be prohibited, for the building as a whole or for certain individuals. Conditions outside the building may also mean that such walks are inadvisable. Quarantined individual may not go into shops or restaurants or other facilities.

- Quarantined persons may leave their room to dispose of rubbish if conditions in the quarantine facility so require, although care must be taken as regards hygiene; hands must be washed before and after opening the trash chute/trash bin/rubbish storage room, and handles should, as a rule, be wiped with 70% spirits or other disinfectant after being touched.
- Quarantined persons may not enter other buildings except when absolutely necessary, such as to obtain necessary healthcare, and in such cases only after having consulted the contact persons at the healthcare centre responsible for the quarantine facility in question or 1700/112 if the matter is extremely urgent. Quarantined persons are not expected to have appointments with specialists/dentists/physiotherapists. In the event of such appointments, however, these must be cancelled and new appointments made after the quarantine period ends.
- Quarantined persons may not use public transport except for taxis. If he/she needs to seek necessary healthcare services, he/she may also use a private car if able to drive or accept the help of others who are quarantined with him/her. Otherwise, the assistance of patient transport must be obtained through 1700/112.
- Quarantined persons may not go to their work or school where there are other persons. He/she may need a certificate to such effect from the healthcare centre. Employers have been requested to be understanding if an employee must be quarantined.
- Quarantined persons may not participate in gatherings, irrespective of whether such gatherings relate to his/her work, family or social life. This includes work meetings, gatherings involving colleagues, gatherings held by unions, confirmations, funerals, sewing clubs, choir practices, concerts, etc.
- Quarantined persons may not attend physical training centres, swimming pools, the theatre, cinemas, shopping malls or other places where large numbers of people congregate.
- Quarantined persons may not personally fetch resources, including from pharmacies, supermarkets, post offices, banks or other. While residing in the quarantine facility, the Icelandic Red Cross will provide assistance with resources, entertainment, etc.
- Quarantined persons may not stay **unnecessarily** in the shared premises of the quarantine facility, such as in stairwells, laundries or outdoor recreational areas/garden that are used by persons outside the quarantine facility.
- Quarantined persons may not entertain guests in their room for the duration of the quarantine, not even those who are also quarantined there.
- Persons from the same home / who are closely related, such as married couples/families that were exposed to infection at the same time, may, upon request, be quarantined together in the same location.
- Members of the household/family who have not previously been exposed to infection should preferably not be in the same place as the quarantined person.

**In the event that a quarantined person falls ill:**

- The sick person should remain in the room where he/she was quarantined until a healthcare worker instructs otherwise.
- Call for assistance from a healthcare facility (healthcare centre/1700/112 as appropriate).
- One employee must be appointed to take care of the sick person until he/she leaves the premises. Others shall be directed away from the area in which the sick person is located.

- All clients/employees that have been in close contact with the sick person on that date must register as a contact person, by name, telephone number, e-mail and ID No. (if appropriate). The employee looking after the sick person after he becomes ill must be specifically identified. **Each quarantine facility must define who is to manage the list for the healthcare services/ Chief Epidemiologist.** The employees responsible for cleaning after the sick person has left must not be forgotten.
- The care of the sick person until responders take over or he/she leaves the facility:
  - Provide the sick person with a face mask if such is available and he/she can tolerate wearing it. If no mask is available or if it cannot be tolerated, the sick person must be shown how to use a paper towel as a screen when coughing or sneezing. Such paper towels must be directly disposed of into a plastic bag after use and hands washed.
  - Hand disinfectant must be available, and the sick person should have easy access to it. The hand disinfectant should be in a hands-free dispenser if shared with the employee looking after the sick person. If such dispenser is unavailable, the employee should assist the sick person to use the disinfectant, otherwise the pumping mechanism would have to be cleaned before the employee could use it and after the sick person has left the facility (see cleaning below).
  - Ensure that the sick person has access to a separate lavatory if there is no lavatory access inside the room.
- The appointed employee shall assist the sick person as needed until responders take over.
  - The employee must have very easy access to hand cleaning.
  - To the extent possible, the employee shall maintain a distance of >1 m from the sick person. Hands must be cleaned extra well and disposable gloves used, if available, if he needs to come closer. In the cases of severe coughing/sneezing fits, it can be useful to use a face mask on the employee as well but only if the employee needs to be very close to the sick person.

## Interaction with persons in isolation

Persons in isolation have, according to the definition accompanying COVID-19, a disease and are, therefore, infectious. It is important to limit, as far as possible, contact between persons in isolation and others, including those working in the quarantine facility. The employees of the quarantine facility, therefore, should:

- Stay at least 2 m from persons in isolation to the extent possible unless they are using protective equipment (see below).
- Use careful hand cleansing (wash hands with soap or disinfectant) on a regular basis, particularly after having been in contact with persons in isolation; touching shared surfaces, such as lift buttons and door handles; before eating, etc. It is very important to use disinfectant or wash hands before the employee touches his face, for whatever reason.
- Gloves must be used for dirty tasks but can provide a false sense of safety if they are not removed immediately on completion of the task. It is not appropriate or useful to wear gloves all day long if the hands are not cleaned on a regular basis.

- Provide persons with respiratory system symptoms with face masks if communication is necessary and put one on yourself as well as a disposable coat and disposable gloves if a sick person requires assistance, see below as regards the illness of persons in isolation.

When cleaning a quarantine facility, special care must be taken to wipe all shared surfaces, such as light switches, door handles, lift buttons, stair rails, etc., preferably more often than once a day. Special care must be taken as regards the personal hygiene of persons handling rubbish from the rooms of sick persons (see below).

The virus does not live for long on surfaces, and there is no significant infection risk from recycling containers and the like, although care should be taken when handling such items and hands cleaned properly on completion of tasks.

It is important that persons in isolation have access to sufficient lavatory paper, etc., although there should not be significant extra volumes in each room, as such supplies must be destroyed, if contaminated, when the person in question is free from isolation or leaves the quarantine facility, e.g. due to worsening condition.

## Limits to the travel and activities of persons in isolation in the quarantine facility.

See also [Instructions for persons in isolation](#).

- Persons in isolation should remain in their rooms as much as possible in the quarantine facility and have direct contact with as few people as possible.
- Persons in isolation may go out on a balcony if such balcony is for the private use of his/her room.
- Persons in isolation may leave their room to dispose of rubbish if conditions in the quarantine facility so require and their health allows but should wear face masks while outside the room. Proper attention must be paid to hygiene; hands must be washed before and after opening the trash chute / trash bin / rubbish storage room, and handles should, as a rule, be wiped with 70% spirits or other disinfectant after being touched.
- Persons in isolation may not enter other buildings except when absolutely necessary, such as to obtain necessary healthcare, in such cases only after having consulted the contact persons at the healthcare centre responsible for the quarantine facility in question or 1700/112 if the matter is extremely urgent. Persons in the quarantine facility are not expected to have appointments with specialists/dentists/physiotherapists. In the event of such appointments, however, these must be cancelled and new appointments made after the isolation period ends.
- Persons in isolation may not use public transport or taxis. The assistance of patient transport must be obtained through 1700/112 if necessary healthcare services are required.
- Persons in isolation may not go to their work or school where there are other persons. He/she may need a certificate to such effect from the healthcare centre.
- Persons in isolation may not participate in gatherings, irrespective of whether such gatherings relate to his/her work, family or social life. This includes work meetings, gatherings involving

colleagues, gatherings held by unions, confirmations, funerals, sewing clubs, choir practices, concerts, etc.

- Persons in isolation may not attend physical training centres, swimming pools, the theatre, cinemas, shopping malls or other places where large numbers of people congregate.
- Persons in isolation may not personally fetch resources, including from pharmacies, supermarkets, post offices, banks or other. While residing in the quarantine facility, the Icelandic Red Cross will provide assistance with resources, entertainment, etc.
- Persons in isolation may not spend time in the shared premises of the quarantine facility, such as in stairwells, laundries or outdoor recreational areas/garden that are used by persons outside the quarantine facility. If he/she needs to leave the room for some reason, he/she should wear a virus-proof face mask, wash hands carefully and touch as few surfaces as possible.
- Persons in isolation may not entertain guests in their room for the duration of the quarantine, not even those who are also quarantined there or are in isolation.
- Persons from the same home/who are closely related, such as married couples/families, who are ill at the same time, may, upon request, be in isolation together in the same location.

#### **In the event that the condition of a person in isolation deteriorates:**

- The sick person should remain in his/her room in the quarantine facility until a healthcare worker instructs otherwise.
- Call for assistance from a healthcare facility (healthcare centre/1700/112 as appropriate).
- One employee must be appointed to take care of the sick person until he/she leaves the premises. Others shall be directed away from the area in which the sick person is located.
- All employees that have been in contact with the sick person on that date must register as a contact person, by name, telephone number, e-mail and ID No. (if appropriate). The employee looking after the sick person while waiting for help must be specifically identified. **Each quarantine facility must define who is to manage the list for the healthcare services / Chief Epidemiologist.** The employees responsible for cleaning after the sick person has left must not be forgotten.
- The care of the sick person until responders take over or he/she leaves the facility:
  - Provide the sick person with a face mask if such is available and he/she can tolerate wearing it. If no mask is available or if it cannot be tolerated, the sick person must be shown how to use a paper towel as a screen when coughing or sneezing. Such paper towels must be directly disposed of into a plastic bag after use and the hands washed.
  - Hand disinfectant must be available, and the sick person should have easy access to it. The hand disinfectant should be in a hands-free dispenser if shared with the employee looking after the sick person. If such dispenser is unavailable, the employee should assist the sick person to use the disinfectant, otherwise the pumping mechanism would have to be cleaned before the employee could use it and after the sick person has left the facility (see cleaning below).
  - Ensure that the sick person has access to a separate lavatory if there is no lavatory access inside the room.
- The appointed employee shall assist the sick person as needed until responders take over.
  - The employee must have very easy access to hand cleaning.

- To the extent possible, the employee shall maintain a distance of >1 m from the sick person. Hands must be cleaned extra well and disposable gloves used, if available, if he needs to come closer. In the cases of severe coughing/sneezing fits, it can be useful to use a face mask on the employee as well but only if the employee needs to be very close to the sick person.

## Monitoring those who come into contact with the sick

The regional/area epidemiology physician maintains a file of those who were possibly exposed to infection and submits such file to the Chief Epidemiologist. Regional/area physicians or their representative in the healthcare centre responsible for the quarantine facility provide further information on infection prevention and conduct for the following two weeks. Those belonging to this group shall follow the [Quarantine instructions](#).

**If it comes to light that the person with whom the ill person had close contact does not have a COVID-19 infection, the measures shall be discontinued.**

As a rule, employees who had close contact while wearing the appropriate protective equipment do not have to be quarantined but should take special care with their hygiene and monitor for any symptoms. If any symptoms appear, the employee in question must contact 170 and remain in isolation until the COVID-19 disease has been eliminated.

## Disinfecting an area where an ill person has stayed

### 1. Equipment used for cleaning:

- a. Use disposable gloves, plastic apron/protective coat and disposable wipes when cleaning up blood, vomit or other body fluids from an ill person. Protective items are to be placed in a plastic bag which is then closed and placed in another bag in case the first one was contaminated. The bag is then disposed of as general waste.
- b. If clothing has become contaminated (protective clothing not used or has leaked), the person cleaning should shower and change clothes after the clean-up. Contaminated clothing shall be placed in a plastic bag or a dissolvable laundry bag which is then closed. Contaminated clothing can be washed as normal, although gloves should be used when placing the items in the washing machine if no dissolvable laundry bag that can go directly into the machine is available (see information about handling contaminated linens below).
- c. Use a wipe and disinfectant (Virkon, Oxivir, chlorine mix 500–1000 ppm or ethanol/spirits >70%) to clean surfaces after the sick person has left the premises. Remember to clean shared surfaces such as light switches, door handles, water faucets, etc.
- d. Used gloves are to be placed in a plastic bag and hands washed.

## 2. Disinfecting and cleaning areas that have been contaminated

- a. The area in which the sick person stayed and its closest environs are to be cleaned before access to the area is allowed again.
- b. Pressurised air may not be used, as this can disperse contaminants.
- c. Have a trash bag ready for disposable wipes, used protective clothing and other waste that results from the cleaning operation.
- d. Paper wipes are used to clean up visible contaminants. Change gloves and throw used gloves away if contaminants can be seen on them.
- e. **Begin by cleaning at the top and work your way down.** Start by spreading a soap solution over the area using a paper wipe or spray bottle. When the entire area has been covered with soap solution, use paper wipes to clean up and place the wipes in a bag. Then the whole area is covered with paper towels and the towels wetted with disinfectant. Wait for as long as recommended by the manufacturer and then remove the paper towels and place them in a bag. Finally, rinse the area with warm water and dry.
- f. If carpets, clothing or other linens are significantly contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids, they may have to be disposed of. Paper and other single-use items that the sick person used are also put in a bag and thrown away.
- g. Change wash cloths between areas and place in bag once the work is done.
- h. Particular care must be taken when cleaning the following in the lavatory/bathroom that the sick person used:
  - i. Light switches, door handle and locking mechanism
  - ii. Faucet and washbasin
  - iii. Adjacent walls and table around wash basin
  - iv. Bathing facilities and mixer taps
  - v. Finally, the toilet seat and the adjacent area
- i. Protective equipment and gloves are placed in a bag on completion of work and are then thrown away and personal aseptic measures employed (see cleaning equipment). Please note that if impurities have contaminated the outer surface of the trash bag, the bag should be placed in another clean bag that is closed before being thrown out with general waste.

## Treatment of equipment that is non-disposable

In the quarantine facility where the patient has used multi-use equipment, such as linens and tableware, the following must be kept in mind:

- Those who collect and clean equipment for cleaning should read “Cleaning equipment”.
- On collecting and washing **linens** that have possibly been contaminated by bodily fluids:
  - Disposable gloves and protective aprons should be used when linens are collected.
  - Linens should be collected into a water-soluble linens bag.
  - Protective apron and gloves should be removed and placed in a bag for disposal (see section on cleaning).
  - Hands should be cleaned and new disposable gloves put on to close the linens bag.
  - Gloves should be removed and hands washed.

- Linens bag should be transferred directly to laundry and placed immediately in washing machine. If no washing machine is immediately available, care must be taken to ensure that the bag will not be opened by mistake.
- Hands should be washed, washing machine closed and wash cycle started. Normal washing detergents and temperatures may be used.
- On the collection and cleaning of tableware and other utensils that may be washed and which have been used by a person that has a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection:
  - Hands should be washed before gloves are put on.
  - Tableware is to be collected by glove-clad hands. Contaminants are unlikely to disperse when tableware is collected, and as a result, no apron/coat need be worn.
  - If shared surfaces must be touched, such as door handles, lift buttons, etc. before the utensils are washed, gloves are to be removed and hands washed before such surfaces are touched.
  - The likelihood of infection from tableware is negligible UNLESS the utensils are contaminated by body fluids, such as spit or vomit. Rinsing the utensils with pressurised water under such circumstances should be avoided, as contaminants could spray onto the face of the employee. It is a better idea to use low-pressure water or soak the utensils in water if they are too dirty to go directly into the dishwasher.
  - Disposable gloves are to be used until the utensils have been placed in the washing machine if available. Gloves should be removed thereafter and hands washed before the machine is closed and started. If there is no washing machine, the tableware can be washed using dish washing detergent. Hand must be washed after washing up ends and gloves have been removed.
- Other multi-use equipment, such as television remote controls, television sets, cupboards, etc., shall be cleaned with soap if possible and their surfaces then disinfected as described on page 5.
  - Telephone directories and other items made of paper that are generally not replaced after each guest in hotels do not need throwing away, as the lifetime of the virus is probably short on such surfaces (based also on data on the SARS virus), although if such items are obviously contaminated with body fluids, they should be replaced.