

Operational Guidance

Self Catering & Welcome Standard Operators

Overview

All information provided within this guidance document as of March 23, 2020 has been developed in line with the HSE Guidelines on how to mitigate the risks presented by COVID-19. Updates will follow as and when new information is provided by the relevant authorities.

This is not an official policy document. It has been created to support Self Catering and Welcome Standard operators to mitigate as much risk as possible to their staff and guests. While we refer to 'staff' in this document, this should be taken to refer to operators and their families as well as others who may provide support from time to time.

The document contains information which may be relevant to both individual and multi-unit properties, and should be applied to each operation as appropriate.

Welcome Standard Operators may like to review Operational Guidance for other sectors e.g. Caravan and Camping, where relevant.

Controls and responsibilities are to be delegated by management.

In the event of a case of COVID-19 or the need for guest self-isolation in your property, please visit the link below on the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's website to find out what immediate action you need to take:

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/contacttracingguidance/>

Useful links

HSE Overview: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/coronavirus.html>

HPSC: Guidance for non-clinical settings - employers, education, transport and other sectors

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/guidancefornon-clinicalsettings/>

Fáilte Ireland: COVID-19

<https://www.failteireland.ie/Utility/Covid-19.aspx>



Help prevent coronavirus



**Wash your
hands**



**Cover mouth if
coughing or sneezing**



**Avoid touching
your face**



**Keep surfaces
clean**



**Stop shaking
hands and hugging**



**Keep a safe
distance**

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Lack of accurate information	Displayed on website	Information from HSE www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/	Provide details of your policy on the management of guest safety regarding COVID-19		Check daily and update as required	
Cancellation policy	Displayed on website	Provide clear information on cancellation policy in place during COVID-19			Check daily and update as required	
Accurate information	Bookings	Provide staff with clear and consistent message to guests enquiring about their booking by email and phone, including a reference to containment measures in place e.g. social distancing, hygiene measures, etc.			Check daily and update as required	
Close contact with guests	Key collection	Conversation to take place pre-arrival to arrange a specific time for key collection	Arrange to leave the key somewhere for the guest		In advance of each guest arrival	
Registration process	Registration	Pre-registration where possible. If not possible, reception personnel to register guest.	Remove pens. Staff maintain own pen.		Disinfect staff pens after each use and replace regularly (as required)	

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Car park	Open bins	Keep all bins and area around bins clear of rubbish	Bins should have disposable bin liners and tied liners		Empty regularly (as required)	
Entrance	Door handles	Signage and additional hand sanitiser to be available both inside and outside of the main entrance doors	Insist all guests and staff use hand sanitiser before entering the building		Ongoing	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Shaking hands	Meet & Greet / On arrival	Ensure that staff do not shake hands with guests and/or others	Place a sign at entrance to highlight this in a friendly manner e.g. 'Please don't take offence if we don't shake hands – this is for your safety. We value your custom'		At all times	
Washing hands	On arrival	Clear signage at entrances to remind guests and staff to wash hands with soap and warm water frequently, for at least 20 seconds each time			At all times	
Close contact with guests	On arrival	Signage to ask guests to refrain from close contact with staff	Put visible references in place to indicate safe distance especially for groups of three or more		At all times	
External contamination from other guests (where relevant)	On arrival	Hand sanitiser at entrance and at arrival point	Signage in place to remind guests to wash hands on arrival		Signage on display at all times and sanitiser replaced as soon as container is empty	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Receipts / invoices for guests	Departure	Offer to email invoices or confirmation of payment			As required	
Room cards / keys	Departure	Disinfect			After each use e.g. guest has checked out/ staff handling	
Payment facilities	Departure	Encourage the use of card and contactless payments where possible	Disinfect payment machines Staff handling cash to wear gloves		Disinfect after each use	
Close contact with guests	Key return	Conversation to take place pre-arrival to arrange a specific time for key return	Arrange for the guest to leave the key somewhere for operator to collect		In advance of guest departure	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Counter tops and entrance area furnishings	Hallway	Disinfect			Regularly (as required) <i>Check HSE guidelines</i> www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/	
Stair handrails	Stairs	Disinfect surfaces. Have sanitiser available			In advance of each guest arrival	
Light switches, door release buttons, call bells, etc	Entrance / Hallway	Disinfect	Provide guests with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use		In advance of each guest arrival	
Documentation and brochures for guest information	Reception / Information Pack	Remove any tourist information collateral, newspapers and books	Update to include details of local food businesses currently offering a takeaway / delivery service in lieu of pub / restaurants		At all times	
Bins for guest use	Reception and Hallway	Use lidded pedal bins with plastic bin liner with ties	Remove bins from area		Empty and disinfect regularly (as required, and in advance of each guest arrival)	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Door plates, handles and areas of doors used to push open doors	Guestroom Doors	Disinfect door handles and plates			In advance of each guest arrival	
Hard surfaces All areas that guests may touch regularly, e.g. light switches, cupboard handles, door handles, arms of chairs, etc.	Guestrooms	Disinfect all hard surfaces	Provide guests with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use Signage to remind guests to wash hands regularly		In advance of each guest arrival, with top up of cleaning supplies where required	
Appliances Guest use of kettle, iron, hairdryer, television remote, phone set, etc.	Guestrooms	Disinfect all appliances with particular focus on remote controls and phones	Provide signage to advise guests of risk of using appliances and if wipes / gloves are provided, to use where required		In advance of each guest arrival	
Guest Directory and information	Guestrooms	If laminated, disinfect. If not remove.	Information can be emailed to pre-booked reservations		For laminated information, disinfect in advance of each guest arrival	
Pillowcases, sheets, duvets, etc	Beds	Clean as per SOPs and as directed by HSE guidelines			As required, and in advance of each guest arrival	

Ensuites & Bathrooms

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Hard surfaces e.g. light switches, taps, plugs, grabrails, etc	Ensuite / Bathroom	Disinfect	Deep Clean		In advance of each guest arrival	
Bins for guest use	Ensuite / Bathroom	Provide lidded pedal bins with plastic and tied liners			Empty and disinfect in advance of each guest arrival	
General use of ensuite	Ensuite / Bathroom	Signage regarding hand / respiratory hygiene	Provide antibacterial soap or wipes		Signage on display at all times. Soap / wipes to be replaced as required	
Bathroom amenities	Ensuite / Bathroom	Remove all disposable items such as sachets and provide as requested			In advance of each guest arrival	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Door plates, handles and areas of doors used to push open doors	Sitting Room Doors	Disinfect door handles and plates			In advance of each guest arrival	
Hard surfaces All areas that guests may touch regularly, e.g. light switches, cupboard handles, door handles, arms of chairs, etc	Sitting Room	Disinfect all hard surfaces	Provide guests with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use Signage to remind guests to wash hands regularly		In advance of each guest arrival, with top up of cleaning supplies where required <i>Check HSE guidelines www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/</i>	
Appliances Guest use of kettle, iron, hairdryer, television remote, phone set, etc.	Sitting Room	Disinfect all appliances with particular focus on remote controls and phones	Provide signage to advise guests of risk of using appliances and if wipes / gloves are provided, to use where required		In advance of each guest arrival	
Guest Directory and information	Sitting Room	If laminated, disinfect. If not remove.	Information can be emailed to pre-booked reservations		For laminated information, disinfect In advance of each guest arrival	
Close contact with other guests	Sitting Room	Move furniture / chairs to allow for sufficient social spacing as outlined in HSE guidelines			In advance of each guest arrival	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Door plates, handles and areas of doors used to push open doors	Doors	Disinfect door handles and plates			In advance of each guest arrival	
Hard surfaces All areas that guests may touch regularly, e.g. light switches, cupboard handles, door handles, arms of chairs, etc	Kitchen / Dining Area	Disinfect all hard surfaces	Provide guests with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use Signage to remind guests to wash hands regularly		In advance of each guest arrival, with top up of cleaning supplies where required <i>Check HSE guidelines www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/</i>	
Appliances Guest use of kettle, iron, television remote, cooker knobs, etc.	Kitchen / Dining Area	Disinfect all appliances with particular focus on remote controls and phones	Provide signage to advise guests of risk of using appliances and if wipes / gloves are provided, to use where required		In advance of each guest arrival	
Close contact with other guests	Kitchen / Dining Area	Move furniture / chairs to allow for sufficient social spacing as outlined in HSE guidelines			In advance of each guest arrival	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Cross contamination	Cutlery, crockery & glassware	All cutlery, crockery and glassware to be washed	Information provided to guests on correct methods of washing utensils		In advance of each guest arrival	
Cross contamination	Cookware and utensils	All cookware and utensils to be washed	Information provided to guests on correct methods of washing utensils		In advance of each guest arrival	
Bins for guest use	Kitchen / Dining Area	Provide lidded pedal bins with plastic and tied liners			Empty and disinfect in advance of each guest arrival	
Multi-use items	All condiments	Remove salt & pepper cruets	Provide disposable sachets		Immediately	
Cross contamination	Welcome Basket	Should a Welcome Basket be provided, all food included should be hygienically wrapped	Only include pre-packed items		In advance of each guest arrival	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Inaccurate Staff Briefing / Inconsistent Messages	Communication with staff	Pre-arrival updates / briefings re current HSE Guidelines and any recent changes.			In advance of each guest arrival (as required)	
Incorrect or out of date contact details for staff	Communication with staff	Ensure contact details for all staff are up to date e.g. mobile numbers	Develop a 'cascade' emergency communications plan		As required	
Unprofessional and inaccurate signage	Signs and notices	Print and display signage available online www.failteireland.ie/Utility/COVID-19.aspx www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/			As required	
Multilingual signs and information	Signs and notices	Offer materials in multiple languages to educate customers in various languages about hand and respiratory hygiene.			As required	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff ?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Rubbish disposal	All areas	Ensure all rubbish bags are immediately disposed of in appropriate external facility	<p>Staff disposing of rubbish must wear appropriate protective wear e.g. gloves</p> <p>Hands must be washed directly after disposal</p>		Regularly (as required)	
Bad ventilation	All areas	Ventilate rooms by opening external windows			Regularly (as required)	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Handling of documentation by various staff members	Staff process and procedure documents	SOPs, recipes, rotas, bookings, etc. used by staff may be laminated if possible	If laminated, disinfect		Disinfect regularly (as required)	
Uninformed staff with inadequate direction	Covid-19 case possible / Someone presents with symptoms	Ensure staff are aware of steps to take and appoint senior staff as deputies to lead teams.	Plan the steps you will take in the unlikely event that a case is identified within your property. Follow HSE guidelines		As required	

Additional Considerations for Multi-Unit Properties

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Lack of accurate information	Displayed on website	Information from HSE www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/	Provide hotel policy on the management of guest safety regarding COVID-19		Check daily and update as required	
Cancellation policy	Displayed on website	Provide clear information on cancellation policy in place during COVID-19			Check daily and update as required	
Car park	Open bins	Keep all bins and area around bins clear of rubbish	Bins should have disposable bin liners and tied liners		Empty regularly (as required)	
Entrance	Door handles	Signage and additional hand sanitiser to be available both inside and outside of the main entrance doors	Insist all guests and staff use the hand sanitiser before proceeding to reception or public areas		Ongoing	
Accurate information	Bookings	Provide staff with clear and consistent message to guests enquiring about their booking by email and phone, including a reference to containment measures in place e.g. social distancing, hygiene measures, etc.				

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Shaking hands	Reception	Ensure that staff do not shake hands with guests and/or others	Place a sign on reception to highlight this in a friendly manner e.g. 'Please don't take offence if we don't shake hands – this is for your safety. We value your custom'		At all times	
Washing hands	Reception	Clear signage at entrances and on desk at eye level at Reception Desk to remind guests and workers to wash hands			At all times	
Close contact with guests	Reception	Signage to ask guests to refrain from close contact with reception staff	Put visible references in place to indicate safe distance especially for groups of three or more		At all times	
External contamination from other guests	Reception	Hand sanitiser at reception	Signage in place to remind guests to wash hands before going to reception		Signage on display at all times and sanitiser replaced as soon as container is empty	
Untrained staff	Reception	Basic training for all front office staff on the signs and controls re COVID-19	Sufficient staff and continuity of staff		Ongoing	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Counter tops and lobby furnishings e.g. light switches, door release buttons, etc.	Reception	Disinfect			Regularly (as required) <i>Check HSE guidelines</i> www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/	
Registration process	Reception	Pre-registration where possible. If not possible, reception personnel to register guest.	Remove pens. Staff maintain own pen.		Disinfect staff pens after each use and replace regularly (as required)	
Documentation and brochures for guest information	Reception	Remove any tourist information collateral, newspapers and books	Remove brochures from area		Signage on display at all times asking people to remove or dispose of newspapers	
Stair handrails	Stairs	Disinfect surfaces. Have sanitiser available			Disinfect regularly (as required)	
Door plates handles and areas of doors used to push open doors	Door to guest areas	Where possible, keep doors open (keep fire regulations in mind)	Disinfect surfaces especially door handles and areas used to push open doors		Disinfect regularly (as required)	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Bins for guest use	Reception	Use lidded pedal bins with plastic bin liner with ties	Remove bins from area		Empty and disinfect regularly (as required)	
Receipts / invoices for guests	Reception	Offer to email invoices or confirmation of payment			As required	
Room cards / keys	Reception	Disinfect			After each use e.g. guest has checked out / staff handling	
Payment facilities	Reception	Encourage the use of card and contactless payments where possible	Disinfect payment machines Staff handling cash to wear gloves		Disinfect after each use	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Furniture used by guests	Lobby	Clean and disinfect chair arms, tables and any rails in lobby area	Signage regarding hand / respiratory hygiene			Signage on display at all times
Light switches, door release buttons, call bells, etc	Entrance / Hallway	Disinfect	Provide guests with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use			In advance of each guest arrival
Close contact with other guests	Lobby	Move furniture / chairs to allow for sufficient social spacing as outlined in HSE guidelines				Regularly (as required)
Bins for guest use	Lobby	Provide lidded pedal bins with plastic and tied liners				Empty bin and disinfect regularly / as required
General contamination	Lobby	Signage provided to remind guest to wash hands regularly and to use hand sanitisers				Signage on display at all times

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Doors	Public Toilets, including baby changing facilities	Disinfect door handles and areas used to push open door	Leave door to main toilet area open		Disinfect hourly or as regularly as possible	
Hard surfaces, e.g. light switches, taps, plugs, grabrails, etc	Public Toilets, including baby changing facilities	Disinfect all hard surfaces	Provide signage to remind guest to wash hands regularly		Disinfect hourly or as regularly as possible	
General contamination	Public Toilets, including baby changing facilities	Provide signage with pictorial instructions on how to correctly wash hands. Ensure water and soap available to guests.	Provide hand sanitiser		Signage on display at all times and sanitiser replaced as soon as container is empty	
Bins for guest use	Public Toilets, including baby changing facilities	Provide lidded pedal bins with plastic and tied liners			Empty bin and disinfect regularly / as required	
Hand dryers	Public Toilets, including baby changing facilities	Provide a disposable alternative to hand dryers e.g. paper towels			Check supply during each hourly visit	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Inaccurate Staff Briefing / Inconsistent Messages	Communication with staff	Pre-Shift updates/briefings re current HSE Guidelines and any recent changes.			Before each shift (as required)	
Incorrect or out of date contact details for staff	Communication with staff	Ensure contact details for all staff are up to date e.g. mobile numbers	Develop a 'cascade' emergency communications plan		As required	
Accessible information for staff	Communication with staff	Notices in staff room / areas outlining details provided in staff briefings.			As required	
Unprofessional and inaccurate signage	Signs and notices	Print and display signage available online www.failteireland.ie/Utility/Covid-19.aspx www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/			As required	
Multilingual signs and information	Signs and notices	Offer materials in multiple languages to educate customers in various languages about hand and respiratory hygiene.			As required	

What are the risks to your guests & Staff?	Where are the risks?	Actions to help control risks? <small>Minimum Requirements</small>	What additional controls can you put in place?	Who needs to action the control?	Frequency of control measures?	Control check
Lack of trained staff for key tasks	Resourcing	Cross-train staff on key tasks to ensure cover if required.			Ongoing	
Employee absences	Resourcing	Plan for the impact of employee absences, and determine alternative approaches or reallocating staff from non-essential tasks			Ongoing	
Insufficient scheduling of staff	Resourcing	Schedule rotas to ensure additional tasks are controlled e.g. hygiene measures	Ensure roster is reviewed to facilitate additional requirements of staff		Ongoing	

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Door plates, handles and areas of doors used to open doors	Staff areas and offices	Where possible, keep doors open (keep fire regulations in mind)	Disinfect surfaces especially door handles and areas used to push open doors		Disinfect regularly (as required)	
Desks and hard surfaces including light switches, call release buttons, etc.	Staff areas and offices	Disinfect all hard surfaces	Provide staff with antibacterial cleaning supplies to use. Signage to remind staff of hand and respiratory hygiene		Disinfect regularly (as required)	
Hard surface in staff bathrooms e.g. taps, plugs, grabrails, etc	Staff bathrooms	Disinfect all surfaces	Deep clean Signage to remind staff of hand and respiratory hygiene and handwashing guidelines		Disinfect regularly (as required)	
Hand dryers in staff bathrooms	Staff bathrooms	Provide a disposable alternative to hand dryers e.g. paper towels			Regularly (as required)	
Appliances in staff room e.g. kettle, microwave, remote control	Guestrooms	Disinfect all appliances with particular focus on remote controls and phones	Provide signage to advise guests of risk of using appliances and if wipes / gloves are provided, to use where required		Daily and at check out	