

General Health and Safety Guidelines Applicable for lodging facilities

1.1 General recommendations

1. In general, government recommends to practice (and will refer to) social distancing and social hygiene measures as described on <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>, most specifically hand sanitation (see chapter 1.6)
2. Hotels and guesthouses are recommended to review, update, and develop Prevention & Safety Plans for their organization, based on the particular location and physical plant, with special consideration on handling situations with increased risk of severe illness. This should include: social distancing policies, layouts for common areas, enhanced cleaning methods and policies, Personal Protective Equipment per employee per task and timeframes for cleaning per space. In the back of this document, for specific extra links are provided to detail recommended policies and procedures.
3. Appoint a designated person or team to be in charge of all health and hygiene topics regarding COVID-19 and any other infectious diseases, with experience managing and updating cleaning and hygiene policies and procedures. This person or team is in charge of the execution of the established guidelines, responsible for monitoring compliance with the company's policies, leads the implementation processes and adapts to the inevitable changes that will need to be made in updating the Company's protocols.
4. An education/awareness plan is recommended to ensure that the identified team is trained and remain up to date with the development of the prevention measures to protect your guest and staff
5. We recommend thoroughly training of employees and informing guests clearly of your guidelines. Sending visitors and customers your guidelines in advance of visiting your property helps, they accommodate to your standards.
6. When guests are reserving or booking ensure there is a small questionnaire place to confirm the expected guests COVID19 status and affirmation on your COVID19 guidelines
7. We advise to keep a logbook of the important sanitation actions and measures carried out by time task is completed and person performing such task.
8. We advise to place proper signage of guidelines, social distancing and other sanitation procedures clearly at the entry of your business, and preferably at more locations. This is not just for repetition of your message towards employees, but also enhances clarity for the customer.

1.2 Employees

- Government recommends daily temperature checks of employees with a no-contact infrared thermometer. Calibrate the thermometer as recommended in the Instruction Manual of the product. Regardless of the result, it is recommended to always remain alert of symptoms such as cough, runny nose or shortness of breath of employees.
- If any employee either displays bodily temperature of above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius or refuses to have his/her temperature checked, it is recommended they be sent home and should not be able to enter work or serve customers.
- We suggest employees to follow the safe distancing protocols and the guidelines for the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Depending on the frequency of the task in the business hygiene plan (1.1), employees should be provided with enough PPE for reasonably safe execution of tasks and receive new PPE at designated locations as stipulated by the specific business plan. Facemasks when worn should cover the mouth and nose area while interacting with colleagues. Employees may be required to wear protective gloves per tasks, such as laundry attendance.
- Employers are responsible for providing the appropriate protective equipment for their workforce.
- We suggest to conduct a detailed training workshop for all employees to review and to train them of your enhanced COVID 19 policies and procedures relevant to their position. The training is important to make sure that employees are properly informed on the required use of PPE and to secure commitment to its implementation and continued use.
- We advise to ensure that everyone in the staff is aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, and what to do if a staff member or customer become symptomatic.
- Knowledge of the guidelines can be strengthened by having employee handbooks and documents signed and acknowledged by employees.
- We recommend to establish a protocol to identify those employees that are at high risk or vulnerable to contracting COVID 19 and try to find tasks that have a lower risk of contracting the virus.
- If applicable, we advise working from home if possible – especially for risk groups.
- We advise to provide hygiene materials such as tissues and hand sanitizer stations for all offices / rooms of your hotel; especially at the entrances.
- We suggest to discourage workers from using phones or personal screens during shifts unless it is an urgent matter; and inform them of the need to clean these devices regularly as well.
- We recommend Companies make use of signage to promote their health and safety guidelines with emphasis on reminding people of practicing good hygiene and hand washing. At a minimum, these signs should be displayed in all wash rooms and in the employee break areas.
- Staff who report from home that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 should follow the instructions received from their doctor and CPS, including the recommendation of self-isolation at home until the symptoms have completely disappeared

1.3 Public areas – front desks, receptions, counters, lobbies, waiting areas and offices

- It is advised to ensure that employees, customers guests are aware of the regulations and procedures per of the property hygiene plan.
- The use of physical barriers such as glass, plexiglass or acrylic “sneeze guards” recommended for areas such as counters, front desks or service stands.
- We suggest to encourage cashless transactions or introduce digital payments. The use of touchless payment methods are encouraged. It is recommended where feasible to avoid using devices where customers need to touch a screen, a button or hand on over an employee a credit card.
- In case a business cannot use touchless payment processing systems, it should make readily available to customers antibacterial wipes or, swabs for hand and card cleaning and/or install plastic coverings to avoid direct contact with the unit. The attending employee is recommended to disinfect the unit after each use, even when customer uses a swab. Also be mindful about pens changing hands for required signatures on CC Slips and other seemingly minor exchanges of contact.
- When handling a credit card, employees are recommended to sanitize their hands. It is also recommended to wipe and disinfect the counter surface after every customer interaction.
- We advise to use appointment systems to avoid queues whenever possible. Mark lines on the floor to indicate the 2-meter distance anywhere where people tend to wait in lines. It is advised for Businesses to review the receiving protocols and secure proper hygiene for supplies deliveries.
- We recommend to appoint self-evident (or sign guided) waiting areas where customers can keep six feet distance from each other. Areas where lines are formed should be clearly marked with floor decals or markers clearly indicating the appropriate physical distancing space. This includes but is not limited to front desks, entrance areas, reception, elevator lobbies, restaurants.
- Reception and front desks should have emergency phone numbers immediately available of the health authorities, ambulance, SMMC, and CPS for use whenever there is the possibility that a guest may be ill. In addition, management and other emergency personnel contact phone numbers must be readily available and updated. **Number 914 functions as the COVID19 number for health information; whereas 911 functions for other emergencies.**
- All handles, counters and elevators are to be completely sanitized and disinfected on a regular basis
- Use of self-service water, coffee or snacks stations are discouraged.

1.4 Elevators

- We recommend social distancing should apply to the elevators. Only very limited number of persons should be allowed in an elevator, with the requirement that all wear masks or facecloth and the permitted number of passengers at one time depending on the size of the elevator and as provided in the Company’s business hygiene plan as established under chapter. Signage should be outside each elevator floor indicating guidelines.
- We recommend that the elevator hygiene guidelines are easily visible inside the elevators and have the floor and buttons regularly sanitized.

1.5 Hand washing and sanitation as most important step in outbreak prevention

- Hotels are recommended to have hand sanitizer dispensers readily available for all employees and customers. These must be strategically situated in common public areas including the entrance to the business, front desk, concierge stands, lobbies, elevator lobbies, and outside each bathroom location throughout the facilities. The stations must be visible for all, and the use of it must be complimentary. When possible, it is recommended to provide touchless stations.
- Hand sanitizers can be used as an additional measure but should not replace ubiquitous emphasis on handwashing. Hand hygiene means regularly and thoroughly cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand disinfection should take place after exchanging objects (money, credit cards) with guests. We suggest to follow these five steps every time:
 1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
 2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
 3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
 4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
 5. Dry your hands using a clean towel
- Handwashing should be done when sneezing, touching the face, blowing the nose, after use of the restroom, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, smoking, eating, drinking, going on break and before or after starting a shift.

1.6 Cleaning

- Start cleaning from the top to down, and from a clean area to a dirty area.
- Use disposable towels, or use towels one time, after which they are washed at 60° C.
- For cleaning it is recommended to make use of CDC and EPA-approved disinfectants of 70% with claims to be effective against viruses, and bacteria. The list of approved products can be found at EPA, <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Clean and properly disinfect surfaces regularly and increase the frequency based on traffic and guidelines from various authority (<http://www.sintmaartengov.org/government/VSA/Health-Updates/NOVELCORONAVIRUS/Pages/default.aspx>) for its sanitation.
- This list of guidelines contains suggestions for cleaning all soft or porous surfaces (e.g. Sofa, rugs, drapes) with appropriate cleaning products.
- We suggest to regularly wipe and disinfect high-touch areas such as door handles, light switches, safes, coffee machines, refrigerators, touch screen computers, elevator buttons and in case of hotels-- tv remotes. Frequency can be determined in your business hygiene plan as per our general recommendations under 1.1.
- Restrooms are recommended to be cleaned regularly.
- Waste is recommended be handled with gloves and bagged properly, and bins to be emptied regularly. In case of disposing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), government suggests to follow the safety disposal protocol established by the CDC and the WHO. (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-Coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and->

[how-to-use-masks?gclid=EAlalQobChMIgpyzsMSi6QIVQcDICh07jQCxEAAAYASAAEgLkR_D_BwE\)](#)

- Air conditioning is suggested not to be overlooked and to be properly cleaned, including the cleaning of the filters at regular intervals.
- Shared break and kitchen areas, including appliances also require a regular cleaning with the appropriate disinfectant.
- Keep detergents and disinfectants away from children. Do not mix detergents and disinfectants.

1.7 Hotel specific pointers

- It is suggested to implement a temperature monitoring protocol using touchless thermometer for all guests and employees.
- Consider contactless check-in and check-out. If this is not possible, we advise to create a separate or multiple check-in and checkout area with 2 meter social distancing spacing if front desk area is expected to get over-crowded.
- If on-line checkout not feasible, hotels should advise guests to inform the front desk about their checkout plans so that bills can be ready at the expected checkout time.
- Properties are recommended to have disinfecting wipes readily available for guests or employees to use for luggage disinfection upon entry.
- Guests are recommended to wear masks in public areas when interacting with employees or other with the exception of guests in the persons travel group. If guest does not have a mask, hotel staff should provide guests with one. A mask can be offered either on a complimentary basis or sold at cost.

Rooms

- We recommend to suspend mini-bar service and in-room sale of items until further notice. Fridges should remain in the room but it should be properly cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Rooms should be pre-assigned as much as possible to avoid waiting and unnecessary physical contact.
- We suggest to provide summaries of your hygiene protocol and PPE offer in rooms
- Providing disinfectant dispensers in every room can further add to both feeling of comfort and overall hygiene.
- It is suggested that hotel restaurants do touchless (closed door) delivery of ordered items. Room service should avoid entering the room.

Pools, Jacuzzis, Hot Tubs and Beach Area

- Pools should be closely monitored for cleanliness and hygiene and disinfected more frequently in order to reduce the spread of the virus. Please see the following link for more details on the proper cleaning and disinfecting of pool water. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>) We suggest to put extra effort in following international standards of pool maintenance (see for guidelines <https://www.phta.org/>)
- Pool chairs, umbrellas and tables should be reconfigured to secure separation of at least 6 feet between guest or parties.

- Each chair, umbrella and table should be disinfected before and after each use.
- We discourage self-service towel management. Towels should be distributed by an employee wearing the appropriate protective gear. For properties without pool and beach attendants, it is recommended to leave the towels inside the guestrooms as part of the housekeeping service.
- We recommend social distancing by guests while inside the pool, Jacuzzi and hot tubs or on the beach or in the ocean.
- We suggest to provide ready to use disinfectant wipes stations in strategic locations around the pool lounge and beach chairs area to facilitate the disinfection of surfaces.
- Avoid sharing beach equipment (like snorkeling equipment, and floatation devices etc)

Housekeeping

- We recommend that guests be provided the choice of opting out of receiving housekeeping and/or services in their rooms
- It is suggested to wash bedcovers regularly. Sheets and linen are recommended to be machine washed--Follow the CDC high-level infection control procedures to collect wash and dispose laundry. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>)
- We advise linens only be transported in sealed bags, and to disinfect all barrows after and before each use.
- We suggest that PPE be allocated as described in the business hygiene plan and at a minimum that housekeepers wear a mask, single-use gloves and closed shoes when servicing each room.
- An enhanced room cleaning and disinfection protocols should be designed and implemented for situations in which there are confirmed or suspected guests with COVID-19.
- Staff responsible for luggage should wear proper PPE when handling luggage and should practice social distancing.

Spas, Gyms, Fitness Centers

- We suggest that Spas, gyms and fitness centers develop industry standards of social distancing and hygiene for their individual facility. For specific details for Spas, see back of this document.
- Extra attention is recommended for high-touch areas, such as weight equipment, treadmill interfaces and handrails, yoga mats and exercise balls.
- Hand Sanitizer is recommended to be available by the entrance, as well as disinfectant wipes readily available for guests to use to wipe down equipment prior to use and when finished
- Consider the gym, as well as the spa, to be open on appointment only to avoid crowds.
- Gym and Spa visitors should be instructed to change and use the bathroom in their rooms or at home

2.1 Suggested actions in case of an infected guest

- In case of suspected COVID19 cases we suggest to follow the national guidelines, to immediately contact the front desk , call 914, and follow protocol
- Service staff may require additional training in the preparation, handling, application, and storage of these products, mostly bleach, which may be at a higher concentration than usual. The cleaning staff should know how to make sure the bleach is not disintegrated and how to rinse it off after 10 minutes.
- When use of bleach is not suitable, e.g. telephone, remote control equipment, door handlings, buttons in the elevator, etc. then alcohol 70% could be used.

- Whenever possible, use only disposable cleaning materials. Discard any cleaning equipment made of cloths and absorbent materials, e.g. mophead and wiping cloths. When pertinent, disinfect properly non-porous cleaning materials with 0.5% sodium hypochlorite solution or according to manufacturer's instructions before using for other rooms.
- Textiles, linens, and clothes should be put in special, marked laundry bags and handled carefully to prevent raising dust, with consequent potential contamination of surrounding surfaces or people. Instructions should be given for washing them in hot cycles (70°C or more) with the usual detergents.
- Operational considerations for COVID-19 management in the accommodation sector. Interim guidance of used items must be handled appropriately to mitigate the risk of potential transmission. Disposable items (hand towels, gloves, masks, tissues) should be placed in a container with a lid and disposed of according to the hotel action plan and national regulations for waste management.
- In general, public areas where a case has passed through or has spent minimal time in (corridors) do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.
- All rooms and common areas should be ventilated daily.

2.2 The Contacts (travel companions) of COVID 19 positive visitors

Health requirements/recommendations:

- Collective Prevention Services request that all persons entering St. Maarten should complete a form and email to ehas@sintmaartengov.org 72 hours prior to arrival.
- Persons entering have to also submit a certified laboratory RT-PCR-COVID19 test results no older than 72 hours to CPS by means of ehas@sintmaartengov.org
- Your guests must have a health insurance to deal with medical issues
- Guests are expected to monitor his/her symptoms and report immediately to the front desk of the accommodation, who is expected to take immediate actions as it relates to requesting person to be isolated in his/her room and inform your house doctor and Collective Prevention Services begin recording all immediate contact of this person to inform these persons
- Have a registration in place to register guests, respective room number and date of onset of flu-like symptoms or infectious disease which can be handed over to your house doctor and report/email to the Collective Prevention Services at email ehas@sintmaarengov.org
- Recommend to discuss and identify a physician whom your guests can call in the event medical assistance is required
- Note and remind all your guests to call prior to going to the emergency room and/or a physician
- Remind your guests/visitors to be vigilant, responsible and adhere to the guidelines to protect themselves and your staff.
- Guests are expected to follow the public guidelines as it relates to masks use, social distance, hand-washing and properly disposing of used items in a garbage bin.
- Guests must be isolated in the room if they have developed any symptoms and signal such to the front desk, call the physician and inform CPS.
- Hotel must know the difference between quarantine and isolation and what are the respective actions see [Guidelines on quarantine and isolation](#)

3. Specific Hotel Areas

3.1 Restaurants, Food vendors and Bars

Please follow the [Guidelines for Restaurants, Food vendors and Bars](#)

3.2 Spas

Please follow the [Guidelines for Spas](#)

3.3 Casinos

Please follow the [Guidelines for Casinos](#)