

Preparing for Potential Infection in West Virginia Communities

Since February 2020, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health has been following an increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. The Bureau for Public Health monitors Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates, hospital admissions, and other data to determine the potential risk to citizens in West Virginia from the virus.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath

PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION

- Occurs via small droplets from the nose or mouth of the infected person when they cough, sneeze, or exhale.
- Maintain 2 meter (6 ft) distance between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel sick. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

PREVENTION

- Isolating sick and diagnosed individuals.
- Encourage proper handwashing.
- Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.
- Provide education about COVID-19.
- Discourage sharing food, drinks, etc.

CDC GUIDANCE FOR NON-HEALTHCARE FACILITY ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING

- Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the lodging facilities, such as guest rooms, check-in counters and other frequently touched surfaces. Use the cleaning agents that are normally used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
- **Disinfectants:** To determine if a product is effective against COVID-19, review the product label or product specification sheet and ensure it states “*EPA-approved emerging viral pathogen claims.*” You may also search the product name in the Environmental Protection Agency’s registered product database at: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Linens may become contaminated with the virus, so it is also important to add disinfectant when washing laundry. Bed scarfs and bedspreads should be washed more frequently.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS

- Set a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting facilities.
- Clean and disinfect touchable surfaces frequently.
- Provide proper cleaning and disinfecting supplies including instructions for use, as well as personal protective equipment (PPE) for workers.
- Provide and maintain adequate handwashing supplies (hand soap, running water, disposable hand towels, waste cans, etc.) and hand sanitizer.

PUBLIC SPACES - LOBBIES, DINING AREAS, CONFERENCE ROOMS, ETC.

- Promote everyday prevention actions:
 - ◇ Cover sneezes and coughs
 - ◇ Frequent handwashing
 - ◇ Stay at home if you’re sick
 - ◇ Avoid close contact
- Close seating in all the dining areas.
- Close all fitness centers & gyms.
- Offer only prepackaged breakfast items.
- Ensure adequate handwashing supplies are provided and maintained.
- Post up-to-date information on COVID-19.
- Routinely and frequently clean all hands-on surfaces including entrance/exit doors.
- Provide hand sanitizer for public and staff use.
- Post signs throughout the facility describing ways to prevent the spread of germs.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance for Hotels, Motels and Other Lodging Facilities April 2020

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PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS FOR HOTEL WORKERS

- Train housekeeping staff to use the disinfectants safely and correctly. Staff should wear gloves when cleaning. Many of these cleaning products need to remain on hard surfaces for several minutes in order to work. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper use to get the most virus killing protection. Schedule and perform routine cleaning and disinfection of all contact surfaces in public areas, guestrooms, television remote controls, toilet flush handles, door handles, water faucet handles, and flooring.
- Train hotel staff and post signage to remind guests and workers to wash hands with soap and warm water frequently, for at least 20 seconds each time. If possible, provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol in all guest contact areas and to all staff. In addition, staff should be advised not to touch their faces and to practice "social distancing" by standing at least six feet away from guests and other workers.
- Educate staff on the most common signs and symptoms of coronavirus infection, which are fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms typically occur 1-14 days after exposure, though a small proportion of people who are infected don't have symptoms.

PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

- Public spaces, and the front desk, need to be cleaned frequently. If possible, provide disposable disinfectant wipes to front-of-house staff to disinfect surfaces between guests. High touch areas in public spaces include tables in the lobby area, buttons on elevators, water fountains, and ice and vending machines. Pens at the front desk and room keys and key cards should also be cleaned with disinfectant.
- You should maintain records that will help you trace who has been in contact with any infected individuals that have been to your property. Review and implement a record keeping process to maintain records of guest and staff movement. These records should be kept for a minimum of 12 months as required by 64 CSR 18 General Sanitation Rule. This includes maintaining guest registration records, employee work assignments, documentation of key control procedures including the electronic lock records, and security camera closed circuit tapes. This is especially important if someone in your hotel has been confirmed to have the virus.
- Consult with the local health department to determine appropriate actions if a guest or worker presents symptoms of COVID-19 disease, as well as how to respond if asked to quarantine guests. Public health officials at the state, federal, and local level have the legal authority to implement control measures to prevent the spread of communicable disease, such as isolation and quarantine, travel restrictions, and medical treatment.

For additional information on COVID-19, please visit our webpage at: www.coronavirus.wv.gov.

Questions and concerns can also be directed to the 24/7, toll-free COVID-19 information hotline at 1-800-887-4304.

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OUT-OF-STATE TRAVELERS

Travel by infected persons is the means by which coronavirus spreads from state to state, so it is vitally important for the tourism and hospitality industry to take a leading role in protecting the lives and health of West Virginians. In addition to implementing enhanced cleaning protocols, lodging providers are also asked to notify local law enforcement of any individual they believe to be violating the self-quarantine procedures set forth by Governor Justice's Executive Order.

Currently, there are no restrictions on who can enter West Virginia's borders but rather on who must quarantine. The Governor's self-quarantine order specifies that out-of-state-guests from certain hot spots must self-isolate. The Executive Order lists a few examples of states and countries, by way of example only, that are "areas of substantial community spread of COVID-19," but the Order explicitly says that those examples are "without limitation." Obviously, the number of areas with substantial community spread is increasing every day, and will be ever-changing as this pandemic continues.

Lodging providers are asked to contact local law enforcement if they suspect guests or patrons are violating or flouting the requirement to self-isolate for the first 14 days of their visit or the duration of their stay (if they are just passing through, for example).