



**SECTOR SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SAFETY STANDARDS FOR  
OPERATORS OF LODGINGS TO ADDRESS COVID-19  
As of June 8, 2020**

---

**Purpose**

These sector specific COVID-19 workplace safety standards apply to all forms of lodging operations covered by the DPH Guidance. That includes hotels, motels, inns, bed and breakfast accommodations, and all other short-term residential rentals including those arranged through on-line hosting platforms such as Airbnb and VRBO. These standards are issued to provide owners and operators of lodging operations and workers at those businesses with instructions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19 as lodging operators return to less restricted service.

These standards are minimum requirements only and are not exclusive or exhaustive. As the public health data for disease prevention upon which these guidelines are based can and does change frequently, it is the responsibility of each lodging operator to stay abreast of any updates to these requirements.

**Standards for Responsible Lodging Operations in Massachusetts**

No activity in lodging businesses shall occur without meeting these sector specific COVID-19 workplace safety standards. These standards apply to all lodging businesses until rescinded or amended by the State. The owner of the lodging business shall be responsible for meeting these standards.

Ballrooms, meeting rooms, function halls, and all other indoor or outdoor event facilities must remain closed. Lodging operators are not permitted to host weddings, business events, or other organized gatherings of any kind.

On-site restaurants, pools, gyms, spas, golf courses, and other amenities co-located with the lodging operation may operate only as these categories are authorized to operate elsewhere in the Commonwealth and subject to the COVID-19 safety rules that apply to free-standing facilities of the same sort. Lodging operators must consult the [Massachusetts Reopening website](#) to review these additional sector-specific safety standards.

Lodging operators must inform guests at the time a reservation is made and at check-in of the Commonwealth's policy urging travelers to self-quarantine for 14 days when arriving in Massachusetts from out of state.

Operators of unstaffed, individual unit lodging facilities such as short-term home or apartment rentals are required to comply with the hygiene standards specified below including cleaning requirements and minimum periods of separation between rentals.

The following workplace specific safety standards are organized around four distinct categories covering Social Distancing, Hygiene Protocols, Staffing and Operations, and Cleaning and Disinfecting.

## **I. Social Distancing**

- Ensure separation of 6 feet or more between individuals unless this creates a safety hazard
  - Close or reconfigure worker and guest common spaces and high-density areas where workers or guests are likely to congregate (e.g., break rooms, eating areas, sitting areas, business centers, concierge service areas, lobbies/front desk check-in) to allow 6 feet of physical distancing
  - Redesign office spaces, work stations or cubicles, if possible, to ensure workspaces allow for at least six feet of physical distancing
  - Physical partitions must separate workstations that cannot be spaced out; partitions must be at least 6 feet tall
  - Arrange for separation of 6 feet or more for guests during check in and check out times by installing separation markers on floor and otherwise limiting opportunities for crowding in lobby and front desk areas
  - Establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic if possible, to minimize contact among persons in transit. Post clearly visible signage regarding these policies
- Require face coverings for all workers and guests when inside hallways and common areas, except where an individual is unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability
- Improve ventilation for enclosed spaces where possible (e.g., open doors and windows)
- Guests should enter through doors that are either propped open, if possible, or are automated or manually operated by a worker that is frequently handwashing and/or using proper hand sanitizer
- Prohibit gatherings of 10 or more workers during work hours
- Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator and ensure the use of face coverings. Use signage to communicate these requirements
- Require workers to avoid handshakes and similar greetings that break physical distance
- Workers should not open the doors of cars or taxis. Valet parking operations should be avoided unless necessary due to physical or geographic constraints or in order to accommodate individual guests with disabling conditions
- Contactless payment methods are encouraged

## **II. Hygiene Protocols**

- Ensure access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water, and allow sufficient break time for workers to wash hands frequently; alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used as an alternative
- Supply workers at workplace location with adequate cleaning products (e.g., sanitizer, disinfecting wipes)
- Require that workers wash hands or use hand sanitizer frequently
- Provide hand sanitizer in public areas throughout the facility for guest and worker use
- Limit sharing of handheld equipment, phones, desks, workstations, and other tools and equipment between workers to the extent possible

- Any shared equipment should be sanitized before, during and after each shift or anytime the equipment is transferred to a worker
- Post visible signage throughout the site (front and back of the house) to remind workers and guests of hygiene and safety protocols
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in offices, guest rooms, and other spaces
- Discontinue the use of shared food and beverage equipment in lobbies (including shared coffee brewers). Close manually operated ice machines or use hands free machines

### **III. Staffing and Operations**

- Provide training to workers on up-to-date safety information and precautions including hygiene and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission, including:
  - Social distancing, hand-washing, proper use of face coverings
  - Self-screening at home, including temperature and symptom checks
  - Reinforce that workers who are sick may not appear for work
  - When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe
  - Which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting and suffering from a severe case of the virus
- Adjust workplace hours and shifts (working teams with different schedules or staggered arrival / departure) to minimize contact across workers and reduce congestion
- Permit breaks outside to enable social distancing, if possible
- Stagger staff meal and break times, regulate the maximum number of people in one place, and ensure at least 6 feet of physical distancing
- Adjust training and onboarding process to allow for social distancing, conduct remotely if possible
- Daily pre-shift meetings should be conducted virtually or in areas that allow social distancing
- Minimize shared touch surfaces such as kiosks, tablets, pens, credit cards, receipts and keys
- Guest room service, laundry and dry-cleaning services, and amenity deliveries should be made available using contactless pick-up and delivery protocols
- No buffets or self-service areas with multi-use items are allowed
- Limit interaction between workers and outside visitors or delivery; implement touchless receiving when possible
- Maintain a log of workers and guests to support contact tracing (name, date, time, contact information) if needed
- Remove non-essential amenities (guest-facing water or coffee, coat rooms, etc.) from public locations
- Remove or limit paper amenities in guest rooms. Remove pen, paper and guest directory, magazines and brochures; supplement with digital material or make materials available upon request
- Workers who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- Encourage workers to self-identify symptoms or any close contact to a known or suspected COVID-19 case to the employer
- Encourage workers who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to the workplace employer for purposes of cleaning / disinfecting and contact tracing. If the employer is notified of a positive

case at the workplace, the employer shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) in the city or town where the workplace is located and assist the LBOH as reasonably requested to advise likely contacts to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other workers may be recommended consistent with guidance and / or at the request of the LBOH

- Post notice to workers and guests of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in the Commonwealth's [Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplace](#)

#### **IV. Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection within all common areas of the lodging site (multiple times a day if the lodging site has multiple guest rooms)
- Consider providing cleaning "kits" (portable containers with cleaning supplies) accessible throughout the hotel for areas that will be cleaned periodically throughout the day
- Practice enhanced room sanitation by cleaning and sanitizing all hard surfaces at a minimum each time a guest checks out and before the next guest is admitted, and laundering all linens, bedspreads and covers
- Dirty linens should be removed and transported from guest rooms in single-use, sealed bags, and pillow protectors on the guest room beds should be changed in between guests at a minimum. Bagging of these items should be done in the guest room to eliminate excess contact while being transported. All bed linen and laundry should be washed at a high temperature and cleaned in accordance with CDC guidelines
- Following each departure, consider leaving guest rooms vacant for 24 hours as part of cleaning protocol to allow for deep cleaning, disinfectant and cleaners to dry, and reasonable air exchange
- Housekeeping should not enter a guest room while the guest is physically present within the room except at the guest's specific request; Housekeeping must otherwise only service rooms when guests are not present and minimize contact with guest personal belongings; Housekeepers should open the doors and windows when possible to increase air circulation
- Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning
- Conduct frequent disinfecting of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, rolling carts, bathrooms)
- In the event that a guest presents a presumptive case of COVID-19 or a positive case, the room used by that guest may only be returned to service after undergoing an enhanced sanitization protocol, in accordance with CDC guidelines

**Additional worker safety guidelines and resources (with hyperlinks to web pages) are available below:**

U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):

[OSHA – COVID-19 Webpage](#)

[OSHA – Enforcement Guidelines Webpage](#)

[OSHA Fact Sheet – Protecting Workers During a Pandemic](#)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

[CDC – Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#)

CDC – Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease (Updated 3/21/20)

**Additional Information:**

Massachusetts State Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website  
[mass.gov/covid19](https://mass.gov/covid19)

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>