

COVID-19 (Coronavirus): Update for Tenant Halls

Last updated: 10 March 2020

Full guidance on decontamination in non-healthcare settings is available here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

What is coronavirus (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus that first emerged in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. Coronaviruses are common and have been known to cause infection to humans before.

Typical symptoms of coronavirus infection are fever and a cough that may progress to pneumonia (shortness of breath and difficulty breathing). Generally, symptoms are more severe in older people and people with pre-existing conditions.

To date, most cases of COVID-19 appear to be mild.

How is COVID-19 spread?

Evidence so far suggests that COVID-19 is most likely to be passed on when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with a symptomatic individual. There are two main ways in which COVID-19 can be transmitted:

1. close contact with individuals who have COVID-19 where respiratory droplets are generated through coughing and sneezing
2. it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching respiratory droplets (from coughing or sneezing) on a surface, object or the hand of a person who has COVID-19 and then touching your own mouth, nose, or eyes.

How long can the virus survive?

How long respiratory viruses can survive depends on a number of factors, e.g. the surface, temperature, and exposure to cleaning products. Under most circumstances, there is likely to be significantly less virus on any contaminated surface after 72 hours.

What can I do to ensure my tenant hall is kept clean?

It is important to clean any surface regularly, particularly in tenant halls where people congregate. Whether or not a surface might have contaminated respiratory droplets on it, the best way to clean is using a simple disinfectant. You should take this opportunity to review your cleaning contracts (if this is contracted out) or your own available cleaning supplies to ensure they meet industrial standards.

Any of the following is suitable:

- combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1000 parts per million available chlorine
- a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants
- if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

After cleaning, wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand rub. As always, avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Should I be doing anything new?

You may want to take this opportunity to remind staff, volunteers, and guests about regular cold and flu precautions and the importance of good hand washing. You may also consider providing additional hand sanitiser and/or hand washing stations, where appropriate, and ensuring that hand-contact surfaces (e.g. door handles) are cleaned.

Public Health England and the NHS have developed a poster, which you may want to display. This is included at the end of this document.

Someone in my tenant hall appears to be sick, what should I do?

It is natural to be worried about any form of illness spreading in your Tenant Hall or elsewhere. As of the 10 March 2020, there is no guidance to suggest that cleaning or disinfecting an area or surface requires any special supplies or methods. You should continue to clean your tenant hall as you would normally, using the recommended disinfectants. This will help to reduce the risk of transmission for COVID-19 as well as other infections like the cold or flu.

Someone who visited the tenant hall within the last 14 days has now been diagnosed with COVID-19

If a known case of COVID-19 has recently been in your tenant hall, it is important to clean the premises. In public areas where a symptomatic individual spent very little time and just passed through (e.g. corridors) and which are not visibly contaminated with any respiratory droplets, cleaning should be done as per existing workplace procedures.

All surfaces that a symptomatic individual has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, particularly:

- objects / surfaces visibly contaminated with body fluids
- all high-contact areas, e.g. bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells

Guidance suggests the use of cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, which should be deposited after use. You should avoid any splashes or spray while cleaning. For detergent, please follow the standards provided on the previous page. If you have contracted out your cleaning, this is not likely to be a substantial change from routine cleaning protocols.

If it is possible, please close and secure the area for 72 hours before cleaning as this will significantly reduce the amount of virus contamination. This means you can clean the area as directed by any existing workplace risk assessment or manufacturer's instructions.

What about bins with contaminated waste?

All waste that has been in contact with an individual who may have COVID-19, including used tissues, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. This plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. The double-wrapped bin bag should be put in a safe place and marked for storage until the diagnosis is available.

If the individual tests negative, this can be put in the normal waste. Should the individual test positive, please contact the [South East London Health Protection](#) team for advice.

What more can I do to help my local community?

As TRAs and TMOs, you are regularly in direct contact with local residents and can play an important role in identifying those who are elderly, vulnerable, or may just need a little extra help.

Please continue to keep an eye on your local residents and tenants. This is a good opportunity to ensure they have social networks for support. Helping out might be as simple as supporting someone with their shopping or linking them up with voluntary organisations.

CORONAVIRUS

WASH YOUR HANDS MORE OFTEN FOR 20 SECONDS

**Use soap and water or a
hand sanitiser when you:**

Get home or into work

Blow your nose, sneeze or cough

Eat or handle food



For more information and the Government's
Action Plan go to **[nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)**