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## Recommendations for tourism service providers

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**In the tourism sector, the risks of the spread of Covid-19 are related to the following conditions:**

- the risks of carrying Covid-19 from countries with high incidence;
- a tourist may become infected when in close contact during a tourist trip;
- a person may become infectious a few days before showing any signs of Covid-19 or even being asymptomatic;
- precautions, including the use of personal protective equipment, minimise the risk of infection but do not completely eliminate it.



**Risks related to the specifics of tourism events, i.e. limited possibility to comply with distance and gathering conditions:**

- gatherings of people from different households;
- long gatherings during an event (e.g. an excursion), at a place for the provision of public transport service, at an airport, in a travel vehicle, at a place of sightseeing or entertainment, or during a guided tour near the tour guide;
- unavoidable contact with different groups of tourists in popular attractions or places where tourist flows cannot be organised (e.g. city walks);
- change of accommodation (e.g. when travelling by bus), etc.

In the tourism sector, precautions must be taken from the point of view of protecting the health of workers, the safety of events and the safety of services.

Organisers of any tourism service shall comply with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 360 of 9 June 2020 “Epidemiological Safety Measures for Limiting the Spread of Covid-19 Infection” (hereinafter Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 360) which determines the basic requirements for the organisations and provision of public services and events (including catering, sports, entertainment, travel, etc.), including restrictions on the number of people in public and outdoor spaces.

**The following basic conditions must be taken into account when providing tourism services:**

- keeping a distance of 2 metres wherever possible (except between members of the same household);

- if it is not possible to ensure a distance of 2 metres and the service lasts more than 15 minutes, physical barriers or visors or face masks/nose and mouth covers for both the service provider and the customer shall be used; it will most likely not be possible when travelling by bus;
- crowding of people is not allowed, e.g. when several tourist groups visit tourist attractions, where a large number of people gather, a visit shall not last for more than 15 minutes, or contact with other groups shall be avoided or an appointment shall be arranged in advance;
- wherever possible, the possibility to practice hand hygiene shall be provided (hand washing or disinfection with a disinfectant containing at least 70% alcohol or proven activity against coronaviruses);
- persons with Covid-19 symptoms or confirmed disease shall be isolated from others and a medical face mask used;
- persons coming from countries subject to special precautionary or restrictive measures shall self-isolate;
- both customers and employees shall be informed about compliance with precautionary measures;
- and other measures in accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 360.

#### **Administrative measures:**

- to develop an internal plan of action if a person (employee or customer) with Covid-19 symptoms or with confirmed Covid-19 infection is detected in the institution;
- to provide training for staff to be able to act if a customer with Covid-19 symptoms is detected (isolation of the customer, use of personal protective equipment, communication with a medical institution, Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC), cleaning of premises, disinfection, handling of the patient's linen and waste);
- to determine the maximum possible number of customers in common areas (catering, entertainment, wellness, etc.), as well as in the institution as a whole, taking into account the possibility to ensure a distance of 2 metres, regulation of customer flow and the possibility of isolating a potentially infected customer or a customer with confirmed Covid-19, as well as taking into account gathering restrictions specified in Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 360;
- to provide information materials to customers about precautions in the specific institution, as well as information about the Covid-19 symptoms and actions in the case of signs of the illness, as well as provide information signage to inform customers about measures to reduce contact with staff and other customers;
- not to organise services and events during which there is a high risk of spread of Covid-19 and during which it is not possible to ensure distance;
- to organise a trip in such a way that local service providers ensure precautionary measures on the way and at the place where the tourist group will be located, and the tour operator has thought through and agreed on precautions throughout the service in advance;
- to provide customers with available information on national restrictions, including travel restrictions and self-isolation measures (the list of countries to which travel restrictions and

self-isolation apply is published on the website of the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi/valstu-saslimstibas-raditaji-a/>);

- to encourage the use of remote services and payments;
- to ensure the appropriate maintenance of premises: ventilation (air exchange within an hour or outdoor air inflow every hour); cleaning of air conditioners according to the user manual; thorough cleaning of surfaces touched by a large number of people;
- as far as possible, to carry out customer registration (name, surname, contact information) and, if necessary, ensure the availability of information to carry out epidemiological investigation by the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (information shall be stored for at least 14 days after the provision of the service/after the customer's check-out).

### **Registration and reception services:**

- to ensure the availability of hand sanitisers containing 70% of alcohol in the reception area, as well as signage with a reminder to practice hand hygiene and instructions for proper hand hygiene;
- to promote the use of remote services - self check-in and check-out;
- to prevent crowding at the place of registration by determining that one of the representatives is at the place of registration;
- If touch screens are used for self check-in, to ensure that they are cleaned after each customer. Not to allow the same writing instrument to be transferred from customer to customer or from employee to employee, ensuring that everyone uses individual writing instruments or providing single-use writing instruments for each customer, or disinfecting used writing instruments;
- to ensure a physical distance between registration staff and other staff, as well as customers, for example by using a plastic barrier;
- to ensure physical distance between customers, for example by using floor markings;
- to warn before registration or to coordinate the possibility to receive services during self-isolation or home quarantine with the customer.

### **Catering services:**

- to ensure the availability of hand sanitisers containing 70% alcohol at the entrance, as well as signage at the entrance reminding people to practice hand hygiene and instructions for proper hand hygiene;
- to avoid self-service by ensuring the serving of food to visitors individually;
- if, however, there is self-service, hand hygiene in the self-service area shall be strictly followed, the use of gloves for food collection shall be ensured, there shall be dividing barriers between food and dishes, as well as a distance of 2 m between customers;
- to provide each customer with an individual set of dishes on the table;
- not to use shared beverage containers, salt and spice containers, napkin holders;
- to use menus that can be disinfected after each customer;

- to limit the number of customers at the catering place in order to ensure an area of 4 m<sup>2</sup> per customer and the possibility of a distance of 2 metres between visitors;
- to prevent the formation of queues at the place of the catering service, but if it is not possible to prevent queues, to ensure a distance of 2 metres is kept;
- to ensure a physical distance of 2 metres between tables;
- to clean tables after each customer.

### **Sports services:**

- to ensure the availability of hand sanitisers containing 70% alcohol, as well as signage reminding people to practice hand hygiene and instructions for proper hand hygiene;
- to ensure cleaning of sports equipment after each customer;
- to limit the number of people in order to be able to provide an area of 4 m<sup>2</sup> per customer and ensure a distance of 2 metres between visitors;
- as far as possible, to prevent visitors from using changing rooms and showers, but to encourage dressing in customers' rooms. However, if common changing rooms are used, it must be ensured that a distance of 2 metres is kept, including between lockers.

### **Wellness and spa services:**

- to ensure the availability of hand sanitisers containing 70% alcohol, as well as signage reminding people to practice hand hygiene and instructions for proper hand hygiene;
- as it is not possible to keep a distance of 2 m during wellness services (massage, beauty treatments, etc., with direct contact to the customer), it is recommended to use a face mask for the service provider and the customer;
- to clean hands and surfaces before and after each procedure;
- as far as possible, to prevent visitors from using changing rooms and showers, but to encourage dressing in customers' rooms. However, if common changing rooms are used, it must be ensured that a distance of 2 metres is kept, including between lockers.

### **Activities (beaches, playgrounds):**

- to ensure the availability of hand sanitisers containing 70% alcohol, as well as signage reminding people to practice hand hygiene and instructions for proper hand hygiene;
- to provide a distance of 2 metres between tables, seats, armchairs, etc. People from one household don't have to keep a distance of 2 m;
- to ensure regular cleaning of all equipment;
- to assess the provision of children's playgrounds or other similar services taking into account the risks of the spread of Covid-19 and the possibility of keeping a distance of 2 m.

### **Elevators:**

- to ensure that the elevator is only shared by people from the same household or a limited number of people in order to ensure compliance with the 2 m distance conditions;

- to encourage the use of stairs if the building is low-rise;
- to ensure regular cleaning of elevator panels, buttons and other frequently touched surfaces;
- to ensure proper ventilation of the elevator in accordance with the user manual.

#### **Transport (transfer, travel) services:**

- to ensure a distance of 2 metres between customers who are not members of the same household (live in the same room or have made one reservation);
- to leave one free row between seats in vehicles, sit passengers one by one etc. to ensure distancing;
- if it is not possible to ensure a distance of 2 metres in the vehicle, then all persons shall use face and mouth covers;
- to clean vehicle surfaces, door handles, chair handles, etc. after each trip;
- to provide a place to accommodate a person who starts to show signs of Covid-19 during the trip.

#### **Visiting tourist attractions:**

- publicly available shared infrastructure (benches, picnic areas, etc.) shall not be used or surfaces shall be disinfected before use;
- shared infrastructure shall not be used and, as far as possible, shall be demarcated, if its disinfection is difficult or impossible;
- while moving, a distance of 2 metres shall be ensured and crowding shall be avoided by taking into account the particularities of the attraction (width of the trail, area of the observation tower, area of the territory near the sightseeing object). The intersection of flows shall be avoided, for example, by organising one-way flow, organising access to the attraction in small groups, etc.;
- hand disinfection shall be performed after the visit to the attraction;
- if the service includes visits to several places or sightseeing objects, the time of arrival shall be coordinated with the object manager in advance, but if this is not possible (e.g. in a city sightseeing tour), then the keeping of distance and the reduction of encounters with other tourist groups shall be observed.

#### **Equipment rental services:**

- gloves that can be disinfected shall be used when issuing and receiving rental equipment;
- disinfected equipment shall be separated from contaminated equipment;
- disinfection of equipment shall be performed after receiving it from the customer;
- if disinfection of the equipment is not possible, it shall be quarantined for 3 days before giving it to another customer.

#### **Premises and equipment hygiene:**

- the use of shared equipment as well as equipment difficult to disinfect shall be restricted;

- cleaning, disinfection and ventilation of the premises shall be performed after each client;
- replacement and cleaning of decorative pillows and bed covers shall be performed after each client. The use of such items shall be avoided;
- washing and disinfection of shared inventory (dishes, grill utensils, etc., washing utensils, etc.) shall be performed before giving it to another client;
- disinfected and clean equipment shall be separated from contaminated equipment.

**Persons subject to self-isolation due to a stay at a country subject to special precautionary or restrictive measures:**

- list of countries to which travel restrictions and self-isolation apply is published on the CDPC website <https://spkc.gov.lv/lv/tavai-veselibai/aktualitate-par-jauno-koronavi/valstu-saslimstibas-raditaji-a/>);
- when entering Latvia, a person shall observe self-isolation for 14 days after leaving the country to which travel restrictions and self-isolation apply;
- during the self-isolation, the client must monitor their health condition;
- such a client shall be placed in a separate room with a separate sanitary unit, ensuring that the client does not use shared rooms;
- as far as possible, the client shall be placed in a separate building with a separate entrance;
- if the client has the opportunity to go out of their room without coming into contact with other customers and employees, it is permissible for the client to be outdoors where few people gather, it is permissible for the client to go to a store to purchase basic necessities using a face mask at a time when few people are there. The use of public transport is not permissible;
- the client's catering shall be provided in the client's room;
- the necessary hygiene items, hand soap and hand disinfectant containing no less than 70% alcohol or other disinfectants with a proven effect against coronaviruses, face masks, individual towel, disposable wipes, wet wipes, toilet paper, waste bin shall be provided in the self-isolation room. Likewise, the patient shall also be provided with disposable tableware (cups, plates, spoons, etc.) as well as individual bed linen;
- the number of staff involved in the care of the client shall be restricted;
- when caring for the client, a medical face mask shall be used;
- if Covid-19 symptoms are detected in the client, proceed as described below;
- daily cleaning of the rooms and cleaning after the client's check-out is performed using a face mask, overall or apron and gloves. After cleaning, personal protective equipment shall be removed and not used during the cleaning of other rooms;
- after the client's check-out, cleaning and disinfection shall be performed.

**Organisation of events (seminars, conferences, celebrations, concerts, sports events, etc.):**

- an event can be organised in the time period from 06:30 until 24:00;
- a distance of 2 m must be observed throughout the event, including during breaks. A distance of 2 m must also be observed if the event takes place at tables with catering.



## **Procedures if a Covid-19 infection is suspected or confirmed:**

- regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of 9 June 2020 “Epidemiological safety measures to limit the spread of Covid-19 infection” prescribe the requirements for the isolation of Covid-19 patients (Paragraph 54 of the Cabinet Regulation), home quarantine of contact persons (Paragraph 55 of the Cabinet Regulation) and self-isolation of persons who have been in countries with unfavourable epidemiological situations of Covid-19, (Paragraph 56 of the Cabinet Regulation);
- the tourism service provider, such as hotel owner, determines the person responsible for the identification of persons (employees and clients) with Covid-19 symptoms as well as the organisation of isolation and testing of such persons. The person is also responsible for identifying the persons (customers) to whom the home quarantine and self-isolation requirements apply;
- it is not permissible for an employee with signs of Covid-19 to remain in the workplace. If an employee is diagnosed with Covid-19 (elevated body temperature, fever, cough, shortness of breath), the employee is instructed to immediately put on a face mask, go to their place of residence, contact their family doctor, i.e. to perform Covid-19 testing;
- if it is established that a client who is not a citizen of Latvia has signs of Covid-19, he or she will immediately be instructed to use a face mask and isolate himself or herself in a separate room with a separate bathroom until the test results are received. To test a client for Covid-19, call 8303, indicating the client's name, surname, age, hotel name and address, and the responsible hotel representative. Taking a sample for the client's testing will be organised on site at the hotel (taking a sample and testing will be paid from the state budget);
- if a person with signs of Covid-19 infection is a Latvian national, the person will be discharged from the hotel and advised to go to their place of residence and contact a family physician;
- if the client has a confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19, the client, who is not a Latvian national in accordance with the CDPC recommendations and based on the clinical indications, will continue to be isolated in a separate hotel room, or placed in in-patient care. The person in charge of the hotel must contact the family physician who will perform medical surveillance of the infected client and his/her contact person;
- a person who has lived in the same room with the infected client before Covid-19 infection (contact person) must be isolated in a separate room, except for children under 7 years of age and dependent persons, to reduce the home quarantine time, as the contact person is quarantined for 14 days from the last contact with the infected person;
- the clients in isolation, home quarantine are provided with food in the room where they stay;
- isolation, home quarantine room must be equipped with the necessary hygiene items, hand soap and hand disinfectant, containing not less than 70% alcohol or other disinfectants with a proven effect against coronaviruses, face masks, individual towel, disposable wipes, wet wipes, toilet paper, waste bin. Likewise, the patient shall also be provided with disposable tableware (cups, plates, spoons, etc.) as well as individual bed linen;



- the room in which a person with confirmed Covid-19 and a contact person is isolated must have good mechanical ventilation or a window that can be opened;
- clients in isolation, home quarantine, are served by staff which do not serve other clients. The number of staff involved in the care of an infected client should be kept to a minimum;
- when serving an isolated client, it shall be ensured that the service person is not older than 65 years and is not a patient of chronic diseases;
- when serving an isolated person: regularly perform wet cleaning and disinfection of the premises where the patient is staying . Use household detergents for cleaning and then disinfect the room. Products with a combined effect (cleaning and disinfection) can be used. Increased attention must be paid to objects and surfaces that the infected person has touched (handles, table tops, bedside). Small surfaces can be treated with a 70% alcohol solution; dirty laundry and bed linen must be collected carefully without shaking or pressing against clothing and placed in two bags, ensuring that the infected person's laundry does not come into contact with other laundry. Machine wash it at 60 to 90 oC (preferably 90 oC or at the hottest temperature allowed by the type of fabric). Dry thoroughly. Wash laundry separately from other customers' laundry; collect the waste of the infected person in two waste bags and place in the unsorted rubbish; use a mask, gloves and a disposable apron and closed shoes when cleaning the premises, collecting dirty laundry, rubbish; use a medical face mask and rubber gloves. The mask should fit snugly on the face and should not be touched during use. If the mask becomes moist or dirty, it must be replaced with a new one and the used one must be disposed of. The mask must be removed from the back to the front without touching the front of the mask. After removing the mask it must be disposed of and hand hygiene performed;
- after the discharge of the client, the premises must be cleaned and disinfected, using personal protective equipment;
- the decision to terminate isolation must be made by the family physician treating the person;
- any expenses related to personal isolation must be paid by persons from their own resources.

### **Cooperation with CDPC:**

- the tourism service provider (person in charge of the hotel or head of the tourist group) reports to the CDPC if two or more persons have signs of the Covid-19 infection;
- the tourism service provider, in cooperation with the CDPC, must organise the identification of contact persons and performance of anti-epidemic measures, if after the discharge of the client, information about him/her being infected with Covid-19 has been received;
- the hotel owner must timely inform the hotel clients about the conditions for receiving services during isolation, home quarantine and self-isolation, as well as about the presence of clients in the hotel who are subject to the relevant restrictive measures;

- the CDPC informs the HI about cases of isolation, home quarantine and self-isolation of persons at the hotel to ensure conformity of the inspection of anti-epidemic measures;
- if information that the hotel client is violating restrictive measures becomes available, it must be immediately reported to the State Police.

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