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# TOURISM SECTOR GUIDELINES

in response to COVID 19

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## MARITIME-BASED ACTIVITIES



**MAY 2020**

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# Guidelines for Maritime-Based Activities

## Scope: Diving Centers, Dive Operators, Watersport Centers

### Definition

**Dive Center** means a person or a body of persons engaged in the teaching of diving; (A dive center may also offer diving excursions and must operate from a land-based facility.)

**Dive Operator** means a person or a body of persons engaged in conducting diving excursions; (a dive operator is not allowed to offer tuition dives)

**Watersport Center** means the base location where recreational or sport activities which takes place in or on the water, such as swimming, water polo, surfing, water-skiing, windsurfing, or sailing is administered

### Introduction

In this new normal landscape, new methods of conducting business in the tourism industry which is very customer oriented must be adopted. In Seychelles, we thrive to offer personalized and excellent service to our clients to ensure that they have the best experience of our islands, culture and its people. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that jobs within the tourism industry will not operate as it normally did.

This document provides guidance to the tourism industry for the gradual return to business. It aims at protecting the health and safety of customers and staff in response to the COVID19 pandemic. Special consideration should be given to these general areas.

1. Human resource and administrative requirements
2. Enhanced infection prevention control
3. Communication
4. Situation monitoring and reporting
5. Special cleaning and disinfection plan for situations in which staff or previous occupant is identified as a Covid-19 case

The recommendations are based on Public Health Guidelines and act as an addendum to the minimum requirements already established for the respective business category. These recommendations may be revised as and when required. Adherence to these guidelines remains the responsibility of the respective business.

## 1. Human Resource and Administrative Requirements

### Action Plan

- Further to adopting these guidelines, all Watersport Centers, Diving Centers or Dive Operators are required to develop their standard operating procedure procedures based on the specificities of their business to guide their operation.
- The Watersport Center, Diving Center or Dive Operator may seek the assistance of a health, safety or hygiene specialist or advisor which should follow the recommendations of the Public Health Authority in developing their action plans.
- Sufficient resources (human & economic) must be available and communication should be maintained between management and staff to ensure the rapid and effective implementation of the action plan.

### Administrative Procedures

- The Watersport Center, Diving Center or Dive Operator shall designate among its staff a person to be the focal point for all health and safety measures.
- The name and contact details, including telephone number and email address of the health and safety officer or focal person shall be communicated to the Department of Tourism.
- The Watersport Center, Diving Center or Dive Operator should put in place necessary screening and monitoring procedures (e.g temperature check, cough, flu symptoms and travel history). A logbook should also be made available to record movement of staff and clients and visitors entering the premises (e.g name, contact details and screening results).
- Health screening procedures should be conducted safely and in a respectful manner. The management shall ensure that confidentiality is respected.
- Where practicable, the Watersport Centers, Diving Centers or Dive Operators shall designate an area as the isolation room for suspected COVID 19 cases. This room shall be properly labelled.
- In the case of an isolation room, there is no need for special modification of a room, but preferably one with a window opening to the exterior to allow fresh air rather than recirculated air conditioned air. It should have the minimum furniture to reduce the amount of cleaning and disinfecting. While it is occupied by a sick person, no one else should access the room. There are guidelines from DOH for cleaning and disinfecting the room after a COVID-19 positive person has occupied it. When not in use to hold a sick person, the room may be used for other purposes, but remain ready to be evacuated immediately should it be required. Where there is no designated isolation room, an area in the premises should be designated for the purpose of segregating

the sick individual from other guests and staff while waiting for the person to be moved to a health facility.

- Instead of traditional in-person teaching classes, meetings and briefings, alternative modes of communication including briefings before starting any water based activities as well as any staff briefings should be considered. E-learning and remote teaching is preferred to limit face to face interaction. When in-person meetings or briefings need to occur, physical distancing practices must be observed. Meetings should be kept as short as possible limiting the number of people in attendance.

### **Staff Training**

Staff training in infection prevention control is key to ensuring safety and security of staff and clients. As such appropriate training as per Public Health Authority guidelines in the following areas is required.

- Ensure that all staff have undergone coronavirus awareness training.
- Educate staff on Infection Prevention and Control measures (IPC) to be implemented by the organization, this should also include training on use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for housekeeping and cleaning staff.
- Provide refresher training on personal hygiene and proper hand washing practices.

**The Public Health Authority and the Tourism Department will be providing scheduled training for health and safety officers and focal persons.**

## **2. Enhanced Infection Prevention Control**

### **Physical Distancing**

- The number of clients accessing services at any one time should be controlled and a queue control system consistent with physical distancing advice should be established.
- It is recommended that floor markings such as with tape are provided to facilitate distancing.
- Where applicable, implement a 4 person per 10 square meter seating. Distance in between 1 chair should be between 1 to 2 meters apart.
- Physical distancing should be maintained on dive boats as per the Public Health and Seychelles Maritime Safety Authority (SMSA) guidelines

- The number of staff in one specific area at any one time should be limited. Staff can be organized into groups or teams to minimize interaction between groups.

### Hygiene Practices

- The Watersport Centers, Diving Centers or Dive Operators must ensure that hand washing and drying facilities and foot pedal operated bins are always available in key locations.
- Adequate numbers of hand sanitizing stations must be provided at entry points or specific areas not in immediate vicinity of hand washing facility e.g. reception area.
- Good hygiene practices must be observed at all times.

### Cleaning and Disinfection

- Rental equipment, including those that are being tested, should be disinfected after each use paying particular attention to regulators, BCDs, snorkels and masks.
- Equipment that have been disinfected should be stored separately with those that have been used.
- Access to disinfected equipment should be accessible to designated staff for distribution. Sharing of equipment should not be encouraged.
- The cleaning of all hard surfaces e.g. floors, desks, worktops, must be enhanced at intervals, using standard disinfectant bleach solution or mixture containing at least 70% alcohol.
- Cleaning of all soft or porous surfaces and equipment must follow the guideline of Public Health Authority.
- The necessary PPE must be available for use by clients and staff.
- If not disposable, clean and disinfect any materials according to guidance for environmental cleaning.
- Properly wash/sanitize any reusable glassware, dishes, cutleries etc in between use.
- Regularly wipe and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, light switches, sanitary facilities, countertops, handrails on stair cases.
- Any other facilities available in a common area or for common use such as equipment must be disinfected between clients.

**Refer to Annex 1 for guidelines on environmental cleaning.**

**Further recommendations from Diver's Alert Network are also attached for consideration at Annex 2.**

**The Operational Guideline for Food Production, Retail and Distribution in Seychelles is attached at Annex 3.**

### **Other measures**

- Protect printed documents, client information guides with plastic covers that can be wiped and be easily disinfected. The use of technology by providing digital information can be considered.
- The name and contact details of all persons which include clients, staff, vendors, delivery persons, must be collected at entry to facilitate contact tracing should it be required.
- Once assigned, clients should handle their own rental equipment.
- Clients must be advised not to touch the cylinder valve outlet or regulator inlet when assembling and disassembling their scuba unit

### **3. Communication**

- Clients must be advised on the established procedures to be applied regarding COVID 19 matters.
- The Watersport Center, Diving Center or Dive Operator shall place health and hygiene reminders at all high traffic areas including staff areas to indicate proper hygiene practices including hand washing, physical distancing, and the practice of good respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing.
- The health and hygiene reminders must include information on symptoms of COVID 19 and reporting protocols.
- The contact number 141 is available for reporting and advice on COVID 19 matters.
- The Watersport Center, Diving Center or Dive Operator shall place signage at the entrance stating that entry is prohibited for anyone with known symptoms or who have been exposed to a COVID 19 case in the prior 14 days.

**Detailed health and hygiene guidance are available at Annex 4.**

## 4. Situation Monitoring and Reporting

### Management

- It is the responsibility of the management to keep abreast of new developments and updated information disseminated by the Health Authorities and other government advisories and to keep staff and clients informed.
- The management shall ensure the health and safety of its clients and staff at all times.
- The management shall ensure that the contact details of Health Authorities is readily available. Any suspected cases shall be reported to the Department of Health without undue delay.

### Procedures for managing suspect COVID 19 Cases

- Staff who report from home with respiratory symptoms and fever or that they are ill should be advised to stay at home and seek medical attention.
- Staff who becomes symptomatic at work should be transferred to the designated isolation room/ isolation area which should be kept closed while health authorities are being notified of cases.
- The staff or customer with symptoms should wear a mask and should be isolated in the isolation room/isolation area until the intervention of the health authorities. No other person should be allowed to enter the isolation room/isolation area.
- In cases where an isolation room is not available, the suspected case must be kept at a safe distance from other people.
- The Public Health Authority must be notified immediately if a staff or client displays any symptoms of COVID 19.

## 5. Special cleaning and disinfection plan for situations in which staff or client is suspected as a Covid-19 case

- Staff involved in re-directing affected staff/client to isolation room/isolation area and transfer out of the facility should apply the infection prevention and control practices (IPC) to include the below measures.
  - Ensure all surfaces that may be contaminated with respiratory secretion/bodily fluid of the ill person are cleaned with regular household disinfectant solution (bleach) containing 0.1% sodium hypochlorite. These surfaces should then be rinsed with clean water after 10 minutes contact time for chlorine (bleach). Where bleach is contraindicated for use on certain surfaces such as telephone, the use of alcohol solution of 70% may be used.

- The use of disposable cleaning materials is recommended. Non-porous cleaning materials can be disinfected with 0.1% sodium hypochlorite solution.
- Textiles/linens/clothes should be sealed in special laundry bags and washed in hot cycles (70 °c or more) with usual detergent.
- Cleaning materials made of cloth or absorbent materials that cannot be easily disinfected should be discarded.
- All used gloves, mask, tissues should be disposed in covered bin and discarded as per regulations for infectious waste.

**Management must ensure that staff are provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) while disinfecting affected areas. The PPE must be properly disinfected or disposed of.**

***Cover photo credit: [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com)***



## Annex 1

# Guidance for Environmental Cleaning in Tourism and Travel facilities in context of COVID-19 pandemic

*Joint Interim Guidance; Department of Tourism and Department of Health; 4 May 2020.*

The guidance aims to ensure the implementation of adequate environmental cleaning and disinfection in tourism and travel facility.

COVID-19 is spread principally by droplets and through contaminated hands and surfaces. Key individual level measures to take include good hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and avoiding touching the face. Evidence to-date suggests the virus can survive on various surfaces for hours to days, and as such, environmental cleaning is a key effective intervention to prevent spread of COVID-19 in all settings, including tourism and travel.

## Scope

These guidelines are relevant for full- or part-time cleaning managers and/or cleaning supervisors, or other staff who assure a clean environment, such as supervisors of hotels or departments, procurement staff, facilities management, and any others responsible for WASH and/cleaning services and/or health and safety officer at the tourism and travel facility.

## Prerequisites

Mops; Mop buckets (designated for different areas e.g.: toilet/kitchen/general floor); Vacuum for carpet; Appropriate disinfectants; Measuring jug; Cloths for damp dusting (designated for different areas e.g.: toilets, kitchen, office or frequently touched surfaces); Dust pans and brushes; Disposable gloves; Disposable mask; Disposable Plastic aprons; Eye protection or mask (if cases where evidence of splash or aerosol is anticipated); Biohazard disposable waste bag and bin liners (colour coded bags. E.g. yellow or white for biohazard waste and black for general waste).

## Terminology

In this document, cleaning refers to wiping or washing an object or surface, to reduce number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface, whereas disinfection refers to measures to kill germs on surfaces being cleaned.

## Choice

For Cleaning and disinfection, it is suggest that one of the following be used:

- Diluted sodium hypochlorite (house-hold bleach) solution, at a concentration of 1% (1000ppm).
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol content (where bleach cannot be used).

Note: most industrial and household cleaning products are bactericidal and viricidal.

## Principles

Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, rooms and common areas) used by the staffs and clients, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces

Frequently touch surfaces include Tables, Light switches, Countertops, Lifts, Railings, Door knobs, Handles, Taps, Phone headsets, Keyboards/Mouse, Desk surfaces Toilets, Sinks, Armrests, Railings, chairs, TV remotes, key cards, keys, vending machines.

## Procedures

- All cleaning staffs should be trained on appropriate use of cleaning and disinfection chemicals.
- Wear disposable gloves and disposable aprons for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling of trash.
- Additional personal protective equipment (PPE), e.g. mask and face shield, might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products used and whether there is a risk of splash.
- All rooms should be cleaned and disinfected with 0.5% to 1% concentration of diluted household bleach solution at least once a day and for each client before check in and after check-out
- Bathrooms and toilets should be cleaned and disinfected with 0.5% to 1% concentration of diluted household bleach solution, at least once daily in hotel rooms (used only by occupying clients) and twice daily in communal areas (e.g. hotel receptions, travel offices).
- All offices, floors and other areas should be cleaned and disinfected with at least 0.5% to 1% concentration of diluted household bleach solution at least once per day.
- Surfaces should be cleaned with detergent first and then mopped/rinsed with clean water after at least 10 minutes contact time with disinfectant.
- When use of bleach is not suitable (e.g. telephone, remote control equipment, door handlings, buttons in the elevator, etc.), use alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol or disinfecting wipes.
- For electronics, please follow manufacturer's instructions on how to clean them.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces at least four times a day.
- More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required in certain areas if their level of use is very high.
- Create a cleaning schedule and monitoring checklist.
- Whenever possible, use disposable cleaning materials.
- Prior to reusing (e.g. cloth, mops), for other rooms/areas, disinfect properly with 0.5% sodium hypochlorite solution, or according to manufacturer's instructions
- Gloves, apron and/or gowns should be removed carefully and disposed in closed bins, to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area.
- Always wash hands immediately with soap and water for 20 seconds after removing gloves or any additional PPE after each cleaning process and after contact with anyone who is well or sick.
- Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
- All waste containers/bins should be pedal operated and covered.
- All wastes should be tied or sealed in a plastic bag, double-bagged and then disposed in a sanitary fashion.

- Ensure the proper functioning and availability of soap and disinfectant solution dispensers, hand dryers, disposable tissue dispensers, and other similar devices. Defective units should be rapidly repaired or replaced.

## Dilution of household bleach for use

Dilution varies based on the strength of the commercial product being used. The active ingredient in bleach is sodium hypochlorite, and its strength is stated in percentages (e.g. 5%) or parts per million (e.g. 5000ppm).

Concentration required to kill COVID-19 and other bacterial or viruses is between 500 to 1000 ppm (0.5% -1%). Therefore, a typical household bleach product of 5% strength will require dilution with 10 parts water, to give a 0.5% solution of bleach for environmental cleaning.

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E.g. 1 part of commercial bleach at 7% strength will require 7 ÷ 0.5 - 1 = 13 cups/part of water added to it, to make a concentration of 0.5% (500 ppm), for environmental cleaning use.

(NB: The calculation provided above would change depending on the percentage of the bleach available within the workplace)

## Direction for cleaning

- Clean, then disinfect, from the least soiled areas (cleanest) to the most soiled areas (dirtiest) so that dirtiest areas are cleaned last;
- Clean, then disinfect, from higher levels to lower levels so that debris may fall on the floor and is cleaned last;

## Cleaning of Electronics

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines

- Consider putting a **wipeable cover** on electronics.
- Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 60% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

## Soft surfaces

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes:

- **Clean the surface using soap and water** or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.
- **Launder items** (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- Use steam cleaning for items that cannot be laundered e.g. upholstered furniture/mattresses.
- Heavily contaminated items that cannot be cleaned should be disposed immediately as an infectious waste.

## Dishes and cutlery

- Dishes and cutlery should be cleaned in a commercial or domestic dishwasher using appropriate dishwasher detergent.
- Reusable dishes and cutlery must be cleaned using hot water and appropriate dishwashing detergent.
- Ensure all items are thoroughly cleaned.
- Clean and dry all dishes and cutlery and store in a cupboard or keep covered to prevent potential contamination from sneezes or coughs.
- Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer for at least 20 seconds prior to handling dishes and cutlery
- Any unused dishes and cutlery touched by guests or staff should be washed prior to reusing.
- When manual washing is required all dishes and cutleries should be washed, disinfected, rinsed, and dried out with disposable paper towels.

## Laundry

For clothing, towels, linens, napkins, table cloths and other items

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Wash in hot cycles of (70°C or more or maximum allowed based on type) with the usual detergents and dry items completely.
- **Wear disposable gloves, apron** when handling dirty laundry.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.
- **Do not shake** dirty laundry.
- Clean and **disinfect cloth hangers** according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove gloves after doing laundry, dispose in covered bin, and wash hands thoroughly.

## Rooms of ill staff or clients

Report ill clients to supervisors. Get them to seek medical advice by phone.

It is recommended to **close off areas used by the ill persons and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection** to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets.

**Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.** If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.

- Wear disposable gloves, apron and mask when cleaning the ill person's room.
- Clean and disinfect with 1% concentration of diluted house-hold bleach solution or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol.
- Clean at least once daily, and include all frequently touched surfaces.
- Remove all waste and soiled linen and place them in a separate bin liner and label accordingly. Use disposable masks, aprons and gloves when handling these again (e.g. for laundry).
- Waste from this room should be should double bagged labelled and discarded accordingly as these are considered infectious and it.
- The same cleaning process applies to rooms of ill persons who are under isolation precautions
- Clean all reusable cleaning equipment, and disinfect with bleach or at least 70% alcohol, before reuse with other clients.

In areas where ill clients have frequented, continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

**N.B.:** Avoid large-surface cleaning methods that produce mists or aerosols, or disperse dust, when cleaning a *sick client's* room, e.g. dry sweeping, mopping, spraying or dusting.

## References

Seychelles IPC guidelines and policies 2014;

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331638/WHO-2019-nCoV-Hotels-2020.1-eng.pdf>

CDC website. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>

# 2.2 DIVING EQUIPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

There are still no specific tests carried out regarding the survival of SARS-CoV-2 virus on diving equipment especially where it has penetration cavities or threaded sections. It is therefore imperative that diving equipment is disinfected after use in order to neutralise the virus. Some products, such as quaternary ammonium compounds, are effective and highly compatible with typical diving equipment materials (rubber, neoprene, plastics, metal, etc.), however difficult to source or harmful for the marine environment. Other products, such as bleach (sodium hypochlorite), are easier to find and cheaper, but must be used in accordance with the guidelines for COVID-19. There are also other products (EW80, Virkon S etc.), commonly used by divers, that have been proven to be effective against the virus.

In the United States, the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) provides a [list](#) of disinfectants effective against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In Europe, the ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control) has published some [guidelines](#).

Regardless of the active ingredients chosen or the method of disinfection, it is of the utmost importance that its effectiveness against the new coronavirus is proven.

### SODIUM HYPOCHLORITE

Common **bleach**, marketed under different brands and with variable percentages (5-10%) of its active ingredient, **sodium hypochlorite**, is among the products able to neutralise the virus. It is important to read the product label carefully, check the percentage of active ingredient, and dilute it in water in the right measure. Recent scientific studies (1) suggest a **1:50** dilution of bleach containing **5%** of sodium hypochlorite (concentration of **0.1%** or **1,000 ppm** of active ingredient), with complete immersion of the objects for at least **5 minutes**.

Here's a practical example of how to dilute the product in water, to obtain **5 litres** of solution containing **0.1%** of active ingredient:

- ✓ 5% sodium hypochlorite bleach // 100 ml of product in 4900 ml of water, or
- ✓ 10% sodium hypochlorite bleach // 50 ml of product in 4950 ml of water

Precautions:

- ✓ Perform disinfection operations wearing gloves, mask and eye protection.
- ✓ Mix solutions in well ventilated areas.
- ✓ Prepare solutions using cold water, as hot water damages the active ingredient.
- ✓ Never mix bleach with other products or chemicals.
- ✓ Avoid splashes during cleaning.
- ✓ Rinse with fresh water and allow to dry before use.



## WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE INFECTION CONTROL OF RENTAL EQUIPMENT?



### 3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

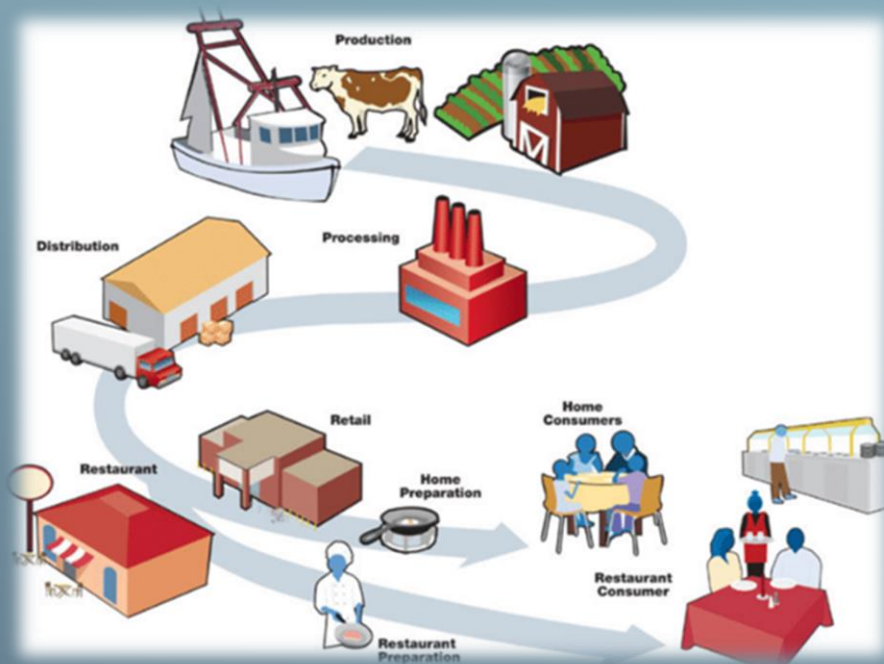
Equipment rental should be handled with particular care, especially considering the responsibility of Dive Centre owners in case of possible contamination. Here are some recommendations:

- ✓ Rental equipment should be disinfected as indicated, after each use, paying particular attention to regulators, BCDs, snorkels and masks.
- ✓ Rental masks need to be fit-tested by each diver before use, which implies disinfection after each test. Customers may be encouraged to bring at least their own mask.
- ✓ Keep areas for returned rental equipment separate from areas where disinfected equipment is stored.
- ✓ Customers should be prevented from entering the area where disinfected equipment is stored. Bring the gear out to customers.
- ✓ Transport rental equipment in individual containers, marked with customer's name, and remember to disinfect these after use.
- ✓ Once disinfected, handle the equipment safely, e.g. by storing masks, regulators and snorkels in closed bags, to be removed before use.
- ✓ Instruct customers not to touch the cylinder valve outlet or regulator inlet when assembling and disassembling their scuba unit.

### 3.2 SHOULD SECOND STAGE MOUTHPIECES BE REPLACED AFTER EACH USE?

Although perceived by customers as a synonym of special care and good service, replacing mouthpieces may not be enough to prevent contamination. An infected user would not only contaminate the mouthpiece, but the entire second stage unit. This is why it is necessary to disinfect regulators as described above, even if mouthpiece is replaced.

# Operational Guideline for Food Production, Retail and Distribution in Seychelles



*COVID-19  
Risk of Infection Through Food  
Industry*



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This document provides guidance to Food Production, Retail and Distribution Operators to facilitate gradual return to normal business, while protecting the health and safety of clients and employees. The recommendations may need to be revised as the situation evolves. Facilities must be prepared to tighten measures should the need arise.

Despite the large scale of the pandemic, there has been no report of transmission of COVID-19 via consumption of food to date this is because coronaviruses need an animal or human host to multiply. Therefore, as stated by the Department of Health / World Health Organization, there is no evidence that food poses a risk to public health in relation to COVID-19. The main mode of transmission for COVID-19 is considered to be from person to person, mainly via respiratory droplets that infected people through sneeze, cough or exhale.

Although according to WHO, studies have shown that the causal agent of COVID-19 can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper and less than 24 hours on cardboard, there is no evidence that contaminated packages, which have been exposed to different environmental conditions and temperatures, transmit the infection. Nonetheless, to address concerns that virus present on the skin might be able to transfer to the respiratory system (for example by touching the face), persons handling packaging, including consumers, should adhere to the guidance of public health authorities regarding good hygienic practices, including regular and effective hand-washing.

## **2.0 FOOD PRODUCTION**

Seychelles already has in place the Food Act to ensure that the production of food is done in a very hygienic manner. All food businesses must apply them. The hygiene controls to be implemented by food business operators to prevent the

contamination of the food by any pathogens, and will therefore also aim at preventing contamination of the food by the virus responsible for COVID-19.

- Designate a focal person to deal with COVID related matters. The role of the person is to ensure the implementation of the guideline and act as a liaison person between the company and the Department of Health.
- Conduct and coordinate daily screening of staff and other visitor for symptoms of COVID – 19 upon arrival at the food factory which includes cough, sore throat, high fever, runny nose and shortness of breath.
- In the event that a person shows any signs and symptoms of Covid-19 during screening or while on duty this should be reported immediately by calling 141.
- Reinforce hygiene and safe food handling training in food businesses as per health requirements.
- Regular cleaning and disinfection of food producing facilities and equipment is required at all stages of food production.
- Adopt work in turns/ shift to ensure that no more workers that is strictly necessary are present in the facility.
- Personal hygiene such as washing and disinfecting of hands should be emphasized. Reinforce frequent washing of the hands with liquid soap, water and disposable paper towel for the drying of hands.
- Introduce, and maintain hand washing stations in the production area. (e.g. wash hand basin)
- Hand sanitizers should be at the disposal of the staff but should be an alternative option to hand washing.
- Wear personal protective equipment as required
- Gloves may be used by food workers but must be changed frequently (when soiled or damaged) and hands must be washed between glove changes and when gloves are removed.
- Adopt social distancing while at work, e.g. on the production line, canteen, kitchen, changing room. (Where possible employees should demarcate their one-meter distance, and rearrangement of sitting facilities).

- Set up plexiglass when distance cannot be maintained e.g. paying counters.
- During breaks and upon exiting the workplace all employees should perform hand hygiene and remove all PPE.
- Under the special recommendations for COVID-19 now in place any employees presenting symptoms indicative of COVID-19 will be requested to stay at home and seek medical assistance by calling 141 to prevent the spread of the virus.

### **3.0 WHOLESALE and RETAIL**

*(including Take away, Bakeries, Snack Shops, Mobile Food Van as applicable)*

No information is currently available on whether the virus responsible for COVID-19 can be present on food, survive there and infect people. At the same time, there is no evidence to date that food has been a source or vehicle of infection while there is no doubt that people currently ill have been infected by contact with other infected people. However, retailers should be aware of hygiene requirements when handling food.

- Employees handling, packing (cheese, meat, fruits and vegetables, bread) and unpacking commodities should wear disposable gloves at all times and perform hand hygiene soon after.
- Hand sanitizers should be given to all employees behind the tills or paying counters.
- If possible place hand sanitizers station at the entrances and exits of retail premises.
- Implement safe physical distancing;
  - ✓ Monitor number of customers in store and in lines. Consider limiting / spacing entrance of customers so that the store does not become crowded. A warden may be required at the door to police this practice.
  - ✓ Assist customers in keeping at least one metre space between individuals or family groups while shopping or waiting in line.

- ✓ Consider posting signage at the entrance to help educate and encourage customers to keep one metre distance between themselves and others.
- ✓ Minimize quantities of commodities put on display where they may be exposed to coughing, sneezing, etc.
- ✓ Reduce, whenever possible, customer self-service of commodities.
- All baskets and trolleys should be properly disinfected on a daily basis prior to the opening of the facility. If soiled, then proper washing with soap and water is required.
- All counters, tills, self-scans, door handles (e.g. main entrance and exit doors, chiller, freezer, snack display cabinets) should be cleaned and sanitized from time to time during opening hours.
- Conduct regular and thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the premise.
- During face to face service, set up plexiglass screen between cashiers and customers (e.g at Checkout counters) is required.

#### **4.0 RESTAURANTS, BARS AND CAFÉ**

Social/ physical distancing refers to efforts to keep groups of people from coming together and to allow for more physical space between people when they do congregate. Properly implemented, social/ physical distancing is an important strategy to reduce opportunities for the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

- Identify a person to conduct and coordinate daily screening of employees, other visitors and customers for symptoms of COVID – 19 upon arrival at the premise which include cough, sore throat, high fever, runny nose and shortness of breath.
- In the event that an employee, visitor or customer shows any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during screening this should be reported immediately by calling 141.
- Reinforce hygiene and safe food handling training in food businesses as per health requirements.
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of premises are required.

- Adopt work in turns/ shift to ensure that no more workers that are strictly necessary are present in the facility.
- Personal hygiene such as washing and disinfecting of hands should be emphasized. Reinforce frequent washing of the hands with liquid soap, water and disposable paper towel for the drying of hands.
- Introduce, and maintain hand washing stations in the kitchen. (wash hand basin)
- Hand sanitizers should be at the disposal of employees, visitors and customers.
- Employees should wear gloves and masks where and as required.
- Employees should wear personal protective equipment as required
- Adopt physical distancing;
  - ✓ Employees should demarcate their 1meter distance while at work, e.g. kitchen, changing room.
  - ✓ Monitor number of customers on the premise and in lines. Consider limiting / spacing entrance of customers so that the premise does not become crowded. A bouncer may be required at the door to police this practice.
  - ✓ Space tables 2metres apart in dining areas or seat customer groups (maximum of six per table) at least 2 meters apart.
  - ✓ Postpone or cancel events / banquets with 10 or more individuals.
  - ✓ If events (birthday, wedding, baptism etc.) are held at the facility for smaller groups of less than 10 people, such should take place in the private lounge of the premise. The owner should work with event organizers to ensure that individuals who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms do not attend.
  - ✓ Attendees are spaced at least 1meter apart.
  - ✓ Temporarily discontinue self-service of ready-to-eat foods such as salad bars or buffets.
  - ✓ During breaks and upon exiting the workplace all employees should perform hand hygiene and remove all PPE.

- ✓ Gloves should be worn by waitresses/waiters when clearing the tables.
- ✓ Clustering of customers should be avoided at the bar.
- All chairs and stools should be removed with the bar counter. Alternative sitting arrangements should be provided by the management respecting social/ physical distancing.
- Beverages should be ordered and served by waiter/waitresses only.
- Under the special recommendations for COVID-19 now in place any person presenting symptoms indicative of COVID-19 will be requested to stay at home and seek medical assistance by calling 141 to prevent the spread of the virus.

## **5.0 FOOD DELIVERY AND FOOD DISTRIBUTION**

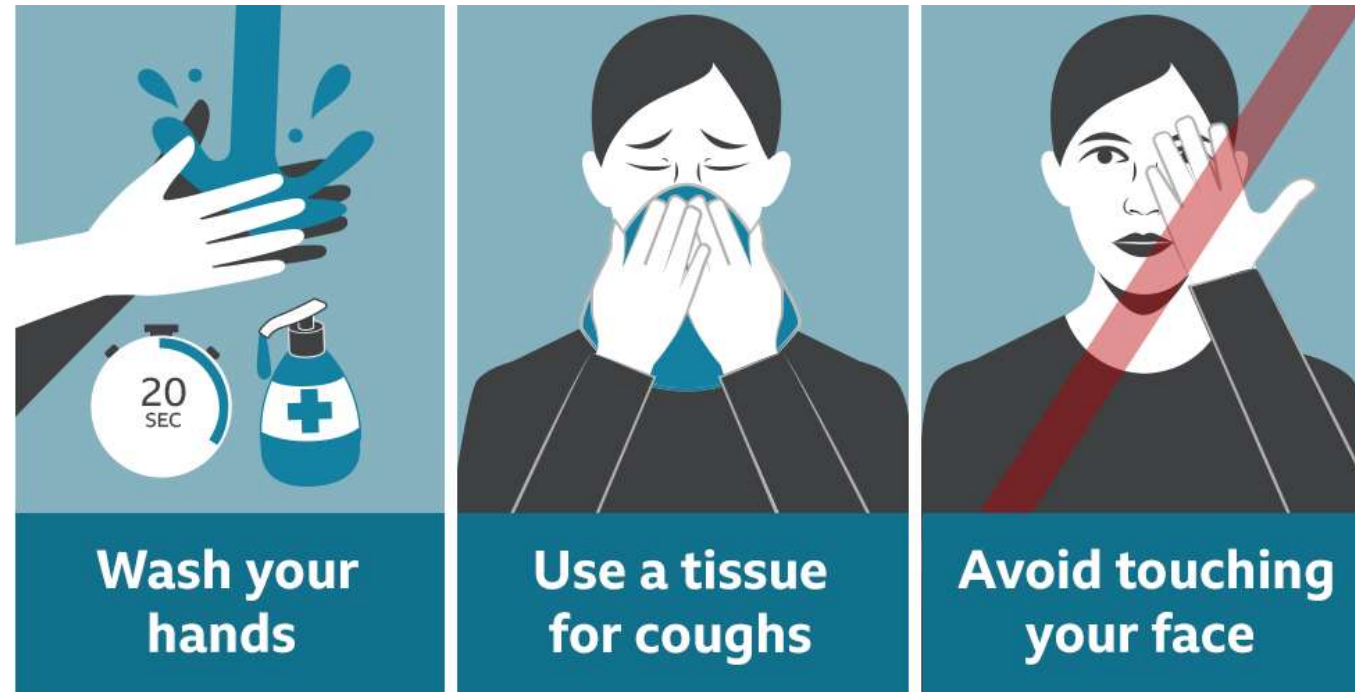
*(ready to eat meals, packaged foods, perishables)*

The primary focus of any additional hygiene and sanitation measures implemented by food businesses is on keeping the COVID-19 virus out of their businesses. The virus will enter business premises only when an infected person enters, or contaminated products or items are brought into the premises.

- Employees who have symptoms of coronavirus disease (such as a fever with cough) should not be allowed to come to work or participate in the distribution of foods.
- Drivers and delivery employees should be provided with hand sanitizer, disinfectant and disposable paper towel.
- All employees should wear clean and appropriate clothing at all times.
- Ready to eat food should be transported in a hygienic manner.
- Transport and other reusable containers such as crates and plastic containers being used for delivery should be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.
- Foods should be protected from contamination and must be separated from other goods that may cause contamination.
- Items should not be damaged or soiled upon delivery.

- Drivers and delivery employees should use a hand sanitizer before passing food delivery documents to the food premise staff.
- Drivers and delivery staff should maintain physical distancing when picking up and passing deliveries to customers.
- Log book or register for contact tracing purposes to be kept on work site.

## Annex 4



# Preparing for Covid 19 in Workplaces

Risk Communication Team, Department of Health

March 2020

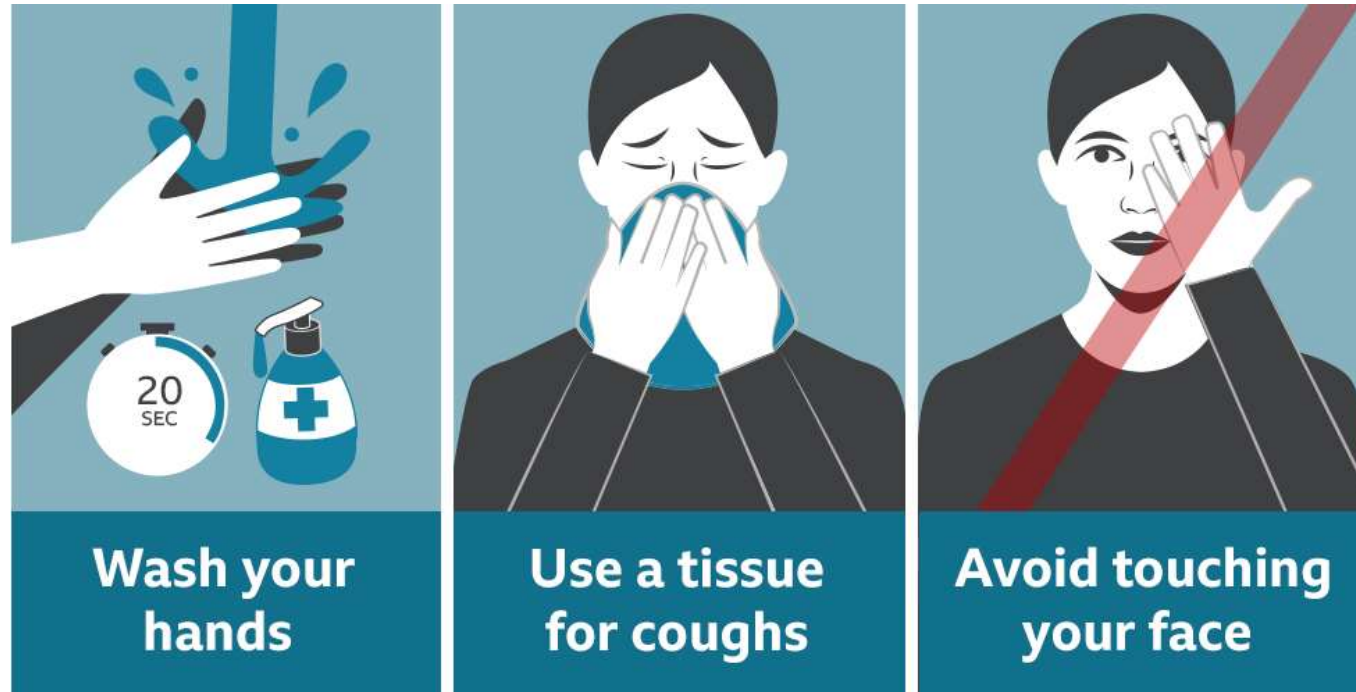
Adapted from WHO Guidance published 28 February 2020



# How Covid 19 will affect Workplaces and Businesses?

1. **Absenteeism:** illness, sick family, child's school closure, fear.
2. **Change of patterns of commerce:** people buy more items for infection prevention, less of all else.
3. People may **stockpile**; shop at odd hours; use more home delivery.
4. **Supplies may be interrupted** (shipments/flights).





**Wash your  
hands**

**Use a tissue  
for coughs**

**Avoid touching  
your face**

# What can we do to Prepare?

Plan Ahead. Take Basic Precautions...

Panic or Fear will not solve the problem.

# Promote hand-washing

- **Encourage regular hand washing** amongst all staff and customers.
  - Put sanitizing **hand rub** dispensers in prominent places around the workplace.
  - Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled.
  - Display **posters/videos** promoting hand-washing.
  - Ensure **access to places to wash hands** with soap and running water.
- **Why? Because washing kills the virus on your hands and prevents the spread of COVID- 19.**

Protect yourself and others from getting sick

## Wash your hands



- after coughing or sneezing
- when caring for the sick
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after handling animals or animal waste

Wash your hands with soap and running water when hands are **visibly dirty**



If your **hands are not visibly dirty**, frequently clean them by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water

# Promote good respiratory hygiene

- Display **posters** promoting respiratory hygiene.
- Ensure that face masks and / or paper tissues are available at your workplaces, **for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work**, along with closed bins for hygienically disposing of them.
- **Why? Because good respiratory hygiene prevents the spread of COVID-19.**

## Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing **cover mouth and nose** with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands.



Throw tissue into a closed bin immediately after use

**Clean hands** with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick



# Ensure workplaces are clean and hygienic

- **Surfaces** (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be **wiped with disinfectant regularly**.
- **Why?** Because contamination on surfaces touched by employees and customers is one of the main ways that COVID-19 spreads.



# Take general precautions to protect the community from spread of Covid 19

**Protect others from getting sick**



Avoid close contact when you are experiencing cough and fever

Avoid spitting in public



If you have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing **seek medical advice early by phone**, and share previous travel history with your health care provider.

- **Avoid large public gatherings.**
- **Avoid close contact** with others when you or when the other person(s) are sick.
- Seek **medical advice early – by phone.**
- Wearing masks or gloves when not necessary or by persons not trained in their use may increase risk of infection.

# Ask employees to stay home if ill

- **If COVID-19 starts spreading in your community** anyone with even a mild cough or low grade fever (37.5 C or more) needs to stay at home.
  - Can work from home if mild illness.
  - People need to stay at home even if just mild symptoms.
  - Communicate this via calls/e-mails/posters/videos in your workplaces.
  - Agree to allow this time off to be considered sick leave.

# Advise employees to consult National travel advice before going on business trips overseas

- **Before traveling**

- Provide employees latest information from a **credible source**, such as WHO/CDC/ Department of Health.
- **Assess benefits and risks** related to upcoming travel plans.
- Avoid sending employees who may be at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. older employees and those with medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, heart and lung disease).
- Advice to travel with small bottles (under 100ml) of alcohol-based hand rub. This can facilitate regular hand-cleaning.





# While Traveling

- Encourage employees to **wash their hands regularly** and **stay at least one meter away from people who are coughing or sneezing**
- Ensure employees contact local health authorities if they are feeling ill while traveling, and comply with their instructions.

**Avoid close contact with people suffering from a fever and cough** 

**Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water** 

**Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth** 

**When coughing or sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue - throw tissue away immediately and wash hands** 

**If you choose to wear a mask, be sure to cover mouth and nose – avoid touching mask once it's on** 

**Immediately discard single-use mask after each use and wash hands after removing masks**

# When Employees return from travel

- **Return is subject to travel advisory restrictions.**
- Employees who have returned from an area where COVID-19 is spreading should **monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days.**
- **If they develop illness**, even a mild cough or low grade fever:
  - **Stay at home and self-isolate.** This means avoiding close contact (1 meter or nearer) with other people, including family members.
  - **Telephone the Department of Health**, giving details of their recent travel and symptoms, and follow advice and instructions given by them. Do **NOT** go directly to a clinic/emergency room.
  - **Inform the workplace.**

# Getting your business ready in case COVID-19 arrives in your community

Develop an internal plan of **what to do if someone becomes ill at work** with suspected COVID-19:

- Put the ill person in a room or area where they are **isolated** from others.
- **If a mask is available, ask the sick person to wear one.**
- **Limit number of people who have contact** with the sick person.  
Ensure anyone entering the room **maintains at least 1 m** from the ill person.
- **Contact local health authorities** for further advice.

# Work practices

## **When there is COVID 19 in your community,**

- Where possible, promote **working via telephone or online.**
- **Avoid public transport and crowded places.**
- Develop a **contingency plan** for your business:
  - Plan how to keep your business running even if a significant number of employees, contractors and suppliers cannot come to your place of business - either due to local restrictions on travel or because they are ill.
- **Communicate to your employees** about the plan:
  - Make sure they are aware of **what they need to do – or not do** – under the plan.
  - Emphasize importance of staying away from work if ill (even mild).
- Provide information, support and encouragement for staff.

# Work practices

- **Social distancing:**
  - Avoiding large gatherings/meetings.
  - Staggered or non-overlapping work shifts.
- **Downsizing operations:**
  - Stopping non-essential services.
  - Voluntary leave for these staff.
- **Delivering services remotely:**
  - From home – via telephone, e-mail, online.



# Closing Note

- **Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference.**
- Action now will help protect your employees and your business.
- These actions are **beneficial for employee health even outside a Covid 19 outbreak**, and should be continued indefinitely.
- **Together, we can beat Covid 19!**
- For further information on Covid 19, contact:
  - 141 Hotline
  - Your local clinic via 4388000
- Thank you.