



COVID-19 instructions for catering establishments, pubs, bars, nightclubs, and other gathering places

- COVID-19 is an infectious viral disease which spreads from person to person by means of the projection of aerosols, mainly though coming into close contact with infectious persons.*
- If conditions are favourable, the virus can survive on contaminated surfaces for up to three days, but it can be destroyed through proper cleaning and disinfection.
- The risk of the spread of COVID-19 is at its highest in enclosed, crowded, and poorly ventilated rooms.
- The aim of these instructions is to provide guidelines for nightclubs, bars, pubs, lounges, and other catering establishments and gathering places for the safe provision of their services under the conditions of the spread of COVID-19.
- **The work of the establishment should be organised by using as a basis those valid orders which have been issued by the Estonian government: [Measures and restrictions which are required in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19.](#)**

The cleanliness of the premises and proper ventilation

- It must be ensured that air which is mechanically supplied and removed in the form of a ventilation system is supplied through a system which is fully functional and which has been switched on. The requirements of regulation No 8 by the Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure, dated 2 April 2020: [Requirements for the ventilation and aeration of social welfare institution buildings and non-residential buildings which have indoor climate control](#) must be followed.
- The premises must be regularly cleaned and disinfected by using the usual methods and cleaning materials.
- Frequently-used objects and surfaces (including counters) should be cleaned and disinfected every two to four hours. Such objects and surfaces include toilets, door handles, bar counters, tables, chairs, etc.
- Cover bread and other unpacked food with a kitchen towel or a transparent lid.
- Regularly clean any surfaces (and at least at an interval of between two to four hours) which are touched by customers (including utensils' vessels, menus, condiment and sauce vessels, bread baskets, serving tongs, counters, and so on).
- Packaging and utensils which are used for selling takeaway food and drinks or for consuming them on site must be stored in a manner which helps to prevent their potential contamination.
- Any waste which may have been contaminated with the virus (eg. tissues and masks, etc) should be disposed of pursuant to the following instructions: <https://envir.ee/uudised/koroonajaatmed-tuleb-teistest-eemalhoida>.
- [The advice of the Health Board in terms of cleaning and disinfection](#) should be followed.

Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 is a biological hazard

- As of 24 November 2022, coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 is deemed to be a biological hazard which is included in hazard group 3. The hazards of this group may cause a severe illness in humans and are a serious threat to employee health.





- **In the case of any work which includes coming into contact with biological hazards the employer must, during the course of conducting the working environment risk analysis carry out the following actions:**
 - ✓ the type, extent, and duration of the risk of infection for the employee must be determined, and an assessment should be made of the resultant risk to the employee's health;
 - ✓ **consider where and how the employee may come into contact with the virus and map out all potential infection sites: office and production premises, non-work rooms, auditoriums, cloakrooms, etc.**
- Based on the risk analysis, the required precautions must be taken. [The precautions are introduced on the Labour Inspectorate's 'Tööelu' website.](#)

Customers

- Patrons' **COVID-19 certificates must be checked** once they enter the sales or service areas of catering establishments, entertainment venues, or **events** (including cases which involve the provision of take-away services, when providing courier services, or when on ferries, at international ports, airports in general, or on board airplanes after a security check, or when attending non-public funerals or outdoor events which do not have restricted access). Customers may take part in activities if they meet at least one of the criteria specified below:
 - 1) they are under twelve years of age;
 - 2) they are aged between 12-18, attend a general education school or a vocational educational institution, and do not exhibit any symptoms, if the activity in question is related to sports training or practice, exercising, youth work, hobby activities, hobby education, refresher training, or continuing education.
 - 3) if their physician has decided that they cannot be vaccinated due to an underlying health condition, but they are still able to present the relevant certificate before they take part in the activity in question;
 - 4) they have had COVID-19 as specified in paragraph 5, have been vaccinated (which includes their having received an additional dose of the vaccine), or have been deemed to be the equivalent of a vaccinated individual and can present the relevant certificate before they take part in the activity in question;
 - 5) they are in some way connected to the activity in question, with their employer having prescribed it through the working environment risk analysis and have implemented measures which are intended to alleviate any relevant risks in the specific location at which said activities are taking place, and the individual concerned complies with the relevant requirements;
 - 6) they are the individual who is responsible for organising the activity in the first place, or are a representative of this individual, or they are involved in carrying out emergency duties.
- **All patrons must wear a mask while they are in public indoor premises (except children under the age of twelve and those individuals who cannot wear a mask due to health considerations but who can present a relevant certificate).** [Please see the Health Board's website for details regarding how to wear a mask properly.](#)
- Please observe the rules for providing entertainment services and organising public events which have been laid down by the latest respective order.
- The service provider must ensure that it is possible for the **customers to properly observe social distancing** rules when they are in entertainment establishments and the sales or service areas of catering establishments. This restriction does not apply to families or in any situation in which the requirement cannot reasonably be observed.
- Information material and signage must be posted on the premises of commercial undertakings to facilitate social distancing.
- Information must be posted on the business website, its social media accounts, and besides the entry into the premises so that customers are properly notified that they are not permitted to enter the premises or remain on the premises if they have even the slightest suspicion of having been infected, and that the business operates under the obligation to remove any such individuals from its premises.





- Customers should be encouraged to use the [HOIA](#) mobile phone app (in order to achieve this, for example, information about the app could be added to the menu). The app notifies individuals who have come into close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (with close contact lasting more than fifteen minutes and within a distance of two metres).
- Sanitising products must be made available and sanitising requirements must be observed in public indoor premises pursuant to the [Health Board's instructions](#).
- Customers must be able to wash their hands or, if this is not possible, to sanitise their hands.
- Hand sanitisers must be provided in visible places alongside the main routes which are used by customers, including at the entry and exit points to the premises.
- [Hand-washing](#) and [sanitising](#) stations must be equipped with appropriate instructions.
- Toilets must be equipped with plenty of soap and disposable towels for drying hands. From the perspective of infection prevention, it is safer to use disposable towels instead of hand dryers.
- Buffet service and self-service should be avoided if possible, as such services may encourage people to gather closely together, making social distancing more difficult. If shared utensils are used for serving food then hand sanitiser must be provided, and it must be ensured that people sanitise their hands before handling any food, while also observing proper social distancing rules.
- In cases which involve organising product presentations (such as those involving food, utensils for serving food, or cosmetic products which are accompanied by a high risk of cross-contamination, such as lipsticks or mascara), where possible facilities must be provided to those persons who are tasked with presenting the products and to customers so that all parties are able to sanitise their hands and all parties should be encouraged to maintain the required social distancing.

Employees

- The employer must ensure that all employees are aware of the main [measures which can be implemented to prevent the passing-on of respiratory diseases](#). The employer must make sure that all employees are aware of [the general principles of food hygiene](#) and that they observe personal hygiene rules.
- It must be stressed to employees that they are not permitted to come into work or to remain at work in the case of there being even the smallest suspicion of their having been infected. A procedure must be established in order to make sure that no employee who has fallen ill remains on the business premises.
- Close contact between employees and close contact between employees and customers must be minimised.* If this is not possible, provide employees with personal protective equipment such as visors and masks.
- Employees should be advised to use the [HOIA](#) app. The app notifies individuals who have come into close contact (lasting at least fifteen minutes within a distance of two metres) with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus.
- Employees must be able to wash their hands regularly and the employer must remind employees when and how often they should wash their hands (see the list in the end of the instructions). [Hand-washing](#) instructions must be followed.
- If it is not possible to wash one's hands, then hands must be sanitised with a hand antiseptic by following the relevant [instructions](#). Visibly dirty hands must always be washed.
- Collective means of protection and personal protective equipment must be issued to employees based on the results of the risk analysis for the working environment, and training must be organised to show the proper and safe use of such equipment.
[Instructions can be found on the Health Board's website.](#)





- Work clothing must be washed regularly using a procedure which is followed by all of the business employees. The clothing of any employee who has fallen ill must be washed immediately.
- Clothing or other tools and equipment which are used at work should not be taken home if possible.

**When an employee falls ill with a viral upper respiratory tract disease
(such as a fever or a cough, or displaying a lack of energy, or showing other symptoms)**

- Any employee who falls ill outside of working hours must stay at home.
- Any employee who falls ill at work must leave immediately.
- The employee must contact their family physician who will determine whether or not that person should be diagnosed with COVID-19, plus their need to be tested, and the need to sign a certificate to show their incapacity for work.
- From the perspective of slowing down the spread of COVID-19, it is important for any employee who has fallen ill to notify their employer of their COVID-19 diagnosis having been confirmed. The employer must be notified in a manner which has been agreed upon between the employee and the employer.
- If a diagnosis of COVID-19 is confirmed, the employer must identify all persons who may have come into close contact with the employee who has fallen ill at their place of work, and within the immediate period after the employee had become symptomatic or up two days before they became symptomatic.* In the case of an asymptomatic employee, anyone who came into close contacts with the employee within two days before the employee tested positive is deemed to be amongst the employee's close contacts.* [Further information about determining who is a close contact can be found on the Health Board's website.](#)
- Having been notified of an employee's COVID-19 diagnosis, the employer must cooperate with the Health Board's relevant regional department in order to identify the employee's work-related close contacts, and to provide them with the appropriate instructions for the further organisation of their work.*
- Please enter the details of any work-related close contacts in the relevant table (the table is available [here](#)).
- Following your conversation with the Health Board, please send the table to the Health Board's relevant regional department (you will receive the required contact details) in an encrypted format.
- Close contacts must self-isolate for ten days, while monitoring their health condition carefully. Even though it is not compulsory to get tested, the Health Board advises close contacts to undergo SARS-CoV-2 testing after completing their ten-day self-isolation period in order to detect potential asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic cases. The duration of a close contact's self-isolation period can be calculated with the help of the [Estonian Family Physicians Association's isolation calculator](#).
- Any premises which may have been contaminated with the virus must be closed to third parties and should be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and ventilated before reopening.
- The requirement to self-isolate in one's current abode or permanent residence for ten calendar days and take the coronavirus SARS-CoV2 test is not applied under the following circumstances:
 - a) the individual has had COVID-19 within the past 180 days;
 - b) the individual is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, has obtained full protection after the last vaccine dose, and has received the last vaccine dose within the past year;
 - c) the individual has had COVID-19, has received one vaccine dose, has obtained full protection after the last vaccine dose, and has received the last vaccine dose within the past year, or the individual has been infected with COVID-19 after their first vaccine dose, has recovered from COVID-19, and has taken the SARS-CoV-2 test





which confirmed their diagnosis or they have had their diagnosis confirmed in another manner within the past year.

- [The advice of the Health Board in terms of cleaning and disinfection](#) should be followed.
- If the COVID-19 diagnosis is not confirmed for an employee who has fallen ill, all other employees may continue to carry out their duties, but must monitor their health over the following ten days.

HANDS MUST BE WASHED:

- before commencing work
- before and after handling food
- after handling waste
- after carrying out cleaning operations
- after using the toilet
- after blowing one's nose, sneezing, or coughing
- after eating, drinking, or smoking
- after handling cash

*CLOSE CONTACT IS CLASSED AS BEING:

- direct physical contact with an individual who has been infected with COVID-19 (such as shaking hands)
- direct contact without any protection with secretions from the respiratory tract of a person who has been infected with COVID19 (such as being coughed on)
- being within a distance of up to two metres of a person who has been infected with COVID-19 for at least fifteen minutes

Guidelines and advice are available at:

[The Health Board's COVID-19-related publications and instructions](#)

[The advice of the Veterinary and Food Office to food business operators in connection with coronavirus](#)

[The Labour Inspectorate's advice to the employer and employee](#)

