



COVID-19 instructions for retail businesses

- COVID-19 is an infectious viral disease which spreads from person to person through the projection of aerosol spray, mainly via close contact with infectious persons.*
- If the conditions are favourable, the virus can survive on contaminated surfaces for up to three days, but it can be destroyed through 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 to retail businesses for the safe provision of their services under the circumstances of the spread of COVID-19.
- The work of the establishment should always be organised by observing valid regulations and requirements which have been issued by the government of the republic of Estonia: it is necessary to implement measures and restrictions in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (as published in the State Gazette).

The cleanliness of the premises and proper ventilation

- It must be ensured that air that is mechanically supplied and removed in the form of a ventilation system is supplied through a system that is fully functional and which has been switched on. The requirements of regulation No 8 by the Minister of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure of 2 April 2020 regarding [requirements for the ventilation and aeration of social welfare institution buildings and non-residential buildings that have indoor climate control](#) must be followed.
- The premises must be regularly cleaned and disinfected by using the usual methods and cleaning materials. [The advice of the Health Board in terms of cleaning and disinfection](#) should be followed.
- Frequently touched objects and surfaces (such as door handles, electronic information boards, self-service equipment, cash registers, payment terminals, shopping carts, shopping baskets, scales, etc) must be cleaned every 2-4 hours.
- Packaging and utensils which are used for selling takeaway food and drinks or for consuming them on the premises must be stored in a manner which helps to prevent their potential contamination. Any waste which may have come into contact with the virus (including personal protective equipment) must be collected in plastic bags which can be sealed at the top and disposed of as mixed domestic waste.

Customers

- Conditions must be created in the service areas and public spaces within each business premises or service provider to enable customers to observe the '2+2 rule', which means that up to two people may walk together and the pair must stay at least two metres away from any other individuals. This restriction does not apply to families, or to any situation in which social distancing cannot reasonably be ensured. Signage should be posted around the cash register area to ensure that this requirement is observed. If necessary, customers should be verbally reminded of the requirement.
- In addition to observing the principle of 2+2, sales areas and public spaces in shops and the service areas of service providers may be filled to no more than 50% of their normal capacity at any time. This means that there must be 8m² of floor space in the sales area for each customer (including any part of the total floor space which contains fittings and furniture). In other words, in the case of a shop with a total floor space in the customer area of 100m², the maximum permitted number of visitors is thirteen.

COVID-19 instructions
for retail undertakings





- If possible, customers should be notified in writing of the maximum permitted number of visitors, with a notification to that extent being placed at the main entrance to the business.
- Wearing a mask or covering one's nose and mouth is compulsory in the service areas and public spaces of commercial businesses, and in the service areas of service providers. Wearing a mask is not compulsory for children under twelve years of age, for individuals who have a justified medical reason for not doing so, or for those who need to communicate with an individual who has hearing difficulties and who must be able to read their conversation partner's lips. [Please see on the Health Board's website for details about how to wear a mask properly.](#)
- Customers should be encouraged to use the [HOIA](#) mobile phone 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.
- Hand sanitisers must be provided for employees and customers in visible places in the sales and service areas, at least at the entry and exit points.
- 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.
- [Hand-washing](#) and [sanitising](#) stations must be equipped with appropriate instructions.
- Counters with uncovered food and self-service counters should not be used if possible, as people may gather around such counters and it may be difficult to observe social distancing rules in those areas. Any unpacked food should be covered. If shared utensils are used for serving food, hand sanitiser must be provided and it must be ensured that people sanitise their hands before handling food, as well as wearing masks where appropriate, and observing social distancing rules.
- If the business has an online store, customer should be encouraged to shop online. In the case of sales campaigns being organised, measures should be taken to prevent any gathering of people. Businesses are urged to refrain from organising any large-scale on-site campaigns (with discounts for all or most of the goods). Discounts for single products or product groups are permitted (for example two packs for the price of one).

Employees

- The employer must make sure that all employees are aware of [the main measures which can be implemented to prevent the passing on of respiratory diseases, the main hygiene principles](#), and [the main principles of food hygiene and food handling](#).
- 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 customers must be minimised.*
- Wearing a mask or covering one's nose and mouth in the service areas and public spaces of commercial undertakings is compulsory, as is also the case in the service areas of service providers. Wearing a mask is not compulsory for children under twelve years of age, or for individuals who have a justified medical reason for not doing so, or who need to communicate with an individual who has hearing difficulties and who must be able to read their conversation partner's lips. [Please see the Health Board's website for detailed instructions on how to wear a mask properly.](#)
- 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 the employees when and how often they should wash their hands (see the list in the end of the instructions). The [instructions](#) that have been provided for washing hands 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 respective [instructions](#). Visibly dirty hands must always be washed.
- As of 24 November 2020, COVID-19, officially referred to as SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) is included in hazard group 3 of biological hazards. In the case of all work which is accompanied by a risk of coming into contact with biological hazards, the employer must determine the type, extent, and duration of the risk to the employee of their being infected during the drawing up of the working environment risk analysis and, based on this, must assess the risk to the employee's health and implement necessary precautionary measures. [The precautions are introduced on the Labour Inspectorate's 'Tööelu' website](#).
- 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](#).
- Any waste which may have been contaminated with the virus (such as tissues, masks, etc) should be disposed of pursuant to the following instructions: www.envir.ee/et/uudised/koroonajaatmed-tuleb-teistest-eemal-hoida.
- 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.
- In the case of product presentations being organised (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 and required social distancing and to wear masks.

If an employee falls ill with a respiratory disease
(fever, cough, lack of energy, and other symptoms)

- An employee who falls ill outside of working hours must stay at home.
- An 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 for a certificate to be signed to show their temporary incapacity for work.
- The employee must notify the employer of their confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis. The employer must be notified in a manner which has been agreed between the employee and the employer.
- Having been notified of an employee's COVID-19 diagnosis, the employer must cooperate with the Health Board's regional department to identify the employee's work-related close contacts and to provide them with instructions for the further organisation of their work.*
- 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 advice of the Health Board in terms of cleaning and disinfection](#) should be followed.
- Close contacts must stay at home for a period of fourteen days and should monitor their health condition carefully.* The duration of the required period of self-isolation can be reduced by testing

3

COVID-19 instructions
for retail undertakings





negative for SARS-CoV-2 at least ten days after having come into close contact with someone who is infected.

- Remaining employees may continue to carry out their daily duties, but should also keep an eye on their health.
- 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 fourteen 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 CLASSIFIED 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 COVID-19 (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](#)

