



COVID-19 Guidance – Tourist Accommodations

On June 11, 2020, Governor Kemp issued Executive Order 06.11.20.01, “Empowering a Healthy Georgia.”

In accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order, each Tourist Accommodation must implement the measures applicable to non-critical infrastructure businesses to mitigate the exposure and spread of COVID-19 among its workforce and the public it serves.

Additionally, if the Tourist Accommodation’s property includes any of the facilities for which the Order includes specific requirements, the Tourist Accommodation must also comply with the applicable sections of the Order and published guidance for those facilities. These facilities may include:

1. Food Service Establishments. Restaurants, dining rooms (including continental breakfast operations), bed and breakfast inns as defined in Tourist Accommodation Regulation 511-6-2-.03(b) and (d), banquet facilities, private event facilities, and private reception venues where food is served must comply with Section IV, “Restaurants and Dining Services,” as well as the Department’s *COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR RESTAURANTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS THAT MEET THE DEFINITION OF A “BAR” PER O.C.G.A. § 3-1-2(2.1)* at <https://dph.georgia.gov/>.
2. Bars. Bars as defined in Code section 3-1-2(2.1) must comply with the subsection of the Order that begins on page 17, under Section V, “Industry, Commerce, Organizations and Non-Profits,” as well as the Department’s *COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR RESTAURANTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS THAT MEET THE DEFINITION OF A “BAR” PER O.C.G.A. § 3-1-2(2.1)* at <https://dph.georgia.gov/>.
3. Gyms and Fitness Centers. Gyms and fitness centers must comply with the subsection of the Order that begins on page 14, under Section V, “Industry, Commerce, Organizations and Non-Profits.”
4. Personal Care Facilities. Estheticians as defined in Code section 43-10-1(8), hair designers as defined in Code section 43-10-1(9), tanning facilities as defined in Code section 31-38-1(6) and massage therapy pursuant to Code section 43-24A-8 must comply with the subsection of the Order that begins on page 15, under Section V, “Industry, Commerce, Organizations and Non-Profits.”
5. Conventions. Conventions may not operate in the state prior to July 1, 2020. After July first, Conventions must comply with the subsection that begins on page 36, under Section X, “Conventions.”
6. Swimming Pools. Tourist Accommodation Swimming Pool operations must adhere to the Department’s *COVID-19 GUIDANCE- PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS* at <https://dph.georgia.gov/>. *The guidance incorporates the mandatory measures for non-critical infrastructure listed in the Order, as well as recommendations based on CDC’s [guidance on operating and managing public pools, hot tubs, and water playgrounds during the pandemic.](#)*

Mandatory Mitigation Measures for Tourist Accommodations to Reduce Exposure Risks among Employees and Patrons

The specific directives of the Order are reproduced below in plain text. Additional recommendations and clarification from the Georgia Department of Public Health's Tourist Accommodations Program are provided in italics.

Mitigation Measures for Employees

- Screen and evaluate workers who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. *While it is strongly recommended that each facility have an infrared thermometer on hand to screen employees, it is not required. Employees may screen themselves prior to arrival for work using thermometers they have at home. Employees should do [symptom checking](#) prior to coming to work and stay home if they have symptoms. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include a fever over 100.4°F, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.*
- Require workers who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 to not report to work or to seek medical attention. *An employee with known or suspected COVID-19 must follow CDC guidelines to self-isolate for at least ten days after symptom onset and end isolation only after symptoms have shown progressive improvement and the employee has been fever-free for three consecutive days without medication before returning to work. Tourist Accommodation operators should designate a facility point of contact, who will notify [local public health officials](#) of illnesses. Public health will inform those who have had [close contact](#) with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home, [self-monitor for symptoms](#), and follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop.*
- Require hand washing or sanitation at appropriate places within the location. *Tourist Accommodation Regulation 511-6-2-.06(2) requires employees to “thoroughly wash their hands and the exposed portions of their arms with soap and warm water before starting work, during work as often as necessary to keep them clean and after smoking, eating, drinking, or using the toilet.” Employees are further required to keep their fingernails clean and to “maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and conform to other good hygienic practices.”*
- Prohibit gatherings during working hours. *No more than fifty (50) people may be present at a single location if six (6) feet of distance cannot be maintained between each person. However, Tourist Accommodations are strongly encouraged to ensure that workers and patrons maintain social distancing even in groups of less than fifty (50) people.*
- Permit workers to take breaks and meals outside, in their office or personal workspace, or in such other areas where Social Distancing is attainable.
- Implement teleworking as practicable.
- Implement staggered shifts as practicable.

- Deliver intangible services remotely as practicable.
- Discourage workers from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment (*such as pens, pencils, check holders, etc.*).
- Prohibit handshaking and any unnecessary person-to-person contact.
- For retailer and service providers, provide for alternative points of sale outside of buildings, including curbside pick-up or delivery of products and/or services if an alternate point of sale is permitted under Georgia law.
- For retailers and service providers, open sales registers must be at least six (6) feet apart.
- Point of sale equipment, including PIN entry devices and signature pads, should be frequently cleaned and sanitized. *Registers and point of sale machines should be cleaned and sanitized between uses by different employees.*
- If the entity engages volunteers or has members of the public participate in activities, prohibit volunteering or participation in activities for persons diagnosed with COVID-19, having exhibited symptoms of COVID-19, or having had contact with a person that has or is suspected to have COVID-19 within the past fourteen (14) days.
- If practicable, provide personal protective equipment as available and appropriate to the function and location of the worker within the business location. *Employees should wear a [cloth face covering](#) that covers the nose and mouth as appropriate. Tourist Accommodations should recommend that patrons wear cloth face coverings in the lobby or other common areas while present on the Tourist Accommodation's leased or owned property.*
- If practicable, provide disinfectant and sanitation products for workers to clean their workspace, equipment, and tools. *Develop procedures for cleaning and disinfecting an area used by an ill person. The procedure should include: closing off areas used by a sick person and not using the areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them; waiting more than 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting these areas, if practicable; and ensuring [safe and correct](#) use and storage of approved disinfectants from the Environmental Protection Agency that are shown to be effective against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. A list of these disinfectants can be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.*
- If practicable, increase physical space between workers' worksites to at least six (6) feet. *Where possible, stagger workstations to avoid employees standing next to each other. Where six feet of separation is not possible, consider spacing options that include other mitigation efforts, with increased frequency of cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.*

Mitigation Measures for Guests and Patrons

- Post signs on the front of the facility stating that individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 shall not enter. *Symptoms of COVID-19 may include a fever over 100.4°F, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.*
- Enhance sanitation as appropriate. If [EPA-approved List N disinfectants](#) are not available, an alternative disinfectant can be used: *1/3 cup of unscented bleach added to 1 gallon of water. Do not mix bleach with other cleaning and disinfecting products because this can cause fumes that are very dangerous to breathe in.*
- Disinfect common surfaces regularly. [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces and items (such as room keys, tables, phones, doorknobs, light switches, elevator buttons, water fountains, ATMs/card payment stations, business center computers and printers, ice/vending machines, and remote controls). *Clean and disinfect common restrooms regularly, check restrooms based on the frequency of use, and ensure adequate supply of soap and paper towels is available. Do not vigorously shake linen during changing to prevent the virus from dispersing into the air, and launder linen as directed by manufacturer instructions.*
- Hold all meetings and conferences virtually, as practicable.
- Place notices that encourage hand hygiene at entrances to the workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen. *Post signs that encourage [washing hands frequently with warm soapy water](#) for at least 20 seconds at entrances, restrooms and in other visible areas. Provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for use by guests and patrons, including contactless hand sanitizing stations when available.*
- Increase physical space between workers and patrons. *Design a process to ensure guests have 6 feet of separation while waiting to be checked in or out. Use options for online reservation and check-in, mobile room key, and contactless payment. Valet parking should include floor markings, signs, or call service to help maintain social distancing. Reduce frequency of in-room services and provide contactless delivery for any room service order as practicable. Recommend removal of multi-use glassware and other non-essential items from guestrooms. Encourage patrons to practice Social Distancing while present on the Tourist Accommodation's leased or owned property.*

Recommendations for Servicing Your Building's Water System

There are many public health considerations, not just COVID-19 related, when reopening hotel buildings and associated facilities that have been closed for extended periods. Use CDC's Guidance for Building Water Systems to ensure the [safety of your building water system](#). The guide will help operators implement mitigation measures against contaminants such as *Legionella*.

Some of the recommendations include:

- Refresh your plumbing by flushing fixtures to bring in fresh water to help prevent harmful organisms from growing.
- Inspect mechanical equipment such as cooling towers, boilers, pumps, backflow preventers, etc., and determine if there are any issues regarding their function.
- Monitor water parameters, such as temperature and disinfectant.
- Review Prevention with Water Management Plans at <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/wmp/index.html>.
- Review Guidance for Building Water Systems at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>.

Recommendations for Your Building's Ventilation System

Since COVID-19 may be spread by those with no symptoms, businesses and employers, including Tourist Accommodations, should evaluate and institute controls according to the [hierarchy of controls](#) to protect their employees and members of the general public. Tourist Accommodations should consider improving the engineering controls using the building ventilation system. Some of these recommendations are based on the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) [Guidance for Building Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Review the ASHRAE guidelines for further information on ventilation recommendations.

Based on the system's design, controls may include some or all of the following activities:

- Increase ventilation rates.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and provide acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space.
- Increase outdoor air ventilation, using caution in highly polluted areas. With a lower occupancy level in the building, this increases the effective dilution ventilation per person.
- Disable demand-controlled ventilation (DCV).
- Further open minimum outdoor air dampers (as high as 100%) to reduce or eliminate recirculation. In mild weather, this will not affect thermal comfort or humidity. However, this may be difficult to do in cold or hot weather.
- Improve central air filtration to the MERV-13 or the highest compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter to limit bypass.
- Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed.
- Keep systems running longer hours, 24/7 if possible, to enhance air exchanges in the building space.

Resources

State of Georgia Executive Order 06.11.20.01, “Empowering a Healthy Georgia,”
<https://gov.georgia.gov/executive-action/executive-orders/2020-executive-orders>.

Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations: Interim Recommendations for US Community Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019,
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.

Building Water Quality and Coronavirus: Flushing Guidance for Periods of Low or No Use, Environmental Science Policy and Research Institute,
https://esprinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/FINAL_Coronavirus-Building-Flushing-Guidance-20200403-rev-1.pdf.

Cleaning and Disinfecting for Reopening,
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>.

Guidance for Building Water Systems,
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>.

Building Water System Guidance Analysis
<https://engineering.purdue.edu/PlumbingSafety/covid19/guidance-analysis>

Deciding to Go Out
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/activities.html>

Guidance for Building Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic
https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/ashrae%20journal/2020journaldocuments/72-74_ieq_schoen.pdf

Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), May 2020
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>