

GUIDANCE FOR GROUP QUARTERS DURING COVID-19



Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

Monitor federal, state, and local public health communications about COVID-19 regulations, guidance, and recommendations and ensure that residents and employees have access to that information.

Frequently check the [CDC COVID-19 website](#)

Also check the CDC website for [Shared and Congregate Housing information](#).

Considerations for common spaces in your facility, to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- Consider how you can use multiple strategies to maintain social (physical) distance between everyone in common spaces of the facility.
- Consider cancelling all public or non-essential group activities and events.
- Offer alternative methods for activities and social interaction such as participation by phone, online, or through recorded sessions.
- Arrange seating of chairs and tables to be least 6 feet (2 meters) apart during shared meals or other events.
- Alter schedules to reduce mixing and close contact, such as staggering meal and activity times and forming small groups that regularly participate at the same times and do not mix.
- Minimize traffic in enclosed spaces, such as elevators and stairwells. Consider limiting

the number of individuals in an elevator at one time and designating one directional stairwells, if possible.

- Ensure that social distancing can be maintained in shared rooms, such as television, game, or exercise rooms.
- Make sure that shared rooms in the facility have good air flow from an air conditioner or an opened window.
- Consider working with building maintenance staff to determine if the building ventilation system can be modified to increase ventilation rates or the percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Clean and disinfect shared areas (laundry facilities, elevators, shared kitchens, exercise rooms, dining rooms) and frequently touched surfaces using [EPA-registered disinfectants](#) more than once a day if possible.

Shared Kitchens and Dining Rooms

- Restrict the number of people allowed in the kitchen and dining room at one time so that everyone can stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart from one another.
- People who are sick, their roommates, and those who have higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should eat or be fed in their room, if possible.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or



RILEY COUNTY
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

eating utensils. Non-disposable food service items used should be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Wash hands after handling used food service items.

- Use gloves when removing garbage bags and handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands

Laundry Rooms

- Maintain access and adequate supplies to laundry facilities to help prevent spread of COVID-19.
- Restrict the number of people allowed in laundry rooms at one time to ensure everyone can stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart.
- Provide disposable gloves, soap for washing hands, and household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectant for residents and staff to clean and disinfect buttons, knobs, and handles of laundry machines, laundry baskets, and shared laundry items.
- Post guidelines for doing laundry such as washing instructions and handling of dirty laundry.

Recreational areas such as activity rooms and exercise rooms

- Consider closing activity rooms or restricting the number of people allowed in at one time to ensure everyone can stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart.
- Consider closing exercise rooms.
- Activities and sports (e.g., ping pong, basketball, chess) that require close contact are not recommended.

Pools and Hot Tubs

- Consider closing pools and hot tubs or limiting access to pools for essential activities only, such as water therapy.
- While proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (with chlorine or bromine) should kill COVID-19 in pools and hot tubs, they may

become crowded and could easily exceed recommended guidance for gatherings. It can also be challenging to keep surfaces clean and disinfected.

- Considerations for shared spaces (maintaining physical distance and cleaning and disinfecting surfaces) should be addressed for the pool and hot tub area and in locker rooms if they remain open.

Shared Bathrooms

- Shared bathrooms should be cleaned regularly using EPA-registered disinfectant, at least twice per day (e.g., in the morning and evening or after times of heavy use).
- Make sure bathrooms are continuously stocked with soap and paper towels or automated hand dryers. Hand sanitizer could also be made available.
- Make sure trash cans are emptied regularly.
- Provide information on how to wash hands properly. Hang signs in bathrooms.
- Residents should be instructed that sinks could be an infection source and should avoid placing toothbrushes directly on counter surfaces. Totes could also be used for personal items to limit their contact with other surfaces in the bathroom.

If a resident in your facility has COVID-19 (suspected or confirmed):

- Have the resident seek advice by telephone from a healthcare provider to determine whether medical evaluation is needed.
- Residents are not required to notify administrators if they think they may or have a confirmed case of COVID-19. If you do receive information that someone in your facility has COVID-19, you should work with the local health department to notify anyone in the building who may have been exposed (had close contact with the sick person) while maintaining the confidentiality of the sick person as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and, if

applicable, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

- Provide the ill person with information on how to care for themselves and when to seek medical attention.
- Encourage residents with COVID-19 symptoms and their roommates and close contacts to self-isolate – limit their use of shared spaces as much as possible.
- If possible, designate a separate bathroom for residents with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Consider reducing cleaning frequency in bedrooms and bathrooms dedicated to persons with COVID-19 symptoms to as-needed cleaning (e.g., soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact with the ill persons.
- Follow guidance on when to stop isolation.
- Minimize the number of staff members who have face-to-face interactions with residents who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Encourage staff, other residents, caregivers such as outreach workers, and others who visit persons with COVID-19 symptoms to follow recommended precautions to prevent the spread.
- Staff at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should not have close contact with residents who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19, if possible.
- Those who have been in close contact (i.e., less than 6 feet (2 meters) with a resident who has confirmed or suspected COVID-19 should monitor their health and call their healthcare provider if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- Be prepared for the potential need to transport persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 for testing or non-urgent medical care. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis. Follow guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting any transport vehicles.

Follow the CDC cleaning and disinfection

recommendations:

- Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water before disinfecting them.
- To disinfect surfaces, [use products that meet EPA criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2](#), the virus that causes COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.
- Always wear gloves and gowns appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting.
- You may need to wear additional PPE depending on the setting and disinfectant product you are using. For each product you use, consult and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for use.

Contact Information

Riley County Health Department

2030 Tecumseh Road
Manhattan, KS 66502

Screening Line
785-323-6400

Q&A Information
rileycountycovid19@gmail.com
785-587-4526 (voicemail only)

Business Information

Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce

info@manhattan.org
(785) 776-8829

Kansas COVID-19 Response and Recovery

<https://covid.ks.gov>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>