

What you need to know as a residential care/food operation

How it spreads

Coronaviruses are spread primarily from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. It spreads between people who are in close contact (less than two metres/six feet). Currently, there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food.

What you should do:

- Advise employees to stay at home if they are sick.
- Encourage proper and frequent handwashing.
- Ensure staff and residents are using proper cough etiquette. (see link below for details)
- Ensure staff are washing hands before starting work, before handling any food, after handling raw meats, poultry and fish after handling waste, after cleaning duties, after using the toilet, after blowing their nose, after sneezing or coughing, after eating drinking or smoking, before handling clean dishes and utensils and after handling dirty dishes and cutlery.
- Keep liquid soap and paper towels dispensers filled at all times, both at the hand wash sinks in the food service facility and all washrooms.
- Ensure mechanical dishwashers are sanitizing properly. A high temperature dishwasher must reach a minimum 65.5 °C (150 °F) on the wash cycle and 82 °C (180 °F) on the sani-rinse cycle on most mechanical dishwashers. Chemical dishwashers must provide 50 to 100 ppm chlorine or, 12.5 ppm iodine.
- Make alcohol-based hand sanitizer widely available to residents and visitors.
- Regularly clean and sanitize all surfaces such as tabletops and countertops. Ensure frequent disinfection of doorknobs, faucet handles, elevator buttons, hand rails and all other frequently touched surfaces.
- Sanitizers such as chlorine and quaternary ammonium (quats) are effective sanitizers on food contact surfaces. Allow a one minute contact time or as directed on the label.
- Check sanitizer strengths with test papers (100 ppm for chlorine and 200 ppm for quats).
- All employees, including food handlers and dishwashing employees, must ensure gloves are changed whenever contaminated. Hands must be washed before wearing gloves.
- Wear gloves when clearing tables and discard the gloves after use.
- Avoid touching mouth, eyes and nose.
- The routine use of facemasks by staff is **NOT recommended**.

Remind employees that anyone who becomes sick with a fever and cough at work should go home immediately and call Health Links – Info Santé at: 204-788-8200.

Social distancing strategies for care homes include:

- Do not allow visitors who are ill (fever, cough) or have traveled to an affected area in the past 14 days or has had close contact with confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19.
- Minimize contact where possible and wash your hands frequently.
- Disinfecting frequently touched surfaces such as handrails, elevator buttons, door knobs, chairs.
- Cancelling close contact activities and large gatherings.
- Offering in-room meal service.
- Distancing tables in the dining room.
- Encourage visitors to use media platforms such as Facetime and telephone calls to check in with family members to minimize in-person visits.
- Minimizing prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two metres/six feet) contact between individuals.

Employers should review their business continuity plans and take steps to ensure their employees can:

- stay home when ill, without facing barriers such as the requirement for sick notes; and
- work from home if possible.

Manitobans who are concerned about their exposure to or risk of having COVID-19 should call Health Links – Info Santé in Winnipeg at **204-788-8200** or toll free elsewhere in Manitoba at **1-888-315-9257**.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the Manitoba public health website at www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/. For health questions or more information on respiratory illness, Manitobans can phone Health Links – Info Santé at **204-788-8200** or **1-888-315-9257** (toll-free).

Hand hygiene and cough etiquette posters are available in 32 different languages:

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/coronavirus-resources/hand-hygiene-posters/>

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/health-providers/coronavirus-resources/cough-etiquette-posters/>

Ensure to post these prominently in your establishments, for staff, residents and visitors.