

# What you need to know about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

*Dear Household,*

*The respiratory disease COVID-19 has captured the attention of the world because of its quick spread and potential to cause severe illness in some people.*

*At the Ministry of Health, your health and wellbeing is our main priority, and we are working hard to protect you....But we need your help.*

*We urge you to take action to protect yourself, your family and your neighbourhood communities from this global threat.*

*Please read the information contained in this leaflet carefully. Get informed. Make a plan. Be prepared.*

*We are learning more about this outbreak all the time, and we will share information with you as the situation evolves. For local updates visit [www.gov.bm/coronavirus](http://www.gov.bm/coronavirus).*

*Stay informed to stay well.*

**The Ministry of Health**

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently-discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- fever;
- tiredness; and
- dry cough

Some persons may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell.

## What should I do if I think I have been exposed to COVID-19?

- Call your doctor.
- Tell them your symptoms and travel history.
- Follow your doctor's guidance.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others.

People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. Try to maintain at least one metre (three feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

## How can my family and I prepare for COVID-19?

Create a household plan of action to help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in Bermuda:

- Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan, and discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs.
- Plan ways to care for those who might be at greater risk for serious complications, particularly older adults and those with severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease. Make sure they have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.
- Create an emergency contact list of family, friends, neighbours, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources.

## What steps can my family take to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19?

Practice everyday preventive actions to help reduce your risk of getting sick and remind everyone in your home to do the same. These actions are especially important for older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing,

or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects. (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles). For disinfection, most common household disinfectants should be effective.

### What should I do if I or someone in my house gets COVID-19?

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. For those individuals:

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Please seek medical attention immediately; if you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. These include: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, inability to arouse and/or bluish lips or face.
- Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
- Clean hands regularly by handwashing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.
- Avoid sharing personal items like utensils, food, and drinks.

### What is Government doing to respond to the global threat of COVID-19?

- Enhancing surveillance and laboratory testing to detect cases.
- Procuring Personal Protective Equipment for our front-line workers.
- Adapting our emergency response protocols.
- Improving protection measures at all ports of entry.
- Deploying specialized health professionals where most needed and ensuring they receive the appropriate training.
- Providing recommendations for healthcare infection control and other measures to prevent disease spread.
- Working to inform healthcare providers about proper response protocols.
- And disseminating up-to-date information to the general public, international travelers, and public health partners.

### I am hearing a lot about 'social distancing'. What does that mean?

Social distancing measures are taken to restrict how, when and where people can gather to prevent, stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. Social distancing measures include:

- Maintaining at least one metre (three feet) distance between yourself and others in group settings.
- Limiting large groups of people coming together.
- Closing buildings.
- Cancelling events.
- Reducing the use of non-essential public transport and recommending more people work from home.

## Where can I go for more information? [www.gov.bm/coronavirus](http://www.gov.bm/coronavirus)



#### CLEANSE HANDS

Frequently cleanse hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



#### COVER NOSE AND MOUTH

When coughing or sneezing cover your nose and mouth.



#### AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



#### AVOID TRAVEL

If you have a fever, cough or flu-like symptoms, avoid travel.



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# COVID-19

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### What should I do if I have an emergency while quarantined?

If you get more serious symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, such as shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, have another serious illness or if an accident happens while in quarantine and you require medical attention, call your doctor and explain the situation.

If you need to go to the hospital and you do not require an ambulance, you can use a private car, a motor cycle or have someone in your household who is already quarantined take you to the Emergency Room. Before you leave home you must contact the hospital so they know you are arriving and the nature of your emergency. When you arrive at the hospital phone again before you enter the building and you will be given instructions on what you should do.

If you require urgent medical attention, phone 911 and let the emergency service personnel know you are under quarantine. This allows the emergency responder to arrange the necessary precautions for the EMTs and Emergency Room staff. This will not delay the emergency healthcare needed.

### What about other household members?

Household members can continue with their daily tasks and provide necessities for you.

If there are people in your house who are not under quarantine, you should find ways to separate yourself from those people as much as possible by keeping a one metre/ three feet distance.

If you are able, you should sleep in a room by yourself or at least a separate bed.

If you can, use a toilet and bathroom that no one else in the house uses. If you have to share a bathroom with others, use the bathroom last and then clean it thoroughly.

It is important to practice good hand hygiene together with sneeze and cough etiquette to help reduce the risk of infecting household members.

If you become ill, then you will be isolated and the members of your household must be quarantined.

### What are the next steps?

Follow this guidance strictly.

An assigned public health officer will be in touch with you by phone or email to check for symptoms and that you are following the guidance.

Take and record your body temperature twice a day. Use the attached chart to record your temperature and symptoms. You should be prepared to report your daily temperatures and report all symptoms, whether you think they are relevant to COVID-19 or not, to the assigned public health officer.

You will not require testing unless referred by public health or medical personnel. Testing is only required for individuals with COVID-19 symptoms and a travel risk or contact history.

### Information about COVID-19

#### What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

#### What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are

- fever;
- tiredness; and
- dry cough

Some people may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea.

These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell.

Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around one out of every six people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems





# COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

## Self-Quarantine Guidance

You have travelled from a country with local transmission of COVID-19 and must self-quarantine for 14 days. This document provides details about the disease COVID-19, what it is, what the symptoms are, how it is spread and what you must do to prevent the spread of the disease.

Read this document thoroughly.

### What does quarantine mean?

Quarantine/self-quarantine is used to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease. Quarantine and self-quarantine mean that a person with no symptoms must stay in their home or accommodation, and must stay one meter or three feet away from others.

Everyone entering Bermuda from any country with local transmission of COVID-19 must be quarantined for 14 days after potential exposure. People must self-quarantine in their home or accommodation.

Quarantine is different from isolation with isolation being a step up from quarantine.

Individuals are isolated when they have symptoms, including fever and cough. Isolated people must stay at home (or in hospital if critically ill) and can have limited contact with others.

Even if a person has a fever and cough, this does not mean they have COVID-19 – further information will be provided to those under quarantine who develop symptoms. Everyone entering Bermuda from countries with local transmission of COVID-19 and symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) are required to be isolated while they have symptoms.

To clarify, when a person is quarantined they don't have the symptoms but are separated from others. When a person is isolated, they have symptoms and are kept away from others. Both of these public health measures are used to prevent the spread of an infectious disease.

### What should I avoid while I am quarantined?\*

If you are quarantined, you must not leave your house.

#### This means you should not:

- Go to work
- Visit seniors
- Go to school
- Attend church or church meetings
- Go to the grocery store
- Attend a party
- Go to the movies
- Take the ferry
- Catch the bus
- Attend funerals
- Go to the beach
- Workout at the gym
- Go to the laundry
- Go to the gas station
- Visit restaurants

*\*not a full list but examples of places you must not visit.*

### What can I do while I am quarantined?

Depending on the nature of your work, you may work from home. You can be in contact with your office and colleagues by phone calls, email, video conferencing and other online channels.

You can go outside your house and sit outside, if there are no other people in the immediate area. You must be one meter (three feet) from others.

If you need support like getting groceries or buying necessary items and supplies, contact a trusted family member or friend and arrange with them to get the items you need. They must leave the items in a secure location at your home – outside the door. The person must not enter your house. You must not touch that person and you must stay one meter or three feet from that person.

**Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19 by visiting the Government of Bermuda's website <https://www.gov.bm/coronavirus>**



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# Symptom and Temperature Log

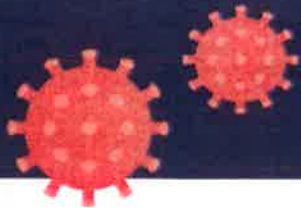
Complete this log daily for 14 days after you arrive in Bermuda

DAY	DATE	SYMPTOMS	TEMP
DAY 0		Day 0 is the day you arrived in Bermuda.	
DAY 1			
DAY 2			
DAY 3			
DAY 4			
DAY 5			
DAY 6			
DAY 7			
DAY 8			
DAY 9			
DAY 10			
DAY 11			
DAY 12			
DAY 13			
DAY 14			

**If you get sick**, inform your healthcare provider.

Tell them your symptoms and that you are under self-quarantine. You should also inform the person responsible for your public health monitoring when you are contacted.

If you have a medical emergency, call 911. Tell them you are returning and that you are under self-quarantine.



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or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention and call in advance.

### How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus.

The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces,

then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others.

People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. Try to maintain at least one metre (three feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms at all is very low. COVID-19 is not spread by mosquitoes, water, or food.

## Where can I go for more information?

# [www.gov.bm/coronavirus](http://www.gov.bm/coronavirus)

1



### CLEANSE HANDS

Frequently cleanse hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2



### COVER NOSE AND MOUTH

When coughing or sneezing cover your nose and mouth.

3



### AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

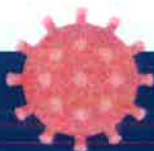
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

4

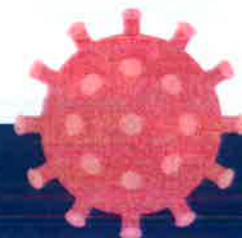


### AVOID TRAVEL

If you have a fever, cough or flu-like symptoms, avoid travel.



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# Self-Quarantine

## DO



Stay home, avoid public areas and public transportation.



Isolate yourself from others in your home.



Use a separate bathroom, if possible.



Call ahead before visiting the doctor.



Wash your hands often.



Wear a face mask around other people and pets.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Complete the symptom log daily.

## DO NOT



Share space with housemates, if possible.



Let in any non-essential visitors.



Share dishes, utensils, cups, towels or bedding.



Go outside for any reason.



Go to doctor without calling ahead.



Discontinue self-quarantine until instructed.



Have contact with pets and other animals, if possible.



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For more information visit: [www.gov.bm/coronavirus](http://www.gov.bm/coronavirus)

# Symptom and Temperature Log

Complete this log daily for 14 days after you arrive in Bermuda

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**If you get sick,** inform your healthcare provider.

Tell them your symptoms and that you are under self-quarantine. You should also inform the person responsible for your public health monitoring when you are contacted.

If you have medical emergencies call 911. Tell them you are under self-quarantine.





# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Business in Bermuda

## Introduction

This information is intended to help prevent workplace exposures to novel coronavirus. This guidance is also useful for preventing other respiratory diseases, including seasonal influenza, from spreading in the workplace.

Risk of novel coronavirus infection is based on a travel history and/or exposure to persons symptomatic with novel coronavirus infection. To prevent stigma and discrimination in the workplace, risk determinations should not be based on nationality or country of origin.

Screening procedures are in place at Bermuda's airport to assess for relevant travel history in persons entering Bermuda. These persons will undergo a risk assessment and be advised on the appropriate public health measures during their time in Bermuda. This may consist of self-quarantine and monitoring by public health for 14 days.

## Recommended strategies for employers to use now

### Information for Travellers

Travellers from affected areas are being monitored. Affected areas should be checked at: [www.gov.bm/health-information](http://www.gov.bm/health-information)

Travelers who have been in affected areas should be prepared to self-quarantine until a risk assessment is completed by a public health officer to determine measures to implement based on the travelers' risk level. Public health measures may include active monitoring or supervision of self-monitoring by public health authorities, or the application of movement restrictions, including isolation and quarantine, when needed to prevent the possible spread of COVID-19 in Bermuda.

Any traveler that has been to an affected area and develops fever, cough or shortness of breath, should inform their health care provider of their travel history prior to attending for medical care.

### Align policies with current public health guidance for persons under self-quarantine

The Ministry of Health advises businesses to consider allowing employees under self-quarantine to work remotely from home if that is an option in your business. Otherwise, consider a non-punitive leave policy for persons under self-quarantine.

### Actively encourage sick employees to stay home

Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are recommended to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever (100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater using an oral thermometer), and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). Employees should notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick.

Ensure that your sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and that employees are aware of these policies.

Talk with companies that provide your business with contract or temporary employees about the importance of sick employees staying home and encourage them to develop non-punitive leave policies which support necessary exclusion from work.

It is recommended that employers do not require a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick with acute respiratory illness to validate their illness or to return to work, as healthcare provider offices and medical facilities may be extremely busy and not able to provide such documentation in a timely way.

Employers should aim to maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member.

### Separate sick employees

Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be separated from other employees and be sent home immediately. Sick employees should cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available).

### Emphasize staying home when sick, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene by all employees

Place posters that encourage staying home when sick, cough and sneeze etiquette, and hand hygiene at the entrance to your workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen.

Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by employees.

Instruct employees to clean their hands often with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Provide soap and water and alcohol-based hand rubs in the workplace. Ensure that adequate supplies are maintained. Place hand rubs in multiple locations or in conference rooms to encourage hand hygiene.

### Perform routine environmental cleaning

Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.

No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.

Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.

### Advise employees before traveling to take certain steps

Visit [www.gov.bm/health-information](http://www.gov.bm/health-information) for travel advice related to novel coronavirus. Advise employees to check themselves for symptoms of acute respiratory illness before starting travel and notify their supervisor and stay home if they are sick. Ensure employees who become sick while traveling or on temporary assignment understand that they should notify their supervisor and should promptly call a healthcare provider for advice if needed.

If outside Bermuda, sick employees should follow your company's policy for obtaining medical care or contact a healthcare provider or overseas medical assistance company to assist them with finding an appropriate healthcare provider in that country.

### Recommended strategies to lower the impact of novel coronavirus in the workplace in the event of an outbreak in Bermuda

If there is evidence of a novel coronavirus outbreak in Bermuda, employers should plan to be able to respond in a flexible way to varying levels of severity and be prepared to refine their business response plans as needed. The Ministry of Health, with our regional health partners, will continue to monitor official information on the novel coronavirus and make additional recommendations as needed.

#### Prepare for increased absences

Employers should plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.

Cross-train personnel to perform essential functions so that the workplace is able to operate even if key staff members are absent.

Assess your essential functions and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products. Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (e.g., identify alternative suppliers, prioritize customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if needed).

#### Prepare for social distancing

Plan to minimize exposure between employees and also between employees and the public. Consider cancelling large work-related meetings or events.

Explore whether you can establish policies and practices, such as flexible worksites (e.g., telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts), to increase the physical distance among employees and between employees and others.

For employees who are able to telework, supervisors should encourage employees to telework instead of coming into the workplace until symptoms are completely resolved. If applicable, have the information technology and infrastructure needed to support multiple employees who may be able to work from home.

Adapted from:

*Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)*, February 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020. Retrieved 14 February 2020 from:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-business-response.html>