

# COVID-19 Protocol **Tourist Accommodation Facilities**

**JUNE 2020**

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# Introduction

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Faced with the situation posed by the current global health emergency and the economic and social impact such emergency has on tourism, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Argentine Republic, in cooperation with the Argentine Institute for Tourism Quality (Instituto Argentino de Calidad Turística, ICTA), the Argentine Chamber of Tourism (Cámara Argentina de Turismo, CAT), the Argentine Association of Tourism Hotels (Asociación Hoteles de Turismo, AHT), the Argentine Association of Hotels, Restaurants & Cafes (Asociación de Hoteles, Restaurantes, Confiterías y Cafés, AHRCC), the Argentine Federation of Hospitality Businesses (Federación Empresaria Hotelera Gastronómica de la República Argentina, FEHGRA) and the Argentine Tourism Council on behalf of the Argentine provinces, have prepared this “COVID-19 Protocol for Tourist Accommodation Facilities.”

The guidelines provided in this Protocol, which are based on the recommendations issued by the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic, include several specific measures and steps to be taken in order to tackle the current situation and help this industry recover. The objective of these measures is to protect the health and wellbeing of industry workers and tourists.

We are currently facing a pandemic (an epidemic that has spread across the world) brought about by a new type of coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, which has been discovered recently and is the cause of the coronavirus disease or COVID-19.

According to the World Health Organization, 80% of those infected with COVID-19 recover from the disease without being admitted to hospital, 15% of infections are mild cases requiring admission to hospital and 5% of cases require ICU admission. Older adults and people with prior medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, heart or lung conditions, diabetes or cancer, are more likely to develop severe cases.

The virus is transmitted from person to person through “Flügge droplets”, that is, droplets that are expelled from the respiratory tract of a person when they cough, sneeze or talk, and by contact with contaminated hands, surfaces or objects. This is why it is paramount to keep the required minimum distance and take all necessary contact precautions.

On 12 March 2020, the President of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, issued Emergency Executive Order No. 260 extending the term of the Public Health Emergency status (set forth under

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Argentine Law No. 27 541) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic declaration issued by the WHO.

In addition, other supplementary Executive Orders and Regulations have been issued owing to the fact that the spread of the virus has varied by province.

Under Executive Order No. 520/2020, it was established that the “Preventative & Mandatory Social Distancing Stage” could begin in all regions where there is no community spread of SARS-CoV-2, while all urban areas where there is community spread of SARS-CoV-2 or which do not meet the required epidemiological and health criteria had to remain in the “Preventative & Mandatory Social Isolation Stage.”

In this stage, a system is still required for the permanent monitoring of the situation allowing for a follow-up of the evolution of the epidemic in each geographic area based on a set of dynamic indicators selected carefully on the basis of scientific evidence, both for the “Preventative & Mandatory Social Distancing Stage” and the “Preventative & Mandatory Social Isolation Stage.”

This Executive Order mandates that applying a 2-metre/6.5-ft social distancing rule and mandatory face covering wearing, along with keeping a good hand, respiratory and surface hygiene, are necessary preventative measures to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2 from person to person.

This Order, in force from 8 June 2020 through 28 June 2020, also extended the effective term of Executive Order No. 297/20 establishing the “Preventative & Mandatory Social Isolation Stage” through 28 June 2020 as well.

The aim of this Order is to allow for the taking of measures to curb the impact of the epidemic in each jurisdiction while, at the same time, facilitating a gradual reopening of economic activities.

Compliance with these preventative measures, along with an early detection of infection signs and symptoms and the early diagnostic, isolation and prompt treatment of suspected and confirmed cases, while taking care of the families, cohabiting partners and other close contacts of those infected, are key strategies to control the pandemic.

Each jurisdiction is applying any measures warranted in their territory. This situation calls for shared responsibilities by all levels of administration, civil society organisations, the community and every person living in the country, as everything we do as individuals, businesses, organisations and agencies has an impact on collective outcomes.

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Based on the applicable regulations, this Protocol is expected to lay down shared criteria for jurisdictional authorities to implement their own protocols, provided that such regulations guarantee compliance with the recommendations and guidelines set forth herein, thus paving the way for a “new normal” in the way we do tourism.

### **SCOPE**

This document is divided into two Chapters. The first Chapter, “General Definitions & Measures,” lays down the recommendations issued by the National Executive Branch and the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic regarding preventative measures and the development of courses of action to guarantee that social distancing is observed and that procedures for hand and respiratory hygiene and surface and room disinfection are applied.

The second Chapter, “Specific Measures,” lays down specific guidelines to be followed at tourist accommodation facilities, which are based on the recommendations set forth in the abovementioned document while taking into consideration the specific characteristics of the industry.

All recommendations and guidelines set forth in this Protocol shall be applied subject to the stage of the response plan in which a given jurisdiction is and the applicable jurisdictional regulations.

In sum, several specific measures and courses of action are put forward to tackle the current situation and help the industry recover. The objective of these measures is to protect the health and wellbeing of both industry workers and tourists. It is essential that all people who are a part of the tourism value chain are prepared for the post-COVID-19 era, in which traveling and tourism and new consumption behaviour will all be taking place in a “new normal.” This new scenario with which the industry will be faced calls for a comprehensive revision and updating of the operating management of every service.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Help meet the needs of this industry, which has been hit by restrictive measures.
- Implement measures to guarantee that the health of everyone involved is protected.
- Curb and stop the spread of the virus.
- Guarantee alignment with any social measures recommended or established by the relevant authorities.
- Guarantee that tourism-related business can continue operating.

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## **TARGET AUDIENCE**

The COVID-19 Protocol for Tourist Accommodation Facilities is meant for all facilities providing accommodation services—irrespective of their kind—in Argentina and aims to guarantee that, on every critical point of the service provision chain, steps are taken to prevent the spread of the virus across the community and to protect industry workers.

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**CHAPTER 1**

# General Definitions & Measures

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The main health measures introduced in the document titled “Recomendaciones para el desarrollo de Protocolos en el marco de la pandemia” (Recommendations for Protocol Development Amid the Pandemic) issued by the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic on 26 May 2020 are laid down below. The entire document is available at:

<http://www.msal.gob.ar/images/stories/bes/graficos/0000001961cnt-covid19-recomendaciones-para-el-desarrollo-de-protocolos-en-el-marco-de-la-pandemia.pdf>  
(available in Spanish)

## 1.1. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

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### 1.1.1. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Post in visible spots signs with information on social distancing measures, steps for a good hand and respiratory hygiene and steps to follow in the event someone exhibits COVID-19 symptoms. This information should also be disseminated in other ways (such as on websites or social media or via email or telephone) to educate workers on the hygiene and safety measures taken at the facility. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus/poblacion/prevencion> (available in Spanish)

A dynamic definition of what is considered to be a COVID-19 case is available at: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus-COVID-19/definicion-de-caso> (available in Spanish)



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## 1.1.2. SOCIAL DISTANCING

a) As per the instructions of the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic, people must keep a minimum 2-metre/6.5-ft distance (ideally) or a minimum 1.5-metre/5-ft distance (minimum acceptable distance.) This applies both to workers and to anyone visiting the facility (customers, suppliers, etc.)

Social distancing guidelines and measures are implemented on the basis of epidemiological and health criteria, subject to the stage of the response plan in which the relevant jurisdiction is and to any applicable higher-level regulations.

Under Executive Order No. 520/20, people are required to stay, at least, 2 metres/6.5 ft apart, wear face coverings in shared spaces, wash or sanitise their hands regularly, cough into their elbow, disinfect surfaces, ventilate rooms and strictly comply with all activity protocols and all recommendations and instructions issued by provincial and national health authorities.

b) Avoid physical contact and greeting others with cheek-kissing, hugs or handshakes.

c) Avoid holding meetings in enclosed spaces, including work meetings and meetings with family or friends, exceeding the maximum number of people allowed.

d) Avoid sharing beverages (such as the traditional mate), dishware and other utensils.

e) “Cloth face covering” wearing does not replace social distancing measures or the need to keep a safe distance from other people, but it may be deemed as a supplementary measure when at a certain moment it is not possible to keep the minimum safe distance. “Cloth face coverings” are reusable cloth devices that must completely cover a person’s nose, mouth and chin and that are a required as a supplementary measure to reduce COVID-19 spread possibilities.

f) For more information on how to wear, put on and make these cloth face coverings, please visit: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/barbijo> (available in Spanish)

g) In order to keep social distancing, room capacity (in conference rooms, offices, cafeterias, kitchens, changing rooms, workstations, etc.) must be limited to 1 person every 2.25 square metres/24 square ft of space meant for people movement. To guarantee compliance with room capacity limit requirements, businesses can resort to working only with reservations or appointments.

Whenever this is not possible due to space constraints, the use of these spaces must be forbidden.

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h) If the minimum safe distance between workstations cannot be kept, businesses can consider installing physical barriers (such as glass screens or partitions) that can be easily and frequently cleaned. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/atencion-publico> (available in Spanish) <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/preguntasfrecuentes#distanciamiento> (available in Spanish)

### 1.1.3. HAND HYGIENE

a) Every person performing duties at these facilities must wash their hands frequently and mandatorily:

- Upon arriving at the workplace
- Before and after handling waste
- Before and after eating, handling food and/or breastfeeding
- After being in contact with frequently touched surfaces: counters, handrails, door handles, banisters, etc.
- After handling money or keys or being in contact with animals, etc.
- After using the restroom or changing diapers
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose
- To the extent possible, people should avoid touching their face.

b) Tourist accommodation facilities must have appropriate spaces for appropriate and frequent handwashing with water and soap (liquid/foaming soap dispenser, disposable towels or hand dryers) and provide 70%-alcohol-based solutions (such as alcohol-based hand sanitiser gel.) <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/atencion-publico> (available in Spanish)

c) Tourist accommodation facilities are required to provide adequate and appropriate personal hygiene elements that can be easily accessed (soap or a water-alcohol solution and paper towels for handwashing.) Alcohol-based solutions should only be used on clean hands; otherwise, hands should be washed using water and soap. People should wash their hands frequently for 40-60 seconds at a time.

[https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/gpsc\\_lavarse-manos\\_poster\\_es.jpg](https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/gpsc_lavarse-manos_poster_es.jpg) (available in Spanish) [https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/gpsc\\_desinfectmanos\\_poster\\_es.jpg](https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/gpsc_desinfectmanos_poster_es.jpg) (available in Spanish)

d) Since the virus can last longer on latex or nitrile, the use of gloves is not recommended other than for specific tasks (cleaning tasks, direct contact with secretions.)

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## 1.1.4. RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

- People must wear cloth face coverings that fully cover their nose, mouth and chin at workstations and shared working spaces. Cloth face covering wearing does not replace physical distancing or hygiene measures.
- Cloth face coverings should be washed with water and soap at least once a day and be changed immediately when dirty or wet (<https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/barbijo>, available in Spanish)
- When coughing or sneezing, people should use a disposable tissue or cover their nose and mouth with the inside of their elbow if they are not wearing a cloth face covering. In either case, hands should be washed immediately.
- Large rubbish bins with no lid must be placed in all waiting rooms or high-traffic areas for people to throw away their used disposable tissues.

## 1.1.5. SURFACE DISINFECTION & ROOM VENTILATION

- a) All activity-related applicable regulations on cleaning and disinfection must be complied with at all times.
- b) Surfaces must be disinfected on a daily basis. Surface disinfection must be performed as frequently as needed based on the movement and gathering of people, the season of the year and the implementation of any supplementary room ventilation measures.
- c) All surfaces must be cleaned with water and detergent before disinfection.
- d) Facilities must provide all the necessary elements for cleaning (buckets, mops, cloths, water, detergent) and disinfecting (containers, mops or cloths, bleach-based solution for domestic use with a 55 g/litre concentration so as to achieve 500 to 1000 ppm chlorine — 100 ml of bleach in 10 litres of water.)
- e) Bleach-based solutions must be used within 24 hours of preparation to guarantee their effectiveness.
- f) Enclosed spaces must be regularly ventilated (at least once a day), especially during winter or low-temperature periods to allow for air turnover.
- g) Spraying or rubbing clothes, footwear, bags or other belongings with alcohol, bleach or other disinfectant solutions is not recommended.

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h) The use of “disinfectant cabinets” or other types of devices that work by spraying disinfectant solutions over people is not recommended. These devices have not been proved to be useful in preventing the spread of respiratory viruses and their use can be associated with potential harmful effects. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus/poblacion/limpieza-domiciliaria> (available in Spanish)

## 1.2. MEASURES FOR THE DETECTION & MANAGEMENT OF SUSPECTED CASES & CLOSE CONTACTS

- Measures must be implemented in order to detect potential COVID-19 cases, such as measuring body temperature, encouraging self-reporting and conducting simple surveys for detecting potential symptoms before people enter the facility.
- If a temperature measurement system is implemented at the entrance of the facility, this task must be performed with infrared thermometers that allow for non-direct physical contact. People in charge of temperature measurement must wear appropriate PPE.
- Do not allow people with a temperature of 37.5 °C/99.5 °F or higher or COVID-19 symptoms to enter the facility.
- Prevent people with COVID-19 symptoms or with a confirmed COVID-19 infection and their close contacts from being stigmatised or discriminated.
- A course of action should be developed to be followed at the facility in order to isolate people exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. A specific room or area should be used to keep people with symptoms away from other people while they wait to be assessed appropriately. All instructions issued by local health authorities regarding suspected cases must be followed.
- If a worker exhibits respiratory symptoms or a fever, immediately contact the local Health Emergency System for the worker to be assessed and taken to a health care centre if needed. All suspected COVID-19 cases must be reported to the local health authority.

A “close contact” is defined as follows:

- Any person who took care of a confirmed case while this person had symptoms, if no appropriate personal protection measures were taken.
- Any person who was less than 2 metres/6.5 ft apart from a confirmed case for at least 15 minutes while this person had symptoms (e.g., cohabiting partners, visitors, coworkers.)
- Recommendations for the use of PPE by activity are available at <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus-COVID-19/recomendaciones-uso-epp> (available in Spanish)

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Close contacts must isolate themselves at home for a 14-day period and have their symptoms strictly monitored. The 14-day period must be counted as from the last day the person had contact with the confirmed case. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus-COVID-19/Identificacion-y-seguimiento-de-contactos> (available in Spanish)

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**CHAPTER 2**

# Specific Measures

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## 2.1. FACILITY PERSONNEL

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### 2.1.1. PREVENTATIVE CONTROL

Control measures must be implemented to screen personnel for COVID-19 symptoms before they enter their workplace. This task should be entrusted to specific staff, who must be provided with training. Screening may be done in various ways, including the use of detection equipment (such as non-contact thermometers) and simple surveys.

If a temperature measurement system is implemented at the entrance of the facility, this task must be performed with infrared thermometers that allow for non-direct physical contact. People in charge of temperature measurement must wear appropriate PPE.

The definition of what is considered to be a COVID-19 case is dynamic and may vary based on the epidemiological situation. Therefore, please stay informed and check the official website of the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic to update any surveys accordingly.

A course of action should be developed to be followed in order to isolate people exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. A specific room or area should be used to keep people with symptoms away from others while they wait to be assessed appropriately.

If a worker exhibits respiratory symptoms or a fever, immediately contact the local Health Emergency System for the worker to be assessed and taken to a health care centre if needed. All suspected COVID-19 cases must be reported to the local health authority.

This same procedure must be applied to outsourced workers.

All the data collected about workers in this respect is confidential and protected under the Argentine Personal Data Protection Act (Argentine Law No. 25 326.)

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## 2.1.2. SOCIAL DISTANCING

All measures taken to guarantee that social distancing is observed must be communicated and compliance with them must be monitored. All personnel must be provided with training on social distancing measures.

Ensure that the required minimum distance between people is kept at all times. The required room capacity limit (1 person every 2.25 square metres/24 square feet) must never be exceeded.

Compliance with social distancing measures must be guaranteed both inside and outside the facility, in work areas and shared areas, such as front desks, dining rooms, breakfast rooms, lounges, halls, lobbies, parking lots, and any other facility area where many people may gather at the same time.

## 2.1.3. HAND & RESPIRATORY HYGIENE

a) Handwashing is the most important infection prevention and control measure. Handwashing should last for 40-60 seconds at a time. Ensure that alcohol-based hand sanitiser gel is available at workstations where personnel do not have access to handwashing with water and soap.

b) All personnel having direct contact with guests must wear face coverings if it is so required under local regulations.

c) Except for specific tasks (cleaning, direct contact with secretions), the use of gloves should be avoided, since viable virus particles can last longer on latex/nitrile. For the handling of documentation, the use gloves is not recommended, but rather frequent handwashing. Please note that the use of gloves does not replace handwashing.

d) Consider the use of protective eyewear (glasses or face mask) for specific tasks. How much protection is needed will depend on the task.

## 2.1.4. TRAINING

Workers must be trained and educated on how to detect COVID-19 symptoms (under section 15 of Executive Order No. 260/2020) and on COVID-19 prevention measures as per the official information disseminated by the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic. Information

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for dissemination in this respect is available for download at: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus-COVID-19> (available in Spanish)

All training activities must be planned in a way that guarantees that all personnel are trained.

Training may be provided internally or by third parties. Training activities should ideally be carried out remotely. If they are carried out in person, the required minimum distance between people must be kept at all times.

### **2.1.5. COMMUTING**

The use of individual means of transport (such as cars and bicycles) is encouraged so as to avoid using public transport.

When using individual means of transport, remember to keep them ventilated to guarantee that the inside is clean and disinfected.

These are some recommendations to follow when using public transport, if such use is not prohibited:

- Wear a cloth face covering at all times.
- Practise good hand hygiene before, while and after using public transport.
- Carry a personal hygiene kit (hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitiser gel, disposable tissues, paper towels.)
- Keep the required minimum distance.
- Avoid people gatherings at the points of access to the means of transport.

When you come home:

- Remove your face covering by only touching the ear loops/ties (avoid touching the front) and put it away for washing (or throw it away if disposable.)
- Wash hands immediately after entering and before touching any surfaces. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus/poblacion/salir-de-casa> (available in Spanish)

### **2.1.6. IDENTIFYING PERSONNEL AT RISK**

Under section 1 of Regulation No. 207/2020 issued by the Ministry of Labour, Employment



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and Social Security of the Argentine Republic, employers shall not require attendance at the workplace of people whose presence at their home is essential as they perform children or teenager caregiving duties and people who fall within the following risk groups:

- People over 60 years old, except when they are deemed “essential personnel for the correct operation of the facility”
- Pregnant people
- People with chronic respiratory conditions: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), congenital emphysema, bronchopulmonary dysplasia, bronchiectasis, cystic fibrosis and moderate-to-severe asthma
- People with heart conditions: cardiac insufficiency, coronary heart disease, valvulopathies and congenital heart defects
- Immunocompromised people or people in an immunosuppressed state
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic renal insufficiency undergoing dialysis or expected to undergo dialysis in the following six months
- People with end-stage kidney disease

Note: privacy must be respected and workers’ medical information must remain confidential, especially any information related to health conditions that are risk factors for severe illness from COVID-19. <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus/poblacion/mayores> (available in Spanish)

## **2.1.7. WORK ORGANISATION**

In order to contribute to compliance with social distancing or observance of the applicable required safe distance, the following work organisation alternatives are recommended:

- Organise personnel into working groups or teams to facilitate interaction among a reduced number of people in order to comply with social distancing requirements. If this is not possible, step up health protection measures.
- Arrange the essential duties to be performed at the facility so as to guarantee that the required minimum distance between people is kept throughout the whole working day.
- Guarantee that the minimum number of people possible are present in an enclosed space at the same time.
- Implement staggered working hours for workers who perform duties that must be performed in person to avoid people gatherings at the points of access to the facility and reduce public transport occupancy during rush hour.

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- Instruct leaders and monitor each area to guarantee that personnel's attendance at the workplace is reduced as much as possible.
- When appropriate and possible, give appointments to customers and suppliers via electronic means (phone/email.) <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/coronavirus/atencion-publico> (available in Spanish)

### **2.1.8. CRISIS COMMITTEE**

A Crisis Committee should be established at each facility with all the stakeholders to develop a protocol, monitor compliance with it and appoint those in charge of guaranteeing compliance with it.

## **2.2. CUSTOMER SERVICE**

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### **2.2.1. RESERVATION MANAGEMENT**

- a) Inform guests of the preventative measures taken at the facility to protect their safety and health and let them know that they may have to wait for check-in or check-out in specially allocated areas.
- b) Encourage the use of digital payment methods.
- c) Send registration forms to guests in advance via email or some other electronic means, along with a COVID-19 screening survey. Customers should send or hand in their forms and surveys upon arrival at the facility.

### **2.2.2. CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT**

- a) During check-in and check-out, follow all hygiene and safety guidelines and keep the required minimum distance.
- b) If possible, enable a virtual pre-check-in process for guests to complete the day before they arrive at the facility to speed up the process.

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- c) If a guest's COVID-19 screening survey has not been received at the facility by email, screen them during check-in. If the guest exhibits symptoms of a COVID-19 suspected case, as per the latest criteria of the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic, proceed as set forth in 2.1.1.
- d) If possible, streamline the check-in and check-out process via digital means, such as platforms or apps that allow guests to easily fill in their personal information, thus minimising direct contact.
- e) Include signage identifying spaces where guests can wait to be provided with customer service and ensure that the minimum safe distance is kept at all times and that room occupancy never exceeds 1 person every 2.25 square metres/24 square feet. These spaces may be demarcated with tapes or lines.
- f) Inform customers of the measures taken at the facility and all the preventative steps to be followed to reduce the risk of COVID-19. This information may be provided in digital form.
- g) Display official prevention information and any coronavirus-related helplines set up by the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic and local authorities. There is material for dissemination available on the official website of the Ministry of Health.
- h) Whenever it is not possible to keep the required minimum distance, consider installing at front desks physical barriers (glass screens or partitions) that can be easily and frequently cleaned.
- i) Make hand sanitiser and paper towels available both in public spaces and personnel-only spaces.
- j) Post signs in visible spots with the phone numbers of health care centres, first responders, doctors and privately-managed hospitals where to call for help or health information.
- k) Keep the use and exchange of documentation or objects to a minimum.
- l) Ensure that keys, magnetic key cards and remote controls are disinfected before they are given to guests.
- m) In the first stage of reopening, avoid offering bell boy and valet parking services, as these services involve the handling of guests' belongings. Offer these services only when guests cannot accomplish these tasks on their own. Let customers park their own vehicles.

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n) Whenever possible, let guests pay by credit card or other digital payment methods and send them their invoice via a means of communication of their choice.

o) Place a box at the facility's front desk for guests to return their keys or magnetic key cards upon check-out so that these can be disinfected before they are given to new guests.

## **2.3. SHARED AREAS**

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### **2.3.1. SPACE ARRANGEMENT**

a) Arrange furniture in shared spaces so as to ensure that the recommended minimum distance is kept. If the required minimum distance between workstations cannot be kept, facilities can consider installing physical barriers (such as glass screens or partitions) that can be easily cleaned.

b) Arrange tables and chairs so as to ensure that the minimum safe distance is kept in breakfast, dining and multipurpose rooms.

c) For the use of elevators, recommend that they be used by only one person per trip or that occupancy does not exceed 30% of the elevator cabin. These instructions must be displayed in a visible spot in such a way that they can be easily read.

d) Make alcohol-based hand sanitiser available in all shared spaces and ensure that water and soap are available in restrooms and that there is always adequate supply.

### **2.3.2. MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE**

a) To the extent possible, have people move in only one way and set up a main entrance and a main exit and an entrance to and an exit from all the sectors of the facility so as to avoid people gathering and ensure a safe distance between people is kept.

b) Include signage to better organise the movement of people and help guests identify the different areas of the facility.

c) Clearly indicate the areas to which entrance is not allowed or block access to them.

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- d) Tell guests to avoid unnecessarily moving around public spaces in the facility.
- e) Access to the pool, spa and gym areas should not be allowed, unless local health authorities permit so. This may then vary based on the stage of the pandemic response plan.

## **2.4. FOOD & BEVERAGES**

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### **2.4.1. BREAKFAST**

- a) Ensure that guests do not handle food, tongs or spoons if breakfast is buffet style. Instead, have facility personnel serve guests using all necessary protective elements.
- b) Encourage guests to have in-room breakfast, offer a breakfast takeaway service and/or make coffeemakers or electric kettles available in rooms.
- c) Offer flexible breakfast hours. Extending breakfast hours favours a better working hours arrangement for service and kitchen staff and compliance with social distancing.
- d) Allow for reservations to be made in advance so that personnel can plan in advance for the number of people to be served each day, allocating reasonable seating times and ensuring that social distancing is complied with.
- e) Prioritise using single-use napkins and table linens. It is recommended that place mats be used and removed after each use for cleaning and disinfection. If cloth table linens are to be used, cover them with a clear nylon cover that can be easily cleaned or change them after each use by a customer.
- f) Implement an appropriate dishware washing policy.
- g) Provide guests with a solution of 70% alcohol and 30% water before they enter the breakfast room.
- h) Guests must wear face coverings to enter the breakfast room and may only remove them to eat and drink, subject to the regulations in place in that jurisdiction.

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## **2.4.2. DINING ROOM AREA**

- a) Extend dining room hours or implement a reservation system for a better working hours arrangement for service and kitchen staff and compliance with social distancing.
- b) Do not lay down utensils, plates, glasses, etc. on the tables before customers sit down.
- c) Only have food served by facility personnel and avoid self-service. Facilities should offer dishes à la carte on an individual serving basis.
- d) Ensure that all utensils are disinfected between customers. Frequently change tongs, spoons and other utensils.
- e) Offer a digital menu or a laminated paper menu for easy disinfection.
- f) Offer bottled or canned beverages.
- g) Avoid using cloth table linens. Instead, use place mats and remove them after each use for cleaning and disinfection. If cloth table linens are to be used, cover them with a clear nylon cover that can be easily cleaned or change them after each use by a customer.
- h) Encourage guests to have their meals charged to their rooms so as to avoid handling cash or cards.
- i) Ensure that personnel that are not involved in food preparation do not enter the kitchen and food storerooms.
- j) Products should be removed from minibar fridges in rooms and this service should be replaced with a laminated or QR code menu informing guests of the products available at the front desk, the restaurant or the breakfast room.

## **2.4.3. KITCHEN AREA**

- a) Organise personnel into working groups or teams to facilitate interaction among a reduced number of people and compliance with social distancing requirements. If this is not possible, step up health protection measures.
- b) Ensure that all applicable regulations in place regarding the handling of food are complied

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with when preparing, storing and selling food products, stepping up the facility's raw material and processed product traceability system so as to guarantee these can be traced and tracked.

- c) Clean and disinfect all surfaces and equipment to be used at the beginning of the day.
- d) Clean and disinfect any facilities and spaces used for preparing/storing food, such as counters, cupboards, cabinets, storerooms, fridges and other kitchen appliances, several times a day.
- e) Cook all food at over 70 °C/158 °F, ensure that the cold chain is not broken, store food in appropriate temperature and moisture conditions, check expiry dates and avoid cross-contamination, among other measures to be taken.
- f) Wash dishware with detergent and hot water. Then disinfect with a 70%-alcohol solution.
- g) Rinse fruit and vegetables with water to wash away any dirt or stain. Then, fruit and vegetables can be disinfected by putting them in a solution of water with 1.5 ml bleach (half a teaspoon approximately) per litre of water (leave for 20 minutes.) Only use bleach for domestic use (with a 55 g/litre concentration.) Rinse with plenty of water before consumption.
- g) Have personnel wash hands with water and soap or sanitise them with alcohol-based hand sanitiser or a 70%-alcohol solution, following all WHO handwashing guidelines, when entering the kitchen, handling waste, coughing, receiving goods and cleaning surfaces and utensils in contact with food and after using the restroom, working with different products, touching elements not involved in food preparation or performing other duties.

## **2.4.4. RECEIPT OF GOODS**

- a) If possible, a delivery schedule should be agreed upon with suppliers so as to avoid people gathering and a procedure should be implemented for the receipt of goods.
- b) Avoid contact with carriers. Keep the required minimum distance.
- c) Whenever the goods receipt process is going to be carried out, place a cloth with bleach at the entrance door.
- d) All facility personnel receiving goods must wear face coverings and tough latex gloves.
- e) If goods are taken inside using a trolley, before entering the storeroom, the wheels of the

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trolley must be disinfected with a solution of water and bleach for domestic use with a 55 g/litre concentration so as to achieve 500 to 1000 ppm chlorine — 100 ml of bleach in 10 litres of water.

f) Before putting the goods away for storage in cabinets, chambers or storerooms, all packaging must be sanitised. Use a wet cloth and a disinfectant solution.

## **2.5. HOUSEKEEPING**

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### **2.5.1. GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING GUIDELINES**

- a) Clean and disinfect floors in entrance areas more frequently.
- b) Clean and disinfect all customer service areas at least three times a day, based on starting and finishing times and the regular operation of the facility.
- c) For breakfast and dining rooms: clean and disinfect door handles, door push plates, handrails, desks, tables, chairs and seats, dishware, utensils and glassware.
- d) Frequently ventilate shared areas every day and restrict the use of spaces where this measure cannot be implemented.
- e) Ventilate breakfast and dining rooms after each shift.
- f) Clean and disinfect the outside of the facility.
- g) Whenever a uniform must be worn, such uniform must be washed more frequently, and, if allowed, preferably at the workplace, at over 60 °C/140 °F. Whenever possible, personnel must be given access to a specific room or a changing room where they can leave their street clothes and avoid cross-contact with bags, utensils and other working elements.
- h) Place soap, sanitiser and paper towel dispensers in restrooms and shared areas, among other spaces.
- i) Perform regular checks so as to ensure there is always adequate supply of all the necessary elements for cleaning and disinfection.



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## **2.5.2. ROOMS & LINENS**

- a) All mattresses should be covered with mattress protectors and pillows should be covered with protective pillow covers. If this is not possible, wash them following a standard washing process or dry clean them.
- b) Ventilate rooms as much as possible in general and especially during cleaning and disinfection. After check-out, keep rooms vacant for as long as necessary to guarantee they are properly ventilated, deeply cleaned and disinfected.
- c) After guests have definitely left their rooms, remove all hygiene elements and dispose of them: toilet paper, waste bags, etc.
- d) Keep clean bed sheets and towels in a locked closet and handle and carry them separately from used bed sheets and towels.
- e) Sort out dirty laundry outside the rooms.
- f) Do not shake off dirty laundry.
- g) Bed linens and towels should be washed mechanically in full washing cycles at 60-90 °C/140-194 °F (if they endure high temperatures.) If washed in cold water, ensure that they are then exposed to the appropriate temperature.
- h) Wash wool blankets in warm water and then air dry them or dry them in a dryer at a cool temperature or directly dry clean them.
- i) Wash bedcovers with hot water and detergent, then rinse and then dry them preferably in a dryer or directly dry clean them.
- j) Personnel must wear gloves when handling bed linens and towels.
- k) When housekeeping tasks are performed, avoid potential risks of cross-contamination between rooms resulting from the use of the same materials with no prior disinfection.
- l) Disinfect high-contact surfaces, such as door handles or knobs, light switches, telephones, TV or air conditioner remote controls, tables, etc.
- m) Use one-step cleaning products only and foam quat to clean electronic devices.

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- n) Ensure that hand sanitiser gel or hand sanitiser solution, disposable gloves and rubbish bags are available in housekeeping carts.
- o) Housekeeping carts must not be taken into the rooms.
- p) If lost objects are found in a room where there was a guest with a COVID-19 suspected or confirmed case, put the objects in a plastic bag and then disinfect and put that bag in another hermetically sealed bag until the objects are returned to the guest. If the guest never claims the objects, these must be disposed of in a red biohazard waste bag.
- q) If they have to enter a room where there was a guest with a COVID-19 confirmed case, personnel must wear PPE as instructed by the relevant occupational risk prevention services, wash or disinfect hands upon leaving the room and, if possible, keep the required minimum distance from the customer. Keep the housekeeping cart out of the room.

## **2.6. MAINTENANCE WORK**

- a) Carry out maintenance work on fittings and equipment and keep a record of these tasks.
- b) On a daily basis, check that soap, sanitiser and disposable paper towel dispensers are working properly and are clean, and have broken dispensers repaired or changed.
- c) Check that HVAC systems are working properly and that filters are clean.
- d) Keep room temperature at 23-26 °C/73-79 °F and ensure that there is adequate air turnover.
- e) If maintenance work has to be performed in rooms where there are guests with a COVID-19 infection, step up all health and hygiene protection measures regarding both the personnel involved and guests. Keep a record of these tasks.

## **2.7 WASTE DISPOSAL**

- a) Provide bags, bins and containers for the disposal of PPE and any disposable workwear.
- b) Post signs identifying all areas allocated for waste disposal.
- c) Keep waste deposits clean and disinfected.

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d) Ensure that, when taking the waste out, personnel wear gloves (preferably disposable gloves) and respiratory protective wear (face covering.)

e) Have all PPE residue and any disposable workwear from the personnel disposed of on a daily basis. We recommend referring to the following instructions issued by the Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic on the management of household waste generated from quarantined patients: “COVID-19. Recomendaciones para la gestión de residuos domiciliarios de pacientes en cuarentena” (<https://www.argentina.gob.ar/salud/coronavirus-COVID-19>, available in Spanish.)

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## THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WERE USED AS A BASIS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THIS PROTOCOL:

- Ministry of Health of the Argentine Republic. Covid-19 Recomendaciones para el desarrollo de protocolos en el marco de la pandemia. 26 May 2020.
- AHT Swiss Medical. Buenas Prácticas para Hotelería Argentina
- FEHGRA. Covid-19 Guía de Buenas Prácticas para los establecimientos y trabajadores del sector hotelero y gastronómico Covid-19
- FEHGRA /FUNCEI. Covid-19 Recomendaciones para la operación de Restaurants, servicios de take away y delivery
- UTHGRA. Medidas preventivas para la actividad hotelera gastronómica COVID-19

# COVID-19 Protocol **Tourist Accommodation Facilities**

**JUNE 2020**