

COVID 19 – Building Managers Guide

Building managers are a strata community's front-line defence and an essential service. It is vitally important that you and/or company prepare your own contingency plan in case you and/or 40% of your staff contract the virus. The show must go on and how will you see that it can?

If you haven't already, develop a Pandemic Plan.

While planning for a pandemic should begin at the corporate level of any business, a successful approach must involve representatives not only from management, but from human resources, communications, IT, legal and compliance, as well as facilities management.

Taking the latest Government advice and looking carefully at your role as the building manager consider how services will be delivered to the building and what your role is in the delivery of services. How will you continue to facilitate access to the buildings you have responsibilities for by considering:

- Which building systems, maintenance requirements and duties are mission-critical to your building
 - Waste Management & Collection Services
 - Car stackers
 - Cleaning & Caretaking of the building (including disinfectant cleans)
 - ESM – Fire Safety Inspections and Servicing
 - Utilities – common power, water and gas
 - Lift Maintenance and Servicing
 - Garage Door Preventative Servicing
 - Sump Pump Servicing
 - Bulk Hot Water System Servicing
 - Plumbing
 - HVAC
 - Telecommunications
 - Emergency Works – burst pipes, weather and accidental damage, roof repairs, hot water system replacement/repairs
 - Gardening, plant maintenance internal/external
 - Pest Control
 - Contractor Management
 - Client Liaison (front desk)
 - Key/access management
- What is the bare minimum staff required to support the building operations?
- Which staff are currently trained to operate critical systems and what specific skills make them qualified?
- Which if any critical building operations can be managed remotely? Can other systems be upgraded to allow remote operations, and if so, what would these upgrades cost?
- What would happen if any given facility had to be closed because of quarantine or staff shortages?
- Which employees perform tasks that cannot be performed off-site, and where are these employees located?
- What measures can you put in place to minimise the spread of infection throughout your daily routine.
- Knowledge of any dependent occupants

The answers to these questions will go a long way toward forming the basis of a Pandemic Plan.

In all likelihood, they will point to a number of key action steps that include:

- Preparing now to cross-train employees (where possible) within the facilities department to cover one another's responsibilities.
- Collaborating with other companies or sites to provide cross-training for facilities support functions.
- Developing contingency plans for the acquisition of crucial supplies should delivery schedules be disrupted, or for the advance purchase of bulk supplies.
- The development of "how to" notes describing step-by-step execution of critical tasks.
- Preparing for a building to be shut down.
- Sourcing reliable best practice guides from around the world including peak body Associations guides:
COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings (UK)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Pandemic planning should include any [Government directives](#) and address interventions from:

- Minor matters — whether and when to close coffee stations and water coolers, through to
- Extreme matters — building lockdown; how to equip a facility with days' or weeks' worth of supplies in case key employees need to quarantine themselves.
- Map your dependencies to understand where disruptions might impact your development remembering your building is at maximum capacity. For example:
 - Greater parcel delivery
 - More visitors and parking
 - How mail is delivered
 - How a confirmed case will impact the occupants, the building and its activities
 - Access to or by emergency services
 - Increase in waste to be managed
- Review the preparedness of your critical third parties (based on your building systems mission-critical assessment above) and write to each service provider asking for their pandemic plan, ascertain if their services to you will be impacted – especially if you have a confirmed case.
- Create a communication platform to inform residents. This could be as simple as a daily or weekly bulletin in the lobby or using technology platforms and if you have the resources to undertake the extra communication.
- Create a communication plan to suppliers in the event that you are advised of a confirmed case.
- Communication plans should be spelled out well in advance, and e-mail lists established for all staff, suppliers and contractors. You need to know what their pandemic plans are.
- List the common areas most at risk for contamination and put in a management strategy for each area. For example, some things to think about are:

Risk Area	Risk Control	Action
ON SITE STAFF / CONCIERGE Surface Contamination Social Gathering Airborne droplets	<p>Remove front desk access and/or remove physical presence from the desk.</p> <p>Increase cleaning schedule</p> <p>Exercise social distancing when liaising with contractors or other stakeholders.</p> <p>Avoid going into private lots etc.</p>	<p>Affix signage to indicate how the on-site staff can be communicated with during this period i.e. mobile, email.</p> <p>Keep disinfectant hand wash adjacent to the desk for frequent hand washing.</p> <p>Wear gloves.</p> <p>Practise social distancing with all stakeholders.</p> <p>Refrain from entering private lots.</p> <p>Discourage any groups you see gathering in common areas.</p> <p>Provide and maintain a register of contractors, essential visitors to site (keeping wipes and hand wash in the vicinity to enable frequent washing of hands and wipe down of any pen used)</p>
CONTRACTORS Safe work-site	<p>Responsibility to maintain a safe worksite when contractors are engaged to work on the common property.</p> <p>Maintain social distancing from contractors working on site.</p> <p>Potential threat of coming into contact with the virus.</p>	<p>Avoid contact or approaching trades persons when on site.</p> <p>Electronic work orders to be issued; continue to require Safe Work Method Statements, which will now include additional processes including PPE and social distancing measures.</p> <p>Instruct all trades to operate as if someone with COVID-19 resides on site.</p> <p>If the OC is notified of a person who has tested positive to the virus all contractors must be notified.</p> <p>Provide a sign in/out sheet in a suitable and accessible location for contractors, to avoid the need for personal meetings and contact. Place</p>

		<p>disinfectant wipes adjacent so pen can be wiped down before and after use. Include signage to advise the same and notify contractors of the process before they attend site, including where the sign in register will be located.</p> <p>Avoid handling paperwork. Request provision of electronic copies.</p> <p>Wipe down computers and desks frequently.</p>
TOILET & SHOWERS Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Increase cleaning schedule</p> <p>Exercise social distancing</p> <p>Consider shutting down the facilities</p>	<p>Authorise and arrange additional cleaning regime.</p> <p>Notify residents of protocols established and reason for same. Affix signs in area of facility.</p>
FRONT DOOR Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Increase cleaning schedule</p> <p>Exercise social distancing</p>	<p>Authorise and arrange increased cleaning regime; to at least daily or more if high use and/or high infection rate.</p> <p>Encourage residents to implement social distancing requirements.</p>
DOOR HANDLES Surface Contamination	<p>Increase cleaning schedule</p>	<p>Authorise and arrange additional cleaning to at least daily or more if high use with increased risk of higher infection rate.</p>
INTERCOM SYSTEM Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Increase cleaning schedule</p> <p>Exercise social distancing</p>	<p>Consider hand sanitizer in lobby, request in interest of all that it not be removed.</p> <p>Authorise and arrange additional cleaning regime.</p>
LIFT ACCESS Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Increase cleaning schedule</p> <p>Exercise social distancing</p>	<p>Consider hand sanitizer in lobby, request for the interest of all that it not be removed.</p> <p>Authorise and arrange additional cleaning regime to at least daily or more if high use and increased risk to infection rate.</p>

		Encourage residents to implement social distancing requirements.
LAUNDRY AREAS Surface Contamination Social Gathering	Increase cleaning schedule Mandatory hot wash	Create a sign or multiple signs and place around Laundry to wash their hands before and after using laundry facility, to use detergent and hot water wash and recommend using the dryer to finish. Consider hand sanitizer in room, request for the interest of all that it not be removed. Authorise and arrange additional cleaning regime to at least daily or more if high use and/or high infection rate Encourage residents to implement social distancing requirements. A booking system could be implemented to regulate numbers.
VENTILATION/AIR CONDITIONING Airborne contaminants	Check if HEPA filters, consider upgrade if not	Review ventilation rates – increase fresh air rates if possible.
WASTE ROOMS and CHUTES Surface Contamination Social Gathering	Increase cleaning schedule Exercise social distancing	Install signage. Consider hand sanitizer in waste rooms, request for the interest of all that it not be removed. Authorise and arrange additional cleaning regime to at least daily or more if high use and/or high-risk area. Encourage residents to implement social distancing requirements.

GYM Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Close the facility as per conditions of Government enacted control phase.</p>	<p>Restrict access to (lock off) the gymnasium to residents. Create a sign to advise the Gym has been closed and thank residents for their understanding.</p> <p>Notify residents of and reasons for closure.</p>
POOL Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Close the pool and spa facilities; as per conditions of the Government enacted control phase.</p>	<p>Restrict access to (lock off) the pool/spa area to residents.</p> <p>Create a sign or multiple signs and place around Pool area notifying residents of its closure and thanking them for their understanding.</p> <p>Notify residents of and reasons for closure</p>
BBQ & COMMUNITY AREA Surface Contamination Social Gathering	<p>Close of area and restrict access to the barbecue; as per Government enacted control phase.</p>	<p>Notify residents of and reasons for closure and thank them for their cooperation and understanding Affix signs to advise of closure of facility.</p>
COMMITTEE MEETINGS Surface contaminants Social Gathering <p>From 23/3/2020 increased social distancing requirements.</p> <p>From 26/03/20 no communal gatherings permitted.</p>	<p>Cancel any face-to-face meetings as per Government enacted control phase protocols.</p> <p>Consider alternative means of communicating to make decisions.</p>	<p>Notify Committee members that face-to-face meetings have been cancelled until further notice.</p> <p>Consider alternative meeting solutions like Skype, ZOOM or telephone for discussion then use email ballots to capture decisions and create record.</p>

<p>GENERAL MEETINGS</p> <p>Surface contaminants</p> <p>Social Gathering</p> <p>From 23/3/2020 increased social distancing requirements</p>	<p>Defer meetings if possible.</p> <p>Use alternative means of communication and decision making.</p> <p>If essential to hold you must convene in a venue that allows you and attendees to exercise social distancing.</p> <p>Wipe down tables, chairs etc. before and after use of meeting area.</p> <p>Request Members not attend if they have travelled overseas recently, been in contact with someone who has, or has been in contact with someone who has contracted the virus, or is known to have symptoms or has the virus themselves.</p>	<p>Notify all lot owners of protocols established and request they comply.</p> <p>Consider other solutions like Skype, ZOOM, Voting on-line platforms, postal ballots etc</p>
<p>PLUMBING</p>	<p>Use of substitute paper products as toilet paper e.g. Newspaper, tissues or serviettes is to be discouraged</p> <p>Potential blockages, increasing health concerns and access to services</p>	<p>Convey concerns to all residents of potential problems and how it will impact them and ask them to comply.</p> <p>Notify contractors you will need to engage to fix problems that arise. There is a high risk to a plumber who must clear blocked sewer pipe. Needs to be advised if there is a positive case.</p>
<p>SHARED OUTDOOR GARDEN AREA</p> <p>Surface Contamination</p> <p>Social Gathering</p>	<p>Responsibility for users to maintain social distancing and therefore restriction to the number of residents who may access the area at any one time.</p> <p>Seats and tables posing potential contamination risks.</p> <p>Social gatherings limited to a family and/or 2 people (in accordance with Stage 3 restrictions).</p>	<p>Provide a notice to residents that re-confirms Stage 3 restrictions and that use of the garden area must comply. Being limited to 2 people gathering at any one location or one family. Also that numbers will be limited by the size of the area (accommodating the protocols of social distancing). Also remind residents to be mindful of the potential risks of contaminated surfaces and to wipe down before and after</p>

		<p>use, as well as wear gloves, masks as extra precautions.</p> <p>An OC could consider closing of access where necessary.</p>
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