



## **COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Protocols – IHA Properties**

### **RESTRICTED BUSINESS**

The Independence Housing Authority is proactively implementing protocols designed to prevent further spread of the coronavirus. The Independence Housing Authority will remain closed to the public through 2021. Near that time, Management will reevaluate phasing back into a full opening capacity.

### **PRIOR TO WORK SHIFT**

Effective 5/18/2020 and until further notice, all employees will be required to wear masks around other employees or in common areas, even if that is outside if around other employees, tenants, contractors, or other individuals.

Vendor Deliveries: Outside vendors deliveries or contract workers will be required to wear a mask inside any IHA property or office.

Per CDC recommendations, if any employee's temperature is at 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, those employees will be required to go home until their temperature is below the minimum level of 100.4 degrees, without the use of fever reducing medications. If you have a temperature of 100.4 before coming into work, please contact your immediate supervisor and remain home.

### **GOING TO WORK**

Practice good hygiene: no handshaking, wash hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds at a time, avoid touching face, cover coughs and sneezes, disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, phones, cell phones, and handrails frequently, following disinfectant instructions.

At this time, all staff are expected to attend work as normal, unless any of the following apply:

- You are sick, especially if you are experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19, which are very similar to the flu (cough, fever, shortness of breath). Employees are advised to stay home if they are ill and notify their supervisor if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. Staff should contact their doctor or a health care provider as needed for medical assistance.
- You or someone you have been in contact with have visited mainland China, Iran, Europe, the Republic of Korea or other COVID-19 level 2 or higher risk areas of concern identified by the CDC in the last 14 days. For more information, contact Management. *For additional* information regarding COVID-19 high-risk areas, please see the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.
- Develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of being anywhere in a country or area of concern.
- Have been in close, personal, and unprotected contact with a presumptive or confirmed case of coronavirus in the last 14 days.
- Have been asked to self-quarantine as a result of any of the above circumstances.

The CDC has stated that persons with the conditions listed below are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. If you believe you fall into such a category and are concerned, you are encouraged to speak with Management. The category includes:

- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease

- Diabetes
- Lung disease

For further information, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>.

Appointments and meetings with staff and the general public are to be limited only to what is absolutely necessary. Appointments and meetings must be conducted in locations that allow for social distancing of at least 6 feet between each person present.

While at work, limit contact by utilizing mail, email, or telephone as opposed to in-person contact.

## **HOW THE VIRUS SPREADS**

The virus is most likely to spread from person to person through:

- Direct contact with a person while they are infectious
- Contact with droplets when a person with a confirmed infection coughs or sneezes
- Touching objects or surfaces that were contaminated by droplets (like those from a cough or sneeze) from a person with a confirmed infection and then touching your mouth, eyes or face.

The length of time that a person is infectious (can spread the infection to others) is not yet known. This is too new and unknown still. However, there is evidence of people with little or no symptoms transmitting the infection to others. It is therefore likely that a person can spread the infection before they first develop symptoms and that they can continue to do so up until 48 hours after symptoms stop.

## **RESIDENT NOTIFICATION**

As the first step in the effort to prevent COVID-19 on all properties, each resident will receive a notice that notifies them of the closure of the common areas, to only travel on property to and from their unit, staying in their unit when on property, and common health information. Those notices are not to be altered in way unless instructed by Management. These notices are:

1. High-Rise "Attention Residents and Neighbors"
2. Family Site "Attention Residents and Neighbors"
3. "COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Health Information for Residents"

The following will be used as visual notification:

1. "Attention: Guests of Residents" posters will be posted at each property entrance notifying guests to not enter the property and/or area if they are sick.
2. "Stop the Spread of Germs" posters will be posted throughout each property in areas that will be seen by everyone.
3. "Wash Your Hands" posters will be posted in every staff and public restroom on property.

## **SITE**

All common areas must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized and shut down. All furniture must be removed and stored in another location that is not accessible. These areas must not be used for any activities, gathering, congregating, or any situation that would cause a group setting. Property management staff must ensure that the residents and guests are following the protocol. All lobby, community room tables and chairs will need to be removed by IHA staff until said time IHA will open back up to full operating capacity. The following areas are:

1. Lobby
2. Community Room
3. Community kitchen
4. TV room
5. Elevator lobby
6. Patios (high-rises)
7. Office

The laundry rooms will be the only common space that is not shut down, unless instructed by the Management.

## **CLEANING AND SANITIZING**

All Properties must be actively cleaned and sanitized. Each property should keep a supply of cleaning supplies and sanitizer. The following protocol should be followed regarding keeping all spaces cleaned:

1. After each encounter with a person or persons, clean and sanitize the space before allowing anyone else to enter the space, following disinfectant instructions.
2. Staff should wash their hands after any encounter with another person.
3. All hard surfaces and used items should be wiped down and sanitized throughout the day, especially after being touched by a person(s). These surfaces include, but aren't limited to the following:
  - Desks
  - Chairs
  - Doorknobs
  - Pens
  - Office phone
  - Printer/Copier
  - Sink handles
  - Toilet handles and seats
  - Computers
  - Keyboards
  - Mouse

To all extent possible, all emergency work within resident units should be conducted wearing disposable gloves, masks, and Tyvek suits. Latex, nitrile, or vinyl type gloves are all acceptable for the cleaning tasks. However, it is important to note that some people suffer from latex allergies. In that case, remember to choose the nitrile or vinyl surgical gloves rather than latex surgical gloves. Furthermore, nitrile gloves are strongly recommended for most maintenance tasks in a potentially infectious unit because nitrile has high levels of chemical and puncture resistance. If leather or nylon gloves are necessary for puncture or abrasion resistance, wear those gloves over surgical gloves and wash them per the manufacturer's recommendations after each use. If they cannot be washed, then dispose of them in the nearest waste receptacle.

Appropriately dispose of gloves in the nearest waste receptacle after completing the work in unit.

## **PROPER REMOVAL OF DISPOSABLE GLOVES**

Remove and properly dispose of gloves immediately following cleaning or disinfecting tasks. To remove your gloves, pinch the glove cuff and peel the first glove away from your body, pulling it inside out. Without touching either glove with your bare hand, hold the glove that you just removed in your gloved hand. Peel off the second glove by putting your fingers inside the glove at the top of your wrist. Turn the second glove inside out while pulling it away from your body, leaving the first glove inside the second. Dispose of the gloves in the nearest waste receptacle.

## **OFFICE DUTIES**

Normal office duties for staff will continue. If a time comes when changes need to be made, staff will be notified.

When conducting normal business, please exercise the use of "social distancing" and sanitizing, as that will help combat the spread if someone is infected. "Social distancing" is defined as keeping everyone six (6) feet away from one another. Keep this in mind when scheduling appointments or any group appointments.

## **WORK ORDERS**

At this time, only emergency work orders are to be completed in an occupied unit. When a work order needs to be completed in an occupied unit, the following protocol must be followed prior to entering the units:

- Knock on the door and ask *"Is anybody in the unit ill with an active cough or fever or is anyone self-isolating (quarantined) due to possible exposure to COVID-19?"*
  - ***If the answer is NO:*** Proceed entering the unit to complete the required work.
  - ***If the answer is YES: DO NOT PROCEED!*** Leave the unit and go the office to notify the Property Manager and/or Admin. Assistant. If the work order is considered an emergency, the property management staff will notify the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director and one of the members of the Maintenance Response Team will complete the required work in the unit.

The members of the Maintenance Response Team will be outfitted in the appropriate PPE to deal with a virus. These members will be selected by the Executive Director.

In the event that one of the properties has a spread of COVID-19, the work order policy will be revised to only emergency work orders.

Effective immediately, residents may call the property management office to request work orders instead of coming into the office. Each staff member must write down the work order in the proper log and confirm in writing that the work order was received. Staff may post on the resident's door a generic work order that it was received. For example, "Work order received on March 13, 2020". No other information should be included on the notice to maintain privacy of our residents. All Routine and Non-Emergency work orders called in need to be placed on a log awaiting the time to be able to cut those work orders when the housing authority employees are clear to enter the units for work other than emergencies.

**Please note:** If maintenance staff observes a resident they think may be ill, they have the right to not enter the unit and must report the situation to the Property Manager. If the work is an emergency, proceed with protocol below for residents with suspected COVID-19. In addition, if a resident does not want their unit entered due to illness, requests a reschedule, or indicates that they have self-quarantined and the work is not urgent/emergency work, do not enter the unit and report the situation to the Property Manager. Residents are encouraged not to advise site staff in person of their diagnosis. They may call site staff over the phone to disclose a COVID-19 diagnosis or quarantine.

Additional questions regarding whether or not to enter a unit should be directed to supervisors and/or Management.

## **TECH CREW PROTOCOL**

ALL Tech Crew personnel are required to carry the following PPE (personal protective equipment) in their vans at all times.

1. Respirator
2. Tyvek suit or HAZMAT suit
3. Anti-Fog safety goggles
4. Latex gloves
5. Hand wipes or sanitizer

Tech Crew are required to fully suit up if they are going into a unit that has a Presumptive or Confirmed case of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) or if the resident is being quarantined due to COVID-19 for an **Emergency Only**.

If they are doing a normal work order that has been requested by the site in an occupied unit and the resident states that they have a Presumptive or Confirmed case COVID-19 or the residents are being quarantined due to COVID-19, they are to **immediately** remove themselves from the unit and let their supervisor and Property Manager know **immediately**. They will need to have the address and resident's name available when reporting to the Property Manager. They will be asked to follow certain protocols at that time for their safety.

## **SUMMARY OF PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

Be alert, be safe, and practice preventative measures at all times.

## **INDEPENDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PROTOCOL As of 8/04/2021**

***This protocol will be updated with new information as it becomes available.***

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### **ALL STAFF**

Practice good hygiene: no handshaking, wash hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds at a time, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes, disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, keyboards, phones, cell phones, and handrails frequently.

At this time, all staff are expected to attend work as normal, unless any of the following apply:

- You are sick, especially if you are experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19+, which are very similar to the flu (cough, fever, shortness of breath). Employees are advised to stay home if they are ill and notify their supervisor if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. Staff should contact their doctor or a health care provider as needed for medical assistance.
- You or someone you have been in contact with have visited mainland China, Iran, Europe, the Republic of Korea or other COVID-19 level 2 or higher risk areas of concern identified by the CDC in the last 14 days. For more information, contact Management. *For additional* information regarding COVID-19 high-risk areas, please see the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.
- Develop symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of being anywhere in a country or area of concern.
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- Older adults
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

For further information, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>.

Appointments and meetings with Staff and the general public are to be limited only to what is **absolutely necessary**. Appointments and meetings must be conducted in locations that allow for social distancing of at least 6 feet between each person present.

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The length of time that a person is infectious (can spread the infection to others) is not yet known. However, there is evidence of people with little or no symptoms transmitting the infection to others. It is therefore likely that a person can spread the infection before they first develop symptoms - and that they can continue to do so up until 48 hours after symptoms stop.

## **OFFICE APPOINTMENTS / MEETINGS / BRIEFINGS**

The Independence Housing Authority is continuing to conduct office appointments, meetings, and briefings when necessary and there is room available for social distancing of at least six feet between each person. The following protocol should apply:

- When a guest approaches the desk in the front lobby and prior to any meetings or briefings staff should ask, *"Do you or anyone you have been in contact with in the last 14 days have an active cough or fever or is self-isolating (quarantined) due to possible exposure to COVID-19?"*
  - **If the answer is YES:** Inform the guest that they must leave and to call their primary THA contact to reschedule their appointment/ meeting/ briefing.
  - **If the answer is NO:** The guest will be allowed to continue with their appointment/ meeting/ briefing.

**Please note:** If staff observes a guest they think may be ill, or has persistent uncovered coughing and sneezing, they have the right to end the meeting and request the guest to reschedule their appointment.

**DO NOT** disclose information obtained from a guest regarding a "yes" or a self-observed incident of persistent coughing which resulted in a discontinuance of a meeting with anyone except your immediate supervisor, who will make the necessary notifications.

Staff must disinfect their office / meeting space after each appointment, meeting, and briefing, following disinfectant instructions.

Full Applications and/or briefings will be the only appointments that will be done in our building and if in person, they have to be done in the Lower Level Conference Room and MASKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE WORN AT ALL TIMES during the appointment. No other appointments will be allowed in the building while under these Pandemic Rules.

## **MASK MANDATE**

IHA employees will continue to wear masks to and from the copiers, to and from the bathrooms, to and from the breakrooms and to and from the building from their vehicles. Employees are not required to wear masks at their desks.

Masks will be required regardless of vaccination status.

Employees with separate offices can unmask until someone comes into their office for any reason and that employee now has to mask up as well.

Mask will be required, at all times, with applicants coming into the building for Full Application interviews in the basement.

## **GLOVES**

All work within resident units and all administrative work involving resident supplied or third party supplied documentation should be conducted wearing disposable gloves. To avoid transference to others, do not touch others with a gloved hand or shake hands, even when gloved, to prevent transferring infection to an ungloved individual.

Latex, nitrile, or vinyl type gloves are all acceptable for the cleaning tasks. However, it is important to note that some people suffer from latex allergies. If that is the case, remember to choose the nitrile or vinyl type surgical gloves rather than latex surgical gloves. Furthermore, nitrile gloves are strongly recommended for most maintenance tasks in a potentially infectious unit because nitrile has high levels of chemical and puncture resistance. If leather or nylon gloves are necessary for puncture or abrasion resistance, wear those gloves over surgical gloves and wash them (per the manufacturers recommendations) after each use. If they cannot be washed, then dispose of them in the nearest waste receptacle.

Remove and properly dispose of gloves immediately following cleaning or disinfecting tasks and upon exiting an apartment.

To remove your gloves, pinch the glove cuff and peel the first glove away from your body, pulling it inside out. Without touching either glove with your bare hand, hold the glove that you just removed in your gloved hand. Peel off the second glove by putting your fingers inside the glove at the top of your wrist. Turn the second glove inside out while pulling it away from your body, leaving the first glove inside the second. Dispose of the gloves in the nearest waste receptacle.

## **PROPERTIES**

Management has distributed additional protocols for site staff.

## **CLEANING PROTOCOLS FOR APPLICATIONS**

All tables, acrylic screens will be wiped down between each appointment time. Pens being used by the applicants will be wiped down and cleaned prior to the next appointment to protect the next round of applicants coming into the building.

Temperatures of all applicants / tenants will be taken before coming into the offices for any appointments. Masks will be required to be worn at all times while inside IHA offices for any appointment or briefing scheduled.

A full complete sanitizing clean, per janitorial service, will be done at the end of each week.

## **CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES**

If a resident is tested and confirmed positive for COVID-19 at a property, Property Managers are to contact Management immediately, and then contact the Local Health Department or The Missouri Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention call center (573-751-6113). Property Managers should keep a log by unit of who has tested positive for COVID-19 and who has shown symptoms. Mandatory quarantines can only be ordered by government officials. If someone has tested presumptive or is confirmed for COVID-19 on a property, we will recommend that residents at the impacted property self-quarantine themselves to their apartment for two weeks.

If an employee has tested presumptive or is confirmed for COVID-19,

If an employee at a property has tested presumptive or is confirmed for COVID-19, Management will notify the Health Department immediately.

## **TRAVEL or OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES (As of 8/4/2021)**

All out-of-state work related travel is suspended. In-state work-related travel must be pre-approved by the Executive Director.

Staff that travels out of Missouri must notify Management with the locations visited, length, and method of travel.

Per CDC, if you travel outside of Missouri for non-worked related business, please contact Management upon your return **before** coming into work.

## **CRITICAL RESPONSE TEAM**

The **Critical Response Team** is made up of Management and representatives from each department. This team will meet weekly – sometimes daily if necessary – to discuss the very fluid situation, determine additional updates to the COVID-19 Protocol, and determine when to terminate the protocol.

Management has implemented a **Maintenance Critical Response Team** for emergency maintenance work orders in units that have or are suspected to have a confirmed COVID-19 occupant. The team will be trained and have regular briefings on relevant information and procedures to prevent the spread of coronavirus. This includes the use and proper disposal of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) necessary to reduce exposure. If there is a need to enter a unit with known COVID-19 infection or self-isolation due to exposure, those tasks **MUST** only be performed by trained and qualified staff or contractors.

## **EMPLOYEES PRESENTING WITH SYMPTOMS OR SUSPECTED EXPOSURE TO COVID-19**

Employees or contractors who appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work, or who become sick during the day, should immediately notify their supervisor, be separated from other employees, and will be sent home. Please note that if you are told to leave, you must leave.

If you can answer YES to any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



Stay home. According to the CDC, most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. It is recommended that you no leave your home, except to get medical care.

## **Updated Guidance to Fully Vaccinated Employees**

IHA will request proof of an employee's vaccination status to determine quarantine requirements.

CDC guidance for fully vaccinated individuals (updated July 15, 2021) allows less restrictive protocols around quarantine after an individual's suspected exposure to COVID-19:

1. An employee who is fully vaccinated and presents no symptoms after a suspected exposure does not need to quarantine. The CDC recommends a COVID-19 test 5-7 days after a suspected exposure even without symptoms. However, as a medical procedure, IHA does require the COVID-19 test as a condition of this protocol.
2. An employee who is fully vaccinated and develops symptoms after a suspected exposure should immediately enter into isolation and quarantine.

## **Updated Guidance on Non-Vaccinated Employees**

1. Per the CDC guidelines, employees who are unvaccinated will be required to meet the 10-day quarantine after a suspected exposure. The CDC recommends a COVID-19 test 5-7 days after a potential or suspected exposure even without symptoms. However, as a medical procedure, IHA does require the COVID-19 test as a condition of this protocol.
2. An employee who develops symptoms after a suspected exposure should immediately enter into isolation and quarantine.

## **Guidance for Employees with a Confirmed (Positive) COVID-19 Test:**

Any employee that has tested positive for COVID-19 will go through the following protocols:

- The employee shall leave IHA premises immediately after gathering personal belongings ( or not to return to work)
- The employee will provide the management a listing of staff or other individuals that he or she might have been in close contact with.
- The employee will be in quarantine as defined by this document
- The employee shall be in regular contact with his or her supervisor about their condition.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving\*

\*Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.

Approximately, 10% of new cases in Independence area are "breakthrough" infections, so it is not unheard of for fully vaccinated employees to test positive for COVID-19. If a fully vaccinated employee tests positive for COVID-19, they will follow the same guidelines as employees not vaccinated: at least 10 days of isolation (Day 0 is symptom onset or the date of the positive test). If at the end of the 10 days, the employee is 24 hours symptom free, he or she can end quarantine.

Local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based upon local conditions and needs. You may return to work following the guidelines below if you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 – excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months or who are fully vaccinated:

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 of receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)
- If you test positive, you will need to quarantine for 10 days from the date of the positive test. You must take Annual Leave or unpaid leave for the time you are off.
- If you are unvaccinated and have significant exposure (15 + minutes in close confines with no masks) by another employee found to have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to get a COVID-19 test. If you decline a test, you will be required quarantine up to 10 days.

After stopping quarantine, you should:

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure
- If you have symptoms, immediately notify your supervisor and self-isolate until you are tested.

IHA does not intend to ask people to quarantine if they have traveled unless they were knowingly around someone with COVID-19. Nor does IHA intend to have people proactively quarantine because of a “friend of a friend”.

IHA encourages staff to get the COVID-19 vaccine and will help you get the vaccine if you desire one. You may use company time to get the vaccine (drive time to the clinic, getting the shot, and drive time back to the office). Employees must take Annual Leave if you stay home while recovering from any side effects. IHA is not collecting “vaccine data” from staff, and staff do not need to ask about their vaccination status. However, IHA reserves the right to ask about vaccination status for the purpose of contact tracing and quarantine requirement protocols.

Every case is different, and there is not a potential protocol for everything. Supervisors will work collaboratively with Michael and Heather if needed, to address questions. Based upon CDC guidelines, we reserve the right to update this protocol at any time. The most recent copy can always be found posted on our website at [www.iha1.org](http://www.iha1.org) or at Heather’s desk.