

# CTH Covid-19 Response Protocol

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Please check [www.civictrusthouse.ie](http://www.civictrusthouse.ie) for updated protocol

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## INTRODUCTION

The house management committee looks forward to welcoming staff back to Civic Trust House in line with government guidelines. Decisions how and when to re-open the house are being made in compliance with the Government and public health advice.

Daily life at the house will be changed considerably, but the committee is confident that the unique character of our workspace, both physical and social, can be maintained while keeping all users of the building safe. To this end, companies, Civic Trust House staff and all workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol.

All staff returning to work will be required to fill out a Pre-Return to Work Form including sections on exposure, symptoms, medical advice and outlining the ongoing responsibilities of the worker as they rejoin the workplace. These responsibilities will include an induction training, consisting of the CTH Protocol and Procedures, for all workers prior to return to the house. Documents will be forwarded ahead of the work start date, and will be run through with supervisor prior to starting work, Returning staff will have the opportunity to ask questions and raise issues prior to signing off that they have understood all aspects and will comply.

Resident Companies and workers will have regular engagement about COVID-19 and preventative measures in the workplace. Information and guidance will be provided by Civic Trust House to workers by:

1. Main notice board in hallway
2. Weekly email updates to Management Committee and people working independently ('hotdeskers'). Companies will email their staff with updates according to their own individual protocol.

Communications will include current information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, how it spreads, cleaning routines and waste disposal as well as advice on hand and respiratory hygiene, physical distancing, use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and work equipment where relevant. Any changes to CTH Covid policy and procedure should be highlighted here.

All workers will be provided with management policy for dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19 and instructed in procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may develop symptoms of COVID-19 during work.

Resident Companies will communicate directly with their own staff regarding practical Workplace changes and changes to Employment Policies. There is no requirement for an employer to notify the Health and Safety Authority if a worker contracts COVID-19.

A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to keeping us all safe. If anyone of us perceive that any elements of this protocol are not being adhered to, they should report concerns immediately to one of the following:

- Their own line manager or company manager
  - Building Manager
  - One of 2 lead worker reps **TBC**
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# What is Covid-19?

Covid-19 is a highly contagious viral airborne respiratory disease which affects your windpipe and lungs, causing pneumonia-like symptoms. It can also affect the brain, heart, liver, kidneys and glands by releasing blood clots from the lungs into the bloodstream, potentially leading to severe long term disability or death.

## What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

The main symptoms are:

- **A high temperature of 38C or more – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back.**
- **A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours.**
- **Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties**
- **Loss or change to sense of smell or taste**

Other symptoms may include:

- |                        |                      |                    |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| ● Stomach ache         | ● Acute Necrotising  | ● Delirium         |
| ● Eye infections       | Encephalitis (ANE) - | ● Repeated shaking |
| ● Fatigue              | a central nervous    | with chills        |
| ● Dizziness            | infection.           | ● Sore throat      |
| ● Muscle weakness      | ● Stroke             | ● Nasal congestion |
| ● Seizure Encephalitis | ● Confusion          | ● Diarrhoea        |
| (Swelling of the       | ● Disorientation     | ● Headaches        |
| brain)                 | ● Chills             | ● Hallucinations   |

Symptoms may appear anywhere from 5 days up to two weeks of contracting Covid-19 (or not at all) and usually last 5-14 days but may continue for weeks or months, and the virus can be contracted more than once.

### **No Symptoms, No Problem?**

**NO, NO, NO!**

It is possible, indeed likely, to contract Covid-19 without showing any symptoms and yet be contagious to others. Asymptomatic infected individuals have been shown in some studies to be as contagious as symptomatic patients. Studies show that 40-50% of infected individuals are asymptomatic at any point in time and those people can transmit the virus as easily as symptomatic patients.

## How is Covid-19 spread?

The virus is transmitted by:

- Coughs from someone who is infected
- Sneezes from someone who is infected
- Breath from someone who is infected
- Talking with someone who is infected
- Touching or shaking hands with someone who is infected
- touching surfaces that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on and bring your unwashed hands to your face (eyes, nose, or mouth)
- Surfaces such as: door handles/knobs, light switches, handrails / bannisters, telephones/mobile phones, keyboards, computer mice, utlery of any material, crockery of any material, milk bottles, plastic containers, jugs of any material, pencils and pens, taps, toilet flush levers, bins, coffeepot handles/kettles, countertops/tabletops, watches, rings, long nails, clothing, handbags/laptop bags or similar, glasses/eyewear, keys, towels, linens, car-handles, inside of cars particularly steering wheels and any other shared items between individuals.
- Cats, dogs and other animals
- Deceased individuals
- Intimate contact with another individual
- Exposure to polluted and un-ventilated air

## How do I protect myself and others from Covid-19?

Covid-19 enters the body through the eyes, nose, and mouth. The best way to prevent the virus from entering your body and affecting you is by:

- Washing your hands with soap and water regularly, and after touching the above surfaces
- Using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, disposing of tissue and washing hands immediately afterwards.
- Keeping 2 meters from any individual where you can
- Wearing a mask while in public or at work (Masks are required in all communal areas of the house and are recommended within offices.)
- The use of hand sanitiser will destroy the virus so long as it is 70% or more alcohol
- Wash hands before and after using Public Transport

## How long does Covid-19 survive for on surfaces?

Covid-19 can survive on:

- Copper for up to 4 hours

- Cardboard for up to 24 hours
- Stainless Steel for up to 72 hours
- Glass for up to 4 days
- Paper for up to 5 days
- Metal for up to 5 days
- Wood for up to 9 days
- Plastic for up to 9 days

Other materials are being tested at present, but it is safe to assume that Covid-19 can survive for quite a time on surfaces.

The most effective ways to destroy the virus immediately on surfaces is to:

- Wash a surface with soap and water and then apply a safe solution of bleach
- Wiping a surface down with Surgical Spirits.
- UVC Radiation also destroys Covid-19 immediately. However, exposure to UVC Radiation can be dangerous if proper procedures are not in place.
- Isolating a room for 14 days.

## Who is most at risk?

Individuals are most at risk from Covid-19 if they:

- are over 60 years of age (even if fit and well)
- have had an organ transplant
- are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
- are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
- have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
- have a serious heart condition
- are pregnant
- have a learning disability

- have a lung condition that is not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema, or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have high blood pressure (hypertension)
- have diabetes
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a medical condition that can affect your breathing
- have cancer
- have a weak immune system (immunosuppressed)
- have cerebrovascular disease
- have a condition affecting your brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, or cerebral palsy)
- have a problem with your spleen or have had your spleen removed
- have a condition that means you have a high risk of getting infections (such as HIV, lupus, or scleroderma)
- are taking medicine that can affect your immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- have obesity
- are residents of nursing homes and other long-stay settings
- are in specialist disability care and are over 50 years of age or have an underlying health problem

## What do I do if I am most at risk?

Take extra care to follow the advice on how to protect yourself from Covid-19. This means:

- staying at home as much as possible
- social distancing
- washing your hands regularly and properly
- You do not need to self-isolate unless you have symptoms of Covid-19
- You should work from home if you are at high risk from Covid-19.

If you cannot work from home and you must go to your workplace, take extra care to:

- practice social distancing where possible
  - wash your hands regularly and properly
  - Ask the people in your life to take extra care to protect you from Covid-19.
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# MEASURES AT CIVIC TRUST HOUSE TO MINIMISE RISK OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION

## ARRIVAL AND OPENING

### Face Masks:

Please note that Face Masks are required to be worn in all common areas of the house - please don a mask before entering.

### Keyholders note:

If you are opening up the building please sanitise your hands and feet on the mat provided before going to the alarm keypad (do not take a shortcut through CAST/Film Centre office), and wash or sanitise your hands after use.

### Signing in/out (everyone):

- Please sanitise your hands, and shoes on the mat provided, as soon as you arrive.
- Please sign in or out directly after sanitising hands with a fresh pen from the 'clean' cup, and sanitise again afterwards leaving the pen in the 'used' cup.
- Staff are encouraged to use their own pen to sign in/out if possible.
- If for any reason you would prefer the receptionist to sign in/out for you, they are available to do so on request during office hours (9-1pm, 2-5pm).

### Healthcheck:

A non-contact thermometer is available at reception and staff are encouraged to have their temperature checked by receptionist on duty on arrival.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing must be ensured to reduce the spread of infection. The current recommended distance to be maintained between people is 2 metres. Please respect this distancing in all common

areas as well as within offices, and allow sufficient space to Civic Trust House reception and caretaking staff to carry out duties.

There should be no shaking of hands & all physical contact should be avoided.

At risk or vulnerable workers who cannot work from home are to be preferentially supported to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres.

## PERSONAL HYGIENE

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19. Instructions for effective handwashing are on display in the bathrooms, with disposable towels. All building occupants should take the time regularly to consult posters to ensure they are using best practices.

Hand sanitiser is available at the entrance but is not a substitute for regular hand washing. Hand sanitiser is available at all landings and it is important to sanitise your hands each time you use the stairs.

In addition to hand hygiene, good respiratory hygiene and etiquette is critical. Tissues are available in the hallway, and from caretaking supplies for your desk, and should be disposed of immediately after use.

## RECEPTION (*\*reception is currently closed May 2021*)

The Reception workstation will not be used by more than one reception staff member in any single shift and should be thoroughly cleaned by the staff on duty before and after each shift (including all desk surfaces, computer mouse, phone handset and keypad). Computer mouse, keyboard and phone handset should be removed and replaced with the spare one between shifts.

The door to Cork Film Centre / CAST should remain closed ordinarily.

Please observe social distancing markings on the floor when visiting reception, and avoid prolonged conversations.

The mail pigeon holes are now to be found in Reception. Please let reception know if you or anyone coughs or sneezes near the pigeonholes and make your mail pick up as brief as possible.

A non-contact thermometer is available at Reception if you wish the staff member on duty to check your temperature.

## KITCHEN

For the protection of all staff the kitchen facilities are closed until further notice. Any food or drink consumed on the premises should be done so using staff's personal cutlery/ware (or disposable ware) and brought home for washing.

## TOILETS

Toilets are allocated as follows:

**Downstairs:** CTH staff, CFC, CAST, IAYO, Midsummer, Folk & Jazz Festival, and Hotdeskers.

**1st Floor:** Choral & ARTlifeCULTURE

**2nd Floor:** Corcadorca & Suisha

**The following toilet etiquette should be strictly adhered to:**

- 1 - Before flushing the toilet after use, ensure the lid is in the closed position. If you need to flush more than once close the lid between flushes.
- 2 - Wash hands after you are finished with the toilet with soap and water provided.
- 3 - Dry hands with paper towels and place towels in the bin provided.
- 4 - After use, please use disinfectant cleaning spray provided and paper towels to clean the taps, the toilet flush handle, the toilet seat if used, the door handle and lock (unlocking in the process) and any other surface touched otherwise contaminated. Please ensure that enough spray is used to leave the surfaces damp and allow to air dry.

## CLEANING & CARETAKING

Thorough and regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is essential and Civic Trust House aims to increase caretaking hours in common areas, but ongoing cleaning is expected from all workers after themselves.

## COMPANY OFFICES

Please refer to your employer's guidance on managing Covid-19 risks within individual offices.

Wherever possible building users should maintain as much ventilation as possible, working with windows open (ideally more than one per room) , or opening them frequently throughout the day.

## VISITORS (updated May 2021)

Civic Trust House is currently open to current Building Staff only and necessary visitors accompanied by keyholding staff. Please ensure that all visitors are aware of this protocol.

Deliveries will be accepted into Reception when there are staff to receive them, but where possible they will be received on the doorstep. Deliveries for companies will be kept in Reception for short-term collection.

Civic Trust House will ask contractors working on its behalf if they have an understanding of COVID-19 precautionary measures, and if they do not they will be refused access. Contractors should be informed in advance that face coverings are required, and are conditional on securing the job.

## CONTACT TRACING

Where possible, the management committee of Civic Trust House recommends and requests all staff to download and use the Covid Tracker app as per government guidelines. This will ensure that if and when building users contract the virus you can be contacted should you be at likely risk.

A register of your staff and visitors' contact details should be kept securely by resident companies, to facilitate HSE contact tracing if necessary.