

Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Directorate General of Health Services
(EMR Division)

Advisory for Gated Residential Complexes with regards to COVID-19

1. Background

Resident Welfare Associations functioning in gated complexes can play an active role in creating awareness about the Covid-19 disease, simple preventive measures that need to be followed, encourage early reporting and inform community about myths & stigma often encountered by patients, healthcare or other frontline workers. This document outlines the preventive and response measures to be observed to minimize and contain the spread of COVID-19 in gated complexes.

2. Scope

The purpose of this document is to advice and guide RWAs/ residential societies in prevention and control of COVID-19 transmission in gated residential complexes.

3. Generic preventive measures

Persons above 65 years of age, persons with comorbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 10 years should be encouraged to stay at home only and keep contact with visitors/guests to a minimum. RWAs may advise all members accordingly.

The generic measures include simple public health measures that are to be followed to reduce the risk of COVID-19. These measures need to be observed by all (residents, visitors and staff) in these places at all times. These include:

- i. Physical distancing of at least 6 feet to be followed as far as feasible.
- ii. Use of face covers/masks to be made mandatory.
- iii. Practice frequent hand washing with soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20 seconds) can be made wherever feasible.
- iv. Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing off used tissues properly.
- v. Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to state and district helpline.
- vi. Spitting shall be strictly prohibited.
- vii. Installation & use of AarogyaSetu App shall be advised to all.

4. Specific preventive measures for gated residential complex:

- i. Provisions must be made for display of Posters/standees/AV media on preventive measures about COVID-19, common signs and symptoms, need for early reporting and sanitization of premises, etc. prominently outside and inside of the gated complex
- ii. Provisions for hand hygiene (sanitizer dispenser) should be made available at entry points and in work areas.
- iii. Thermal screening of visitors/staff is to be carried out at entry points and only asymptomatic individuals shall be allowed to enter the premises. Vendors, household helps, car cleaners, delivery personnel etc. will also undergo such screening daily.
- iv. Physical distancing of at least 6 feet to be followed as far as feasible at all locations at all times in all common areas, incl. parks, corridors, lift lobbies, gyms, clubs etc.
- v. Large gathering, parties, functions, prayer meetings, etc. shall be avoided.
- vi. Specific markings may be made with sufficient distance to manage the queue and ensure social distancing in the premises.
- vii. Seating arrangement, in common areas like parks etc. to be made in such a way that adequate social distancing is maintained.
- viii. Number of people in the elevators shall be restricted, duly maintaining social distancing norms.
- ix. Frequent sanitization of the common facilities, and all points which come into human contact, e.g. door handles, benches, elevator buttons, electric switches, railings, etc. shall be ensured.
- x. Ensure regular supply of hand sanitisers, soap and running water in the common areas and washrooms, as applicable.
- xi. For air-conditioning/ventilation of common areas, the guidelines of CPWD shall be followed which inter alia emphasizes that the (i) temperature setting of all air conditioning devices should be in the range of 24-30°C, (ii) relative humidity should be in the range of 40- 70%, (iii) recirculation of air to be avoided to the extent possible, (iv) intake of fresh air should be as much as possible and (v) cross ventilation should be adequate.
- xii. RWAs will encourage all residents to inform them in case any resident reports symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- xiii. RWAs will be an important stakeholder in COVID-19 prevention, control and containment activities. RWAs should:
 - a. Follow Central Government / State Government advisories for the citizens available on their respective websites and disseminate it further through notice board or the RWA social media / chat groups to the members.
 - b. Maintain suitable linkages with nearest health facilities to handle any health contingencies such as any person developing symptoms of COVID-19.
 - c. Address myths and misinformation / rumors / fake news on the RWA's social media by verifying the facts from government sources.
 - d. Address COVID-19 related stigmatization.
 - e. If feasible, maintain and oversee availability of masks, pulse oximeter, sodium hypochlorite solution, soaps & water supply in common areas, OTC drugs like paracetamol, ORS etc.

- f. The RWAs / residential societies desirous of setting up Covid Care Facility can plan such facilities as per the detailed guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. This shall only be made operational if the required guidelines and standards are met and shall be continued as per the direction issued by the local health authorities / RRTs.

5. Measures to be taken on occurrence of case(s)

- i. RWA shall encourage residents to self-report symptoms and facilitate their testing, isolation and quarantine of contacts.
- ii. Provide counselling, guidance and support to COVID-19 affected individuals and families. Special attention is required in such households which have no family member to take care of the dependants.
- iii. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the designated public health authority (district RRT/treating physician) and accordingly further advice shall be made regarding management of case, his/her contacts and need for disinfection.
- iv. If a decision is taken by the public health authority for home quarantine of contacts/ home isolation of patient, RWA shall facilitate those under home quarantine / home isolation to remain within their homes.
- v. Provide social support and avoid stigmatization of those under home quarantine / isolation.

6. Actions to be undertaken if gated complex is declared as part of a containment zone

If the gated complex is declared as a containment zone, the RWAs will cooperate with the local health authorities in carrying out various activities as stipulated in the containment plan such as:

- i. Facilitate house-to-house search by healthcare workers.
- ii. Facilitate identification elderly / co-morbid patients residing within the complex and help monitor their health.
- iii. Ensure that all houses are covered under daily surveillance.
- iv. Shift the suspect to nearest Covid treatment facility
- v. Facilitate that all residents remain at home and shall only come out for meeting essential requirements.
- vi. Create awareness among the habitants on public health measures such as hand washing/ respiratory hygiene / disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, etc.
- vii. RWA / societies should provide volunteers to support residents for maintaining essential services.