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## COMMISSIONERATE Health & Family Welfare Service

No: NVBDCP/EST7A/COVID 19/2020-21

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### Circular

**Subject:** Guidelines regarding preventive measures in markets to contain the spread of COVID-19

**Reference:** SOP on preventive measures in markets to contain spread of COVID-19 by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India dated 30.11.2020

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### 1. Introduction

Everyday markets are visited by large number of people for their daily needs, shopping, entertainment, food, etc. Amid COVID -19 pandemic, with gradual opening of economic activities, markets are witnessing high footfalls. Such large gatherings, without observance of COVID- 19 appropriate behaviour have the potential to spread of COVID-19 infection. The following guidelines outline various generic precautionary measures to be adopted in addition to specific measures to be ensured at markets to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These guidelines shall be applicable to both retail and wholesale markets. Some of the bigger markets may also have malls/ hyper/ supermarkets in them. For such establishments, the guidelines issued earlier by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (available at <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/4SoPstobefollowedinShoppingMalls.pdf>) shall be followed. For restaurants, with in marketplaces, the earlier guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/3SoPstobefollowedinRestaurants.pdf>) shall be followed. Similarly, for offices, religious places/ places of worship, training institutes, yoga institutes and gymnasiums, cinema halls/theatres and any other specific activities which are part of these markets or situated within the market complex, specific guide lines issued from time to time by the state and central government shall be applicable. Markets in containment zones shall remain closed. Only those outside containment zones shall be allowed to function.

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## **2. Protecting vulnerable populations**

Persons above 65 years of age, persons with comorbidities, pregnant women, and children

below the age of 10 years are advised to stay at home, except for essential and health purposes.

Market Owners Associations shall be advised accordingly.

Employees who are at higher risk i.e. elderly employees, pregnant employees and employees

who have underlying medical conditions must take extra precautions. The Market Associations shall be advised that such persons should not be exposed to any front-line work requiring direct contact with the public.

## **3. Promoting COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour**

Simple public health measures are to be followed to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19. These measures need to be observed always by shop and establishment owners, visitors, workers, and others.

The measures include:

- Physical distancing of at least 6 feet shall be followed.
- Use of face covers/masks shall be compulsory.
- Practice frequent handwashing with liquid soap (for at least 40-60 seconds) even when hands are not visibly dirty. Provision and use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (for at least 20 seconds) can be made outside the shops and other places wherever feasible.
- Respiratory hygiene 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 into a closed bin.
- Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest to toll free Apathmitra helpline 14410 (8 am to 9 pm)
- Spitting is strictly prohibited.
- Installation & use of Aarogya Setu App shall be advised to all.

## **4. Maintaining healthy environment at markets**

During Pre-COVID-19 period, markets were usually crowded, and many places had inadequate sanitation amenities. To prevent the risk of transmission of COVID-19, it is important that healthy environment shall be maintained at markets.

This includes:

- The existing markets/ shall be evaluated for physical structure, amenities, etc. for compliance to COVID-19 precautions like physical distancing of 2 metres/6 feet, adequate ventilation, etc. If found not compliant, they shall make necessary



structural changes to meet the requirements of 'new normal' of COVID-19.

- If the above requirement cannot be complied with, such shops may be relocated suitably to meet the expected requirements.
- All shops shall have a permanent marking of boxes/circles with paint on the floor at a distance of 2 metres/6 feet for ensuring physical distance at all times.
- The shop owners shall ensure that prior to resumption of daily activities, all work areas inside the shop shall be sanitized using 1% sodium hypochlorite solution or household detergent.
- Cleaning and regular disinfection of frequently touched surfaces (door knobs/handles, elevator buttons, hand rails, chairs, table tops, counters, etc.) and floors, walls, etc. to be done before opening of shops, at the end of the day and at other appropriate times.
- Entrance to the shops shall have hand sanitizer dispenser and all customers shall sanitize their hands before entering the shop.
- Where cars are repositioned by parking lot employees (valet parking), proper disinfection of steering, door handles, keys, etc. of the vehicles should be ensured before the vehicle is used again.
- Public utility areas shall be sanitized with 1% sodium hypochlorite solution. This shall be done on a regular basis.
- Deep cleansing of drinking water stations, hand washing areas, and toilets shall be done 3-4 times daily.

The market associations shall facilitate maintaining healthy environment of public utility areas and open spaces through their own means and through local urban bodies/civic agencies. Detailed guidelines are available at

<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Guidelinesondisinfectionofcommonpublicplacesincludingoffices.pdf>

## 5. Planning for COVID -19 related appropriate behaviour at market places

### 5.1. Self-regulating COVID-19 appropriate behaviour in market places

COVID appropriate behaviour in marketplaces may be self-regulated by market associations through a number of measures such as:

- Creation of a sub-committee for each market to facilitate and monitor implementation of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour in the market i.e. within shops and establishments, as well as outside.
- Mask dispensing kiosks maybe set up at entry points and parking lots.
- Distribution of free masks for those who cannot afford shall be encouraged.
- Establish hand washing stations in public utility areas and ensure availability of liquid soap and water. Use of foot operated taps and contactless soap dispensers is recommended.
- Ensure mass thermal screening at the entry/ access points to the market.

- Procuring thermal scanners, sanitizers, disinfectants, etc. for sanitization and disinfection of public utility areas.
- Placement of IEC materials and signages regarding COVID-19 appropriate behaviour in prominent locations.

## **5.2. Enforcing COVID-19 appropriate behaviour by regulatory authorities.**

Where self-regulatory approach fails or not effective, the planning shall also entail taking enforcement actions, wherever warranted. This may include:

- Levying off fines/penalties on defaulters for not wearing mask/face cover, or for not following physical distancing norms.
- Exploring the option of allowing markets/shops to open on alternate days
- Closure of markets in case larger number of cases are getting reported which are found to be having epidemiological links with the market.

## **5.3. Planning for ensuring COVID appropriate behaviours by shop owners/utilities operating in the market**

Owners shall ensure:

- Physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet inside and outside the shops/utilities, specific markings on the floor shall be made.
- Queue management inside and outside the shops/utilities shall be ensured
- They shall deploy sufficient personnel to monitor the queue as per physical distancing norms.
- Keep provision of triple layer masks/ face covers for clients entering shops/utilities without masks.
- Provisioning of hand sanitizers at the entry of the shop/establishment for sanitizing the hands of the visitors. Thermal screening provisions for monitoring of body temperature of workers and customers.
- Suitable arrangements for contact-less payment shall be made and encouraged

## **5.4. Ensuring ventilation**

- As far as feasible, natural ventilation must be ensured and use of small enclosed spaces must be discouraged.
- Circulation of outdoor air needs to be increased, as much as possible, by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods.
- For air-conditioning/ventilation, of closed enclosures, the guidelines of CPWD shall be followed which emphasizes that the temperature setting of all air conditioning devices should be in the range of 24-30° C, relative humidity should be in the range of 40-70%, intake of fresh air should be as much as possible and cross ventilation should be adequate. Air handling unit needs to be cleaned prior to switching on. (CPWD Guidelines: [https://cpwd.gov.in/WriteReadData/other\\_cir/45567.pdf](https://cpwd.gov.in/WriteReadData/other_cir/45567.pdf))



## 5. Crowd management

Crowd density does not remain the same throughout. It usually peaks during evening hours on weekdays. On weekends and holidays, markets are crowded for most of the day till late in the evening. Planning should specifically factor-in requirement for these rush hours/days. Several strategies can be worked out by the law enforcing agencies in collaboration with Market Associations to manage the crowd. These include:

- Engaging civil defence volunteers (Marshals)/ Home Guards/ volunteers and others. for crowd management.
- Access control at parking lots for limiting vehicle entry.
- Separate entry and exit, if feasible, with unidirectional flow of visitors.
- Roads within the market places maybe made vehicle free (including auto-rickshaws) and secured only for pedestrians/bicycles as far as possible.
- Strict penal action against illegal parking on market roads shall be taken by law enforcing authorities.
- Vehicle shall be allowed to be parked in assigned parking lots. Proper crowd management in the parking lots and outside the premises – duly following physical distancing norms to be ensured.
- CCTV monitoring shall be considered to detect over crowding.
- Staggered time of shops/utilities shall be planned, thereby, allowing them to remain open for longer duration.
- Effective crowd management in specific cases of local metro rail stoppages at stations directly leading into markets.
- Provision for online booking of groceries/ items and delivery at doorstep should be encouraged. The staff for home deliveries shall be screened thermally by the vendors/shop owners prior to allowing them for home deliveries.
- Incentive/discounts for those whose shop during non-peak hours may be considered.

### 5.6. Creating awareness

- Provisions must be made for display of posters/standees/audio-visual media on preventive measures against COVID-19 at prominent places in the market area. Do's and Don'ts also to be displayed at prominent places.
- Recorded messages on precautionary measures and COVID-19 appropriate behaviour may be played through AV systems installed in the market premises.
- The mobile application or website of the shops, if available, must display preventive measures for COVID-19 at their landing page. The website/ mobile application shall inform the visitors on self-monitoring of health and not to visit the market if suffering from symptoms of Covid-19.
- Display State toll free Apathmitra helpline number 14410 and also numbers of local health authorities at prominent places.

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#### 5.7. Making available COVID-19 related supplies

- Appropriate arrangements for personal protection devices like face covers/masks, face-shield, gloves, and other logistics like hand sanitizers, liquid soap, sodium hypochlorite solution (1%) etc. shall be made available by shop owners for their employees as per requirements. The Market Associations shall procure the same for sanitization of public utility areas.
- Provide an adequate supply of calibrated thermal scanners.
- Ensure availability of covered dustbins (foot-operated) and trash cans in sufficient numbers to manage waste as per CPCB guidelines (available at: [https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMWGUIDELINES-COVID\\_1.pdf](https://cpcb.nic.in/uploads/Projects/Bio-Medical-Waste/BMWGUIDELINES-COVID_1.pdf))

#### 6. Maintaining healthy practices at markets and shops

- Persons having COVID-19 symptoms like fever, cough, cold, sore throat, difficulty in breathing, etc. shall be advised seek medical consultations and COVID-19 testing. Such persons in the larger interest of public health shall be politely barred entry into the shop.
- Shop owners, employees and visitors living in containment zones shall not be allowed entry into market places.
- At the entry point of shops, all employees/visitors undergo mandatory hand hygiene (sanitizer dispenser) and thermal screening. Only asymptomatic employees/visitors shall be allowed inside shops.
- All employees/visitors to be allowed entry only if wearing face cover/masks. The face cover/mask has to be worn always, both inside and outside shops.
- Staggered entry of visitors shall be done for maintaining physical distancing of a minimum of 2 metres/6 feet, when queuing up at entry.
- Number of customers inside the shop to be kept at a minimum, to maintain the physical distancing norms of 6 feet (2 meters)
- Seating arrangement inside shops, if any, to ensure 6 feet between chairs, benches etc. as far as feasible.
- Number of people in the elevators shall be restricted, duly maintaining physical distancing norms with markings on the floor.
- The use of escalators with one person on alternate moving steps shall be encouraged.
- The shop keeper/ staff shall perform handwash / use of hand sanitizer frequently.



In conclusion, the markets associations and shop-keepers shall work tandemly to implement COVID-19 safety measures in the markets & shops and ensure COVID-19 free markets.



COMMISSIONER  
Health & F W Services

To,

1. The Commissioner, BBMP, Bangalore
2. The District Commissioner, All Districts.
3. The CEOs of all ZPs
4. The District Surgeon, All Districts.
5. The District Health Officer, All Districts.
6. The District Surveillance Officer, All Districts.

Copy to,

1. The Mission Director, NHM, Arogyasoudha, Bangalore
2. The Director, Health & F W Services, Arogyasoudha, Bangalore
3. The Director, Medical Education, AnandaRao Circle, Bangalore

Copy submitted to,

1. The Additional Chief Secretary, Dept. of Health & Family Welfare ,  
Vikassoudha, Bangalore.

**REMEMBER THE FIGHT IS AGAINST THE DISEASE AND NOT THE PERSON  
STAY HOME- BE SAFE**

**For COVID related queries please contact:**

**Helpline numbers:** 9745697456 & 104

**NIMHANS counselling helpline:** 080-46110007

**Ambulance:** 108;

**Apthamitra helpline:** 14410

GoK Website on COVID-19: <https://covid19.karnataka.gov.in/>

For Home isolation/Home care video of Government of Karnataka:

<https://covid19.karnataka.gov.in/storage/gallery/Video%20Gallery/Home-Isolation-English.mp4>

For COVID related videos please visit Jagruti Karnataka [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-jj\\_NNwB9m8\\_OocGo1Zfcg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-jj_NNwB9m8_OocGo1Zfcg)