

# Guidance for Operating Cooling Centers During COVID-19

Extreme heat is a major threat to the public’s health. Exposure to extreme heat can cause a variety of health problems from general fatigue to muscular cramping to life-threatening heat stroke. Cooling centers are designed to provide relief and protection during extreme heat.

The health and safety of staff and visitors at cooling centers is our number one priority. As the Health Officer’s *Safer at Home Order* remains in effect, the following guidance is provided to safely operate cooling centers during times of high heat.

## A. FACILITY SAFETY ACTIONS

- Signage is posted at each public entrance of the Cooling Center to inform all employees and the public that:

“You may not enter the Cooling Center if you have a cough, fever or are actively following isolation or quarantine orders. All staff and visitors must use a cloth face covering while in the Cooling Center. Maintain a minimum of 6 feet of space from one another while here.”

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- Staff place tape or other markings at least 6 feet apart in any area inside the Cooling Center where lines may form like restrooms, and on walkways to the entrances directing visitors to use the markings to maintain distance.
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- Staff arrange tables, chairs and other furniture to ensure at least 6 feet of distance from other seating.
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- Staff determine allowable occupancy (25% of posted maximum, or approx. 100 sq ft/person). Maximum number of visitors in the facility: \_\_\_\_\_.
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- Staff place hand sanitizer at entrances and common areas, and assure soap and water are available within the facility. Restrooms normally open to the public should remain open to the public.
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- Staff may place signage with respiratory etiquette, hand washing, and face covering messages, but no printed materials may be distributed.
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- Staff will place bottled water on tables, counters or chairs for self-service.
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- Designate staff to voluntarily sign in visitors (see Appendix A). This person will also be required to provide the total count of visitors in the facility at the end of the day.
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- Designate one staff member to assure common areas, break rooms, and restrooms are cleaned and disinfected regularly, and trash properly disposed of following CDC Guidance (see Appendix B). The designated staff assigned to this duty should wear disposable gloves.
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- Designate one staff member to clean and disinfect surfaces following CDC Guidance (see Appendix B) with focus on high-touch items such as television remote controls, door handles, light switches, etc. These surfaces should be wiped down every 2-4 hours. The designated staff assigned to this duty should wear disposable gloves.
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- At closing, the facility should complete a final cleaning of common areas, break rooms and restrooms, disinfecting high-touch surfaces like door handles, handrails, counters, tables, emptying all trashcans and property disposing of all refuse.
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- Other actions as directed by facility management:

## B. STAFF SAFETY ACTIONS

- Staff are posted at the door to ensure the maximum number of visitors in the facility is not exceeded. There is no priority admission – first come, first served.
- Staff are instructed to stay home if they do not feel well. Staff reporting or exhibiting signs of illness will be asked to leave and seek appropriate medical care.
- Staff are required to wear a face covering at all times.
- Staff are advised to maintain a minimum of 6 feet distance from other staff members and visitors.
- Staff are required to wash or sanitize hands before/after shift, before/after breaks, and after any of the following activities: using the restroom, eating, entering or leaving the facility, and after touching high-touch surfaces (door handles, TV remote, handrails, etc.) using hand sanitizer, or soap and water available at the facility.
- Staff are instructed to follow standard procedures to call 911 for anyone in distress or experiencing an emergency.
- Staff receive a copy of this guidance prior to beginning their shift.

## C. VISITOR SAFETY ACTIONS

- Visitors are informed not to enter if they are ill, or following isolation or quarantine orders via posted signage.
  - *Staff will advise anyone who is reporting or exhibiting signs of illness to leave and seek appropriate medical care.*
- Visitors are required to wear a face covering at all times via posted signage.
  - *Staff will advise anyone who is not following the rules that face coverings are required.*
- Visitors are advised to maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet from others via posted signage.
  - Exception:** Members of the same family or household.
  - *Staff will advise anyone who is not following the rules to please maintain the required minimum distance.*
- Visitors have hand sanitizer, soap and water accessible within the facility.
  - *Staff will remind visitors to wash or sanitize hands frequently, including upon entry and exit from the facility.*
- Visitors may bring their own food and beverages. Food deliveries are allowed. The facility cannot store or refrigerate visitor food or beverages. Sharing meals is not allowed.
  - Exception:** Members of the same family or household.
  - *Staff will advise any visitor requesting storage that it is not allowed. Staff will ask anyone inappropriately sharing meal items to please stop.*

**APPENDIX A:  
COOLING CENTER VOLUNTARY VISITOR LOG**

**COOLING CENTER NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COOLING CENTER ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TODAY'S DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

NAME	PHONE NUMBER
(1)	
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NAME	PHONE NUMBER
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(78)	
(79)	
(80)	

**TODAY'S TOTAL COUNT:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 (total from sign-in sheet + those who did not wish to sign-in)

## APPENDIX B: [CDC Guidance](#) on How to Clean and Disinfect

### Clean

- **Wear disposable gloves** to clean and disinfect.
- **Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.**
- Cleaning with soap and water **reduces number of germs, dirt and impurities** on the surface.
- **Practice routine cleaning** of frequently touched surfaces.
  - More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use.
  - Surfaces and objects in public places, such as shopping carts and point of sale keypads should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.
- **High touch surfaces include:**
  - Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

### Disinfect

- **Disinfecting kills germs** on surfaces.
- **Recommend use of [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#).**
- **Follow the instructions on the label** to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend:
  - Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
  - Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- **Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used** if appropriate for the surface.
  - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection, and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.
  - Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
  - **Follow manufacturer's instructions** for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
  - **Leave solution** on the surface for **at least 1 minute**.
  - **To make a bleach solution**, mix:
    - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR
    - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
  - Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
- **Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.**