

COVID-19

RESOURCES FOR LANDLORDS



The best thing that you can do to address your tenants (and their parents) concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic is to educate them about the steps you are taking to create and maintain a safe environment. A variety of suggested practices has been compiled from numerous articles and resources to assist you in maintaining a healthy environment and retaining tenants in your facilities and in Brookings.

Education

Resident Communication

Your team should have a plan in place to relay information to all stakeholders during an outbreak, including concerned parents of student renters. Your communication should be calm and fact-based, with consistent frequency in real-time that aids your audience in understanding the situation as it continues to evolve.

Letters to Tenants

A simple letter, or a more frequent tenant newsletter or email, are two methods of keeping tenants informed about health-related risks and best practices to minimize the chances of infection. This letter can also include basic information about what you are doing to protect common spaces.

Here are a few topics to consider:

- What a tenant should do if they are at risk of exposure or showing virus symptoms
- How and when common areas are being disinfected
- How rent should be delivered with no person-to-person contact
- Who to contact for economic concerns – employment, rent & utility assistance, food, etc.
- Facility contact if the building offices are shut down

Connect Tenants with Educational Resources

- [What Everyone Should Know About COVID-19](#)
- [How To Prevent Disease Spread](#)
- [What To Do If You Get Sick](#)

Resources located at www.cdc.gov

Limit The Spread of Viruses

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

- Wash hands before and after handling packages. Do so thoroughly for 20 seconds.
- Perform thorough cleanings of public spaces regularly. These spaces could include lobbies, common areas and bathrooms, high-traffic areas, frequently touched surfaces, fitness areas and equipment, hallways, doors, doorknobs, elevators, elevator buttons, stairwells, mailboxes, trash and pet-waste receptacles, refreshment areas, pool and recreation/game areas and equipment, indoor and outdoor furniture, and TVs.
- Provide soap, hand sanitizer, and wipes for residents to use in common areas.
- Provide supplies to residents when possible.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a list of [EPA-registered disinfectant products](#) that are qualified for use against this strain of coronavirus through the agency's Emerging Viral Pathogen program (located at www.naahq.org)

Limit The Spread of Viruses

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Latex gloves and masks should be required for all staff and partners delivering food, goods, and other resources.
- Encourage resident use of masks and gloves.

SAFE DISTANCING

- Use a drop box or electronic payment for rental payments.
- Limit maintenance to emergency repairs.
- Establish a response team trained in safe practices.
- Distribute goods while maintaining a 6-foot distance.
- Notify residents electronically or by phone to avoid physical visits to the office if possible.
- Post safe distancing requirements.
- Physically limit large group gatherings by:
 - Removing furniture or blocking common areas.
 - Closing common spaces (meeting and computer rooms, kitchens, playgrounds, etc.)
 - Consider temporarily closing common areas if this can be done safely and canceling social/community activities as needed.

DELIVERING TENANT SERVICES

- **LIMIT CONTACT** – Reduce potential exposure by using contactless, no knock, no signature delivery protocols. Maintain a 6-foot distance when face-to-face contact is necessary.
- **LIMIT VISITORS** – Consider limiting visitors to emergency, other medical or personal care providers and essential services, e.g., childcare, delivery of food, medication, other urgent goods. For other facilities, limit visitors to one-at-a time, if possible, and practice safe distancing at all times.
- **RESTRICT HOURS** – Limit entrance to facilities when possible. Employ teleworking and communicate remotely.
- **CREATE & IMPLEMENT A STRATEGY FOR DISTRIBUTING GOODS AND SERVICES**
Delivery of parcels, goods, and services should be conducted using secure drop-off locations, personal protective equipment (PPE), and trained staff or volunteers. Make a record of all deliveries for future reference.
- **PACKAGE ACCEPTANCE** — Consider referring deliveries directly to the package recipients address. Packages should be left outside the apartment door to avoid contact with any self-quarantining resident.
- **RESIDENT EVENTS** — To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, there should be a plan in place to address upcoming resident events. Because of recent federal and state/local recommendations limiting group gatherings, operators are encouraged to find alternative ways to engage residents through social media to keep the community connected.
- **SERVICE REQUESTS** — Service requests should be considered with regard for the safety of maintenance employees and residents alike. To limit exposure, consider deferring nonessential maintenance, resulting in only handling emergency or urgent issues. Other items that may cease include pre-renewal inspections and standard interior preventive maintenance. Maintenance associates should wear disposable latex exam type gloves when performing service in an occupied apartment home and thoroughly wash their hands after completing any service.
- **TENANT PROSPECTS** - In lieu of office traffic, management may consider moving all prospect tours to virtual tours using technology like Skype or FaceTime. Record videos of model or vacant apartments and post on YouTube. Then, share the link with prospects via email or text where authorized.

Be Aware of High-Risk Persons

Inform staff and residents of the serious health risks of COVID-19 and signs of possible infection. Protect the elderly and those with chronic health conditions.

What To Do If A Tenant Believes They Are Infected

If a tenant believes they might be infected with COVID-19, direct them to the CDC's website so that they can decide what to do next. As of writing this article, the CDC suggests the following:

- Check your symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath)
- Call your doctor if you have these symptoms or know you were exposed to a confirmed case
- Follow the doctor's instructions
- For mild symptoms, doctors may recommend you do self-care at home rather than come in for testing
- For at-risk groups and more severe symptoms, doctors will direct you on where and how to get tested
- Wear a mask when leaving the house and take precautions to avoid spreading the disease

It is the responsibility of the health care provider, not the patient, to report cases of disease to health departments and the CDC. A notice to the community may go out in the event of a resident or employee with a confirmed case and should be a business decision made with appropriate local counsel. Extreme caution is advised if choosing to make a disclosure because of privacy laws, and the person's identity, including name or unit number, should not be disclosed.

For an electronic version of these resources and direct links, visit togetherbrookings.com or email bedc@brookingsedc.com.

Stay Informed

- Check [CDC's website](https://www.cdc.gov) frequently.
- The situation is constantly evolving, so there isn't a single right path to follow that will hold true in the coming days, weeks, and months. In fact, it's impossible to know exactly what will happen as the spread continues. That is why it is so important to stay updated.
- For the most current information about the coronavirus in America, check [CDC's website dedicated to COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html). Be sure that your tenants are aware of this link as well, as it can be a useful guide to know what to do in times of crisis.
- [Chamber of Commerce - brookingschamber.org](https://www.brookingschamber.org)
- [City of Brookings - cityofbrookings.org](https://www.cityofbrookings.org)
- [Economic Development Corp - brookingsedc.com](https://www.brookingsedc.com)

Important Contacts

United Way - www.helpinecenter.org

SDSU - Email: notifyOffice.VP.StudentAffairs@sdstate.edu

Police and Emergency - call 911

Useful Links

[NAAHQ Best Practices](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing](#)

[CDC Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)

[Guidance for Multi-Family Property Owners](#)

[Guidance for Renters](#)

[HUD COVID-19 Page](#)

[Off-Campus Student Housing Guidance](#)

[COVID-19: What Landlords and Property Managers Can Do To Help](#)

[National Apartment Association](#)