

Guide

COVID-19 epidemic: Guide to appropriate infection control measures in businesses with one-to-one contact, such as hairdressers, body care, etc.

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Introduction

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), which causes COVID-19 respiratory infection, may continue for some time depending on the infection control measures that are implemented by society. Strict infection control measures have been introduced and we must be prepared for both these and other measures to continue in the future. The resumption of public life will take place over time and in a controlled manner.

Businesses providing hairdressing, skin care, massage and body care, tattoo, body piercing and other similar services were required to close under the COVID-19 regulations. The government has now decided that they will be permitted to reopen provided they follow certain requirements regarding infection control measures.

The Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) provides advice concerning how businesses can organise their work and optimise their infection control. The government regularly reviews its strategy and the measures being implemented, and changes can be introduced quickly.

Who is this guide intended for?

This guide is aimed at hairdressers, businesses that offer skin care, tattoo, body piercing and other services covered by the [Regulation on hygiene requirements for hairdressing, skin care, tattoo and piercing enterprises, etc.](#) The Regulation also applies to other activities that involve the penetration and destruction of skin, such as chormarking/branding and scarring. Conditions for the reopening of these businesses have been incorporated into Section 14a of the COVID-19 Regulation. The recommendations in this guide are in addition to these conditions and other requirements laid down in applicable laws and regulations covering the industry. See the conditions which must be met in order for businesses to reopen in the COVID-19 Regulation here: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2020-03-27-470>.

Purpose of the guide

This guide provides advice on how businesses can carry out appropriate infection control measures and prevent accidental COVID-19 exposure and spreading. The aim of the suggested infection control measures is to protect both customers and employees alike. Cases of COVID-19 may still occur even if the recommended infection control measures are implemented. The recommended measures will help to limit the spread of infection.

Responsibilities

Individual businesses are themselves responsible for assessing whether the treatments they provide meet basic requirements regarding infection control and can therefore be offered. Businesses must assess for themselves how the measures should be adapted to their particular circumstances and local conditions. In addition to the infection control measures described below, the requirements and procedures that normally apply to the business must also be followed. See the section on risk assessment at the end. If a customer or employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 after coming into contact with a business in some way, the district medical officer is responsible for subsequent follow-up and measures.

How is coronavirus transmitted?

COVID-19 is mainly transmitted via droplets from the respiratory tract of an infected person when they speak, cough or sneeze (droplet infection). These droplets fall to the ground quickly and do not remain airborne. The virus can also be transmitted by getting the virus on your hands. From there, it is transmitted to the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose or mouth (contact infection). For example, the virus may be present on the skin and hair of a customer, and can then pass to the hands of the treatment provider. People are most contagious while they are experiencing symptoms (coughing, sneezing, sniffing, etc.), but they can also be contagious immediately before the symptoms become apparent. Good cough hygiene and maintaining a safe distance from others are vital measures for

limiting the risk of droplet infection. Good hand hygiene, especially avoiding touching your face with dirty hands, is important in preventing contact infection. The same applies to frequent and thorough cleaning of surfaces that are touched regularly. It is also absolutely essential that all staff and customers with respiratory infection symptoms (sore throat, cold, cough, etc.) stay at home.

(https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/coronavirus/fakta/hvis_du_mistenker_at_du_er_syk_med_covid-19/?term=&h=1).

Information about COVID-19

More information on COVID-19 can be found on the Institute of Public Health's website: <https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/coronavirus/>

See also the information about COVID-19 and measures in working life from the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority:

<https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/tema/biologiske-faktorer/coronavirus-tiltak-i-arbeidslivet-mot-smitte/>

The Institute of Public Health offers an online course which provides information about the outbreak and the disease itself, recommended infection control measures and legal aspects relating to the reopening of these businesses. Links to the online course and associated test can be found

here: <https://www.fhi.no/om/kurs-og-konferanser---oversikt/nettundervisning-rad-for-gjenapning-av-virksomheter-som-driver-en-til-en-be/>

General recommendations:

- Businesses must ensure that all their staff are familiar with the infection control measures that apply to their business and that they are able to follow the measures.
- Put up information for customers and staff giving advice about how to avoid infection.
 - [Posters and informational materials](#)
- Everyone must assess their own state of health with regard to respiratory infection symptoms, and stay away from their workplace if they develop a fever or symptoms of respiratory infection. Employees in home quarantine or home isolation must not go to work. Employees must leave the workplace immediately if they develop a fever or symptoms of respiratory infection. Employees who become ill at work should not travel home on public transport.
 - [If you suspect you may be ill with coronavirus](#)
- Customers should not visit businesses if they have a fever or symptoms of respiratory infection, or if they are in home quarantine or home isolation. Information about this should be provided by the business when customers book an appointment and when customers are reminded about their appointment (e.g. by text message), so that customers can cancel their appointment if become ill or go into quarantine.
- If no washing facilities are available on their premises, businesses should ask customers to come with clean hair, skin and beard.
- Wherever possible, payment should be made using contactless digital payment solutions. Alternatively, credit cards should be used. Cash must only be used if absolutely necessary.
- Food and beverages, including tea and coffee, should not be included as a service for customers. It may be appropriate to provide sealed bottles of water, soft drinks, etc. in special situations where customers need to take in liquids.

- Businesses must keep a record of the customers who have received services over the past two weeks for use in the event of infection tracing. They must also keep a record of where their customers have received services and which employees provided services to each customer. Businesses must retain this information for two weeks after each service is provided. Businesses must inform their customers about this.
- Businesses should consider reducing or temporarily withdrawing treatment options involving close face-to-face contact, which therefore involve increased infection risk.
- If a business has to reduce the number of staff working at the same time due to social distancing measures, the same people should work in a team or on the same shift wherever possible. This will help to ensure that only people who work together have to go into quarantine if a customer or colleague becomes ill.
- Consider reducing the use of core hours, so that employees arrive at work at different times and avoid the rush hour. Employees should restrict the use of public transport to and from the workplace.

Hand and cough hygiene

- Good hand hygiene with frequent and thorough hand-washing is important. Hand-washing with lukewarm water and liquid soap causes dirt, bacteria and viruses to become detached from the skin during washing and to be rinsed off with the water.
- If no facilities for hand-washing are available, alcohol-based sanitisers are a good alternative. Although the virus is sensitive to alcohol, it is important to note that alcohol-based sanitisers are ineffective on wet or visibly dirty hands. Hand-washing should then be carried out.
- Hand hygiene should be carried out before and between each contact with customers. Employees must wash their hands frequently and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds. They should then wipe their hands with a disposable paper towel.
- Customers should be offered hand-washing/hand disinfection when they arrive at the premises and after the end of the treatment session. See more about hand hygiene: <https://www.fhi.no/nettpub/coronavirus/fakta/renhold-og-hygiene/?term=&h=1>
- Avoid coughing or sneezing directly at other people, and cover your mouth and nose with paper, which you then discard. If no paper is available, cough or sneeze into your elbow. Carry out hand hygiene immediately after coughing or sneezing.
- It is recommended that employees avoid wearing rings, other hand jewellery and wristwatches wherever possible. Nails should also be kept short.

Social distancing measures

- Employees must remain at least one metre apart at all times, except in the case of apprentices under guidance. Maintain a distance from colleagues during work, meetings and breaks.
- If there are several customers on the premises at the same time, you must ensure that they remain at least one metre apart (shoulder to shoulder) at all times. This applies to proximity over time, not just when people pass each other. The requirement applies both in waiting rooms and in the premises where the service is provided. Distances could for example be marked using tape on the floor. Consider rearranging the furniture in the premises to enable people to keep a safe distance apart.

- Make sure that as few customers as possible are on the premises or in the waiting area at the same time. Businesses should consider introducing a pause between each customer, so that no one has to use the waiting room. Customers should be asked not to turn up before the agreed time and not to bring anyone with them.
- Limit the length of time that several employees are in shared dining rooms at the same time.
- If it is difficult to ensure that safe distances are maintained between people in the premises during normal operation, businesses should consider reorganising their work so that when appointments are booked, enough time is scheduled between each customer, and so that employees work at different times or other measures are introduced.
- Avoid shaking hands and other unnecessary physical contact, especially close face-to-face contact.
- Businesses could consider using a fixed or flexible partition between working areas. The partition should cover an area from the chair/treatment bench up to a height of two metres, as well as the entire width of the area where the customer and employee sit or stand during the treatment.
- In situations where face-to-face contact within one metre is essential (e.g. nail design), a physical barrier can be placed between the employee and the customer, such as plexiglass, where possible.

Cleaning recommendations

- It is recommended that premises be thoroughly cleaned and aired daily. Ordinary cleaning methods and products may be used. Toilets and washbasins must be cleaned at least daily. Disposable paper towels and soap must be available. Waste baskets must be emptied regularly. Procedures must be established to document when cleaning was last carried out.
- Local cleaning plans should be reviewed in terms of organisation, responsibilities and resource requirements, and whether any adaptations are needed.
- Door handles, stair banisters, card readers, cash registers and other objects or contact surfaces which are touched often must be cleaned frequently, at least several times a day. Ethanol-based disinfectants can be used on otherwise clean surfaces, but it should be noted that this will not be sufficient in the case of visibly dirty surfaces. Visibly dirty surfaces must therefore be cleaned before any disinfectants are used as well.
 - [Cleaning and disinfection in connection with COVID-19 for sectors outside the health service](#)
- Equipment which is used (scissors, combs/brushes, etc.), armrests, treatment benches, chairs/washbasins for hair washing, etc. must be cleaned between each customer.
- Towels and other textiles that come in contact with customers must be replaced between each customer and washed at the highest temperature the textiles are able to withstand. Soiled textiles must be handled and stored so that they cannot contaminate skin, mucous membranes, textiles and other equipment.
- Pay extra attention to hygiene around kitchenettes/dining rooms. Hand hygiene must be carried out before employees use kitchen/dining rooms.
- Magazines, newspapers, etc. must not be available in waiting areas or anywhere else in the premises.

Recommendations regarding personal protective equipment

- It is not recommended that employees wear a facemask or gloves except in situations where they would normally use such protective equipment.
- If a business does use facemasks and gloves, the manager should ensure that the staff are given training in their correct use.
- The Institute of Public Health does not currently recommend the use of facemasks by healthy people in the general population. This is because there is no proven benefit to wearing facemasks. It can give a false sense of security and cause people not to be as thorough with the other infection prevention measures. There is currently also a shortage of facemasks. It must first be ensured that the health service has the personal protective equipment it needs. Any changes to this recommendation will be announced.
- However, if you decide to wear a non-medical facemask or other mask covering the mouth and nose, it is important to remember the following:
 - Do not purchase medical facemasks which are needed by the health service (facemask class II or IIR, or respirator)
 - Wearing a facemask, etc. does not replace the need to follow the recommendations concerning hand and cough hygiene, staying at home in the event of respiratory symptoms and maintaining a safe distance between people.
 - In order for facemasks to reduce the risk of infection for the wearer, it must sit tightly around the mouth and nose.
 - Facemasks have a limited effect and life. The effect is reduced when the facemask becomes moist. Masks only have any effect against larger particles (such as droplets) and must be replaced at regular intervals.
 - Facemasks are uncomfortable to wear, and people wearing a facemask often tend to touch their mask and face in general. If you have come into contact with dirty surfaces, it is easy to touch your eyes and mouth, thereby increasing the risk of infection. You should therefore avoid touching your mask with your hands while you are wearing it until you have washed or disinfected your hands.
 - Dispose of used disposable facemasks via normal household refuse and wash your hands thoroughly before putting on a facemask and again immediately after removing it. When wearing facemasks which are intended for reuse, the appropriate procedures for washing them must be followed.
- Infection transmission via the hands with gloves on occurs in the same way as with hands without gloves. The virus does not infect through the skin, but via the respiratory tract through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose and mouth. In the same way as without gloves, people who are wearing gloves will act as an intermediary for transferring infection from one object to another, as well as to their own face when they touch it. Experience shows that staff who are wearing gloves feel protected and therefore practise hand hygiene less often than they would if they were not wearing gloves. As a result, they are more likely to contribute to indirect infection transmission than if they were not wearing gloves. We therefore recommend that clean disposable gloves are only worn by staff in the hairdressing and wellness sector when absolutely necessary, primarily in situations where they would otherwise be wearing gloves anyway. When wearing gloves, it is very important to carry out hand hygiene when removing the gloves. Disposable gloves must only be worn once and disposed of after use.

- Employees should wear clean clothing when they are at work. Businesses which are able to provide workwear should do so.

Employees who may be in risk groups

Information that is available about the development of the outbreak so far indicates that it is elderly people (over 65 years of age) who are at particular risk of suffering serious illness if they become infected with COVID-19, especially if they also have an underlying chronic illness. Other adults with an underlying illness (cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure and diabetes) may have a higher risk of becoming seriously ill. It is also possible that other serious chronic illnesses and the taking of medications which weaken the immune system may lead to higher risk as well. Employees in these groups should not work closely with customers or guide apprentices, and should be given the opportunity to work from home or reassigned to other duties where possible.

- [Advice for risk groups](#)

Employers must carry out a risk assessment of the working environment

Employers must map and carry out a risk assessment of all hazards and problems that may arise as a result of coronavirus. Employers must draw up a plan and implement measures to prevent the spread of infection within the business. Occupational health services may be contacted if assistance is needed to assess risks and draw up plans and associated measures.

Examples of risk factors associated with the coronavirus:

- Employees in risk groups (see the overview published by the Institute of Public Health)
- Close contact with colleagues (less than one metre)
- Lack of access to hand washing facilities with soap or hand sanitiser
- Failure to clean equipment before and after use on a customer
- Lack of training for employees

Various tools are available as an aid to carrying out risk assessments. The Labour Inspection Authority's website has a thematic page on risk assessment, which contains guidance and a suggested risk assessment form: <https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/hms/risikovurdering/>

You will find the working environment guide training tool here (in Norwegian). This is an e-learning tool which provides a simple introduction to all aspects of work relating to the working environment. The working environment guide has a separate section on how to carry out risk assessments: <https://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/hms/arbeidsmiljoguiden/kapitteloversikt/del-2/introduksjon-til-risikovurdering/>

There is also an industry-specific tool for risk assessments of the working environment for hairdressers - "Risk help" (in Norwegian). This is based on the key risk factors faced by hairdressing enterprises. Support is available concerning how enterprises can map occurrences with suggestions for appropriate measures. This tool covers more risk factors than those linked to the coronavirus. However, businesses can add risk factors and measures which are not covered by the tool:

<https://risikohjelpen.arbeidstilsynet.no/bransje/fris%C3%B8r>