

COVID-19:
MASTER CIRCULAR ON SOCIAL DISTANCING

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A. Background

Social Distancing is a proven public health tool to slow down the spread of highly contagious disease like COVID-19. In simple language, people should not touch each other and stay far enough from each other so that virus cannot spread from person to person.

World Health Organization has declared COVID-19 as a Pandemic, which is caused by Novel Corona Virus. This is a highly contagious organism and can infect a healthy person coming in direct contact or within one-meter distance of an infected person through droplet infection.

Usually a person develops symptoms of COVID-19 like fever and cough/ respiratory difficulties between 2-14 days of infection/ virus entry in human body. An infected person can pass the infection to the healthy person even before the appearance of symptoms of COVID-19 disease.

So, when we practice social distancing, we are preventing the spread of virus from one to other and hence transmission chain is broken. This would help in slowing down the spread of the disease and finally containing it.

In pursuance of the said order of the NDMA, Government of India, the State Government do hereby order lockdown in the entire State of Odisha until midnight of 14th April, 2020 with a view to ensure strict social distancing and isolation to contain the spread of COVID-19.

B. Working Case Definition of COVID-19 case

- a. **Suspect case:** A patient with fever and cough or with breathing difficulties with travel history to/ from the country/area or territory reporting local transmission of COVID-19 disease.
- b. **Probable case:** A suspect case for whom testing for COVID-19 is inconclusive.
- c. **Confirmed case:** A person with laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms

C. General Measures for containment to be practised by everyone

- a. **HANDS:** don't shake, don't touch surfaces/ wash frequently with soap and water
- b. **LEGS:** Keep at least 3 feet away from others
- c. **FACE:** Don't touch it
- d. **COUGH/ SNEEZE:** Cover it with your elbow/ handkerchief
- e. **FEVER with COUGH** with travel history: Report it to local authority/ 104 health help line
- f. **FLOOR and SURFACES:** Clean it/ Mop it regularly
- g. **FOR ANY FURTHER INFORMATION:** Contact 24x7 health helpline 104
- h. **Preferably advised to stay at home/ avoid unnecessary outside visits**

D. DO's and DONT's at various level

Level of Intervention		DO's	DON'T's
1	Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stay home - Greet from distance more than 1m - Self-reporting if you have returned from abroad - Use your elbow fold while coughing/ sneezing - Practice frequent hand washing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not handshake or hug or touch body of another person - Avoid congregations as you never know that there may be infected person - Do not spread rumours and misinformation - Do not visit hospital without prior information if you are having fever and cough (if you have contact of COVID-19 case/ returned from abroad)
2	Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Counsel all the family members to avoid congregations and unnecessary outings - If any family member returned from abroad keep him at home, report immediately if he/she develops any symptoms and keep him/ her in home quarantine - Keep the list of all the contact of the person returned from abroad and inform - Take care of your elderly members and members with chronic infections (Diabetes/ Heart disease/ Asthma) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't organize family get together/ parties, etc. - Do not hide the information from the authorities/ health personnel - Maintain distance of more than 1 meter from family members suffering from fever and cough/ cold - Do not directly touch the clothes/ articles used by person suffering - Do not mis-inform/ spread rumour, etc. - -
3	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage practice of Social Distancing - Report any person returning from other countries - Display IEC materials related to social distancing, handwashing and cough etiquettes at common places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
4	Workplace (For Essential Services only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use online conferencing and phones for communication even within same building - Encourage work from home wherever possible - Bring your lunch and eat at your desk - Display and follow the workplace advisory with true spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid in-person/ face-to-face meetings, staff gatherings - Do not congregate in work rooms, pantries and other areas where people socialise - Prevent any staff having fever/ cough visiting office

E. Social Distancing Measures in General

1. Hospital to follow the necessary protocols related to COVID-19 management as prescribed and restrict the visit of children/ friends/ family members visiting the patient in hospitals
2. Special protective measures for delivery persons from courier company during online delivery should be maintained
3. In commercial transactions the distance should be maintained more than one meter
4. Local authorities should engage dialogue with the Bazar Committee/ Byapari Associations to follow DO's and DON'T's. They should conduct communication activities like display of poster and miking, etc. for local vendors/ small scale business persons. They should limit the hour or working.
5. Lifts and railings in buildings should be regularly mopped. This needs to be ensured through the society of the apartments/ similar committees.
6. Closure of educational establishments (schools, colleges, universities), gym, museum, cultural and social centres, swimming pools and theatres, etc
7. Suspension of hearing of Public grievances in the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell as well as the Joint Hearing of Public Grievance Cells in the Districts

F. Social Distancing Measures by Individual Establishments/ Institutions (For Essential Services only)

1. **Workplace Advisory:** Employers should start doing these things now, even if COVID-19 has not arrived in the communities
 - Display posters promoting hand-washing – ask your local public health authority for these or look on www.nrhmorissa.gov.in
 - Display posters promoting respiratory hygiene/ cough etiquettes. Combine this with other communication measures such as offering guidance from occupational health and safety officers, briefing at meetings and information on the intranet etc.
 - Ensure that staff, contractors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water
 - Advise employees to stay at home if they developed any flu like symptoms
 - Relocation of staff sitting arrangements to ensure more than one-meter inter-personal distance
 - Brief your employees, contractors and customers that if COVID-19 starts spreading in your community anyone with even a mild cough or low-grade fever (37.3 C or more) needs to stay at home.
2. **Social Distancing by Government and Private Health Facility:** All health facilities, private clinics and individual practitioners of all systems of medicines must follow below advisories –
 - Display of advisories for public in the premises of health facility
 - Conduct training and orientation of health staffs and other on COVID-19
 - Should establish a COVID-19 Corner which should be near the registration counter/ triage station and away from the main OPD/IPD complex. This would help for containment of spread of the cases and accessible to the common public for resolution of their queries.

- Have a triage station at the healthcare facility entrance, prior to waiting area to screen patients and register, if travelled from abroad in last 14 days OR any of the signs and symptoms
- Ensure having hand wash facility with soap and running water/ alcohol based (>70% alcohol) hand rub for the use of healthcare workers, patients and visitors
- Isolate a suspected case promptly and inform the Control Room (104), rather than just sending to a government facility
- Staff should use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while screening patients at the triage center
- Provide medical mask to all patients presenting flu-like symptoms
- Perform regular environment cleaning and disinfection with 1% hypo-chlorite solution for mopping the floors and 0.5% for cleaning the furniture surfaces
- Maintain good ventilation within OPDs/ IPDs and Emergency care wards
- Hospital to follow the necessary protocols related to COVID-19 management as prescribed and restrict the visit of children/ friends/ family members visiting the patient in hospitals
- Communicate the local health authorities/ state health helpline number 104
- **Seeking Hospital Care:** Patients requiring emergency care may visit the hospitals. Other non-essential, non-urgent patients with mild illness which require only outpatient care or follow up care, elective cases including dental procedures should not visit the Hospitals for the time being, to prevent crowding in the hospitals. This applies to both Government and Private health facilities

3. Social distancing for Banks, Post office and Commercial Establishments (Essential Services only)

- Put up COVID-19 awareness posters and banners in bank branches and ATMs
- Keep enough hand sanitizer/hand wash soaps in the toilets.
- Advise the staff members to clean hands using hand sanitizer/ hand wash soaps at regular intervals.
- Keep hand sanitizer in the ATMs and advise customers to use it after operating ATM.
- Avoid crowding in the branches. Open more counters. Allow customers inside the branch in batches.
- Allow customers inside ATMs one by one only. Mopping and cleaning of ATM machines and premises should be done on regularly
- Send SMS to customers advising not to visit branches/ ATMs except in urgency and to use mobile banking and online services.
- Notify to the customers dedicated phone numbers for any transaction queries instead of visiting the branches.

4. Social Distancing at Supermarket and Grocery stores

- No closure of Supermarket or Groceries shops. These will be operational for food, groceries and essential items.
- Limit only 20-30 persons in store. Ensure that they are spread apart in different section. Window shoppers to be discouraged.
- Ensure every person hand are washed with alcohol-based sanitizer or hand washing facility before entering and leaving the shop by keeping enough hand sanitizers.
- Ensure that the staffs are not suffering from fever/ cough and cold.
- Frequently mop the floor and shelves with bleach.
- The messages on personal hygiene and social distancing to be displayed prominently

- All these establishments will be allowed to remain open with the above-mentioned conditions

5. Village Hat and Local urban Hats (for providing Essential Commodities only)

- The congregation should be reduced to minimum. However, the essential supplies through the hats should be in an orderly manner.
- Wide IEC activity should be ensured in local language to bring awareness amongst people going to village hats.

6. Government Offices and Staffs

- All employees should look out for symptoms of Novel Corona Virus and if feeling unwell should leave the workplace immediately after informing the superior officer. They should thereafter avail leave for home quarantine for a period of 14 days. Any leave, necessary for quarantine purpose in excess of this period shall be treated as ordinary leave, wherever admissible and may be considered as per provisions under Rule-5, Appendix-6 of Odisha Service Code.
- Furthermore, Government employees who are residing with a family member who has returned from a foreign visit, on or after 4th March 2020 should also avail leave for self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.
- All Government offices including district collectorate must have restricted entries and all non-essential/ non urgent entries must be limited.
- Entrance gate of all government offices must be manned for restriction of entries. Contact details of every individual entering the premises must be recorded.
- Hand wash practices should be practised before entry
- The same should be practised in all private offices/ other organizations as well
- No meetings shall be held in the Government offices other than those related to COVID-19 or regarding maintenance of basic services. However, in such meetings 2-meter distance will be strictly followed. Wherever possible video conferencing shall be held for interaction.
- Cabinet and the Empowered Group of Ministers' Meetings shall be held through video conferencing.
- All official functions including commemorations and garlanding of statues are suspended until further orders.

8. Jail Inmates and Staffs

- **Orientation and awareness among the Jail inmates and staffs**
 - i. IEC materials displaying personal hygiene and hand washing steps at prominent places and advocacy for the implementation is essential.
 - ii. Availability of hand washing facilities like running water and soap/ liquid hand wash and to be ensured for all inmates especially at the gates.
 - iii. All Jail premises, all doors, gates, railings, door handles and frequently touchable places should be disinfected with 1% sodium hypochlorite solution regularly.
 - iv. Vehicles for transporting staff and inmates to be cleaned by wet mopping of 1% sodium hypochlorite regularly.
 - v. All inmates/ staff should be oriented on hand hygiene/ social distancing and cough etiquette on COVID -19.
 - vi. Any Jail staff having fever and cough or any flu like symptoms should not be allowed at workplace. They should restrict themselves at their home and may work from home if possible

- **Handing Under Trial Prisoners (UTP) / New Prisoners**
 - i. Ensure all new / under trail prisoners must be screened before the individual enters the premises of the Jail. In case any person having cough and breathing difficulty should not be allowed into the premises until isolation facility provisioned for him and permitted by the concern Jail authority.
 - ii. Honourable high court will be requested to allow video conferencing facility for producing the UTPs before the designated court wherever and whenever it is possible.

- **Quarantine/ Isolation of suspected case (Fever and Cough) among the Jail inmates**
 - i. Jail superintendent should identify a designated, well ventilated place (preferably single room with toilet facility) as isolation room for isolation of suspected COVID -19 cases
 - ii. Any inmate having fever and cough should be quarantined (confined) preferably in single room with toilet facility.
 - iii. Daily health status needs to be tracked. If required referral system to be activated.

- **Ensuring Social distancing in the premises of the Jail**
 - i. Any activity which would lead to congregation (>25 persons) should be restricted. Social distance of more than one meter to be maintained in such activities.
 - ii. The Jail authority should ensure provision of e - Mulakat / video call facilities for the visitors who want to meet any of the Jail inmates.
 - iii. All visitors and staffs to ensure social distancing measures like maintaining distance of more than one-meter, respiratory etiquettes, hand hygiene and hand washing. Physical contacts with inmates to be avoided.
 - iv. All non-essential activities by visitors/ groups/ NGO s should be restricted within the Jail premises.

9. Use of Water sources like Ponds and Drains

- Bathing, cleaning and various other purposes in common water reservoirs like Ponds are to be avoided as far as possible in view of general hygiene and COVID-19. They should be advised through functionaries of Panchayati Raj and Drinking water department and Gram Panchayats for not using this polluted water.
- Instead of using such common water from ponds, they should use hand pumps, tube wells and pipe water supply. Individuals having symptoms of Fever and cough or flu like illness should not come in contact with hand pumps and should take help from others.

10. Delivery of articles/ groceries/ food packets etc.

- Delivery personnel of groceries and other essential commodities should ensure all personal hygiene, cough etiquette and social distancing measures to avoid contamination of food material, packets or any such articles.
- The delivery person should not enter the premises/ building/ apartment/ hostel/ offices, etc. Before deliver the delivery personnel must properly hand wash and after receiving the package the receiver also must do hand wash as per protocol
- Restricted entries of food deliveries in the residential premises or in hostel. Food delivery services may be availed with caution

- Special protective measures for delivery person working in food delivery services
11. **Health facilities/ health provision centres/ traditional healers/ pathology labs, etc.**
- These are high risk areas of congregation and as the congregation involves patients/ health seekers where the Corona transmission is high.
 - The concerned authorities must take all measures of social distancing and well as personal hygiene protocol in and around their premises
 - Shops near hospital except medicine store should stay closed
12. **E-Commerce and Online delivery of groceries/ any products:** Delivery of groceries / other commodities/ food delivery services may be availed with caution. Ensure that the delivery personnel should not enter the premises/ building/ apartment/ hostel/offices, etc.
13. **Funeral Rites:** Large congregations should be avoided. Ideally it should be limited to 7 persons.

G. Enforcement of Social Distancing by the Authorities concerned

- Provisions of Section 144, CrPC shall not be invoked either by the District Magistrates and Police in Commissionerate area to enforce Social distancing rather it should be implemented through IEC and awareness build up and media campaign.
- Strict hand washing in AHAR Kendra, OMFED booths, etc.
- The Public Delivery System (PDS), should ensure the supply of ration to the beneficiary like elderly, high risk and vulnerable people at the doorsteps and dispensation of ration through POS (Point of Sale) machines should be done with availability of sanitizer and hand hygiene practice. The POS machine should be regularly cleaned with disinfectant
- Ensure availability hand sanitizers at banks, ATMs and post office. Regular mopping and sanitization should be done on regular basis
- Each District to appoint a vertical with Nodal officer for enforcing social distancing within the district. He/she should coordinate with State Social Distancing committee at the State, chaired by APC-cum- Additional Chief Secretary
- All Secretaries of the Departments and DG Police are being advised that if there are any issues pertaining to “Social Distancing” related to their Department, they should send their recommendation to APC-cum-ACS, Head, Social Distancing Committee

H. References:

1. <https://health.odisha.gov.in/pdf/Guideline-Social-Distancing17032020.pdf>
2. <https://health.odisha.gov.in/pdf/Additional-Guidelines-Social-Distancing.pdf>
3. <https://health.odisha.gov.in/pdf/Notification-GA-20032020Second.pdf>