CARIBBEAN SHELTER GUIDE
COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

Preparatory measures to be taken in Emergency Shelters during hurricane season inclusive of Basic Infection Control, Hygiene, Space Management and COVID-19 Precautions

Interim guidance for Caribbean countries in light of COVID-19
Acknowledgement of contributors to this document

We would like to acknowledge and thank those who have contributed to the development of this technical document:

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Hurricane season in the Caribbean

Most shelters in the Caribbean are community centres, schools or churches that are limited in size. The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) distancing requirements subsequently reduced the number of persons a shelter can accommodate during the hurricane season. This document reinforces some measures to follow per international Emergency Shelter protocols factoring in conditions for spacing between beds/cots, recreation areas and ventilation according to The Sphere Handbook, FEMA and Australian Red Cross. Physical distancing and hygienic standards were modified highlighting that ideal requirements are not always feasible therefore we may choose realistic recommendations for practical purposes and suspected cases of COVID-19.

Preferred Sheltering Practices

1. **Shelter and Space Management**
   - Immediate sheltering
   - Temporary sheltering
   - Sleeping/ living arrangements
   - Recreation/ common area
   - Ventilation
   - Room Temperature

2. **Infection Control and Prevention**
   - Screening area
   - Isolation of ill persons
   - Cleaning intervals of designated areas
   - Disinfection of areas
   - Standard Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

3. **Shelter Hygiene Standards**
   - Bathrooms
   - Showers
   - Handwashing Stations
   - Kitchen
   - Waste Disposal

4. **COVID-19 Precautions**
   - Referral to closest testing center
   - Social distancing
   - Early detection of suspected cases-
     Temperature Checks
   - Waste Disposal
## Shelter and Space Management

### Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Immediate Sheltering** - person is staying up to 18 hours | A (4.5 ft) physical distance from other persons  
This rule does not apply to members of the same family, e.g. a mother with children |
| **Temporary sheltering** - staying longer than 18 hours | A (6ft) physical distance from other persons  
Wheelchair-bound individual approximately (7ft) physical distance from other persons  
This rule does not apply to members of the same family, e.g. a mother with children |
| **Patient with respiratory illness** (Suspected COVID-19 patient, not yet tested) | Individual showing signs of COVID-19 or respiratory illness and has not been tested must observe a social distance of (6ft) or as close to 40 sq. ft. as possible until placed in a temporary isolation room/area |
| **Recreation/Commons area** | As much as feasible, observe a (4.5 ft) physical distance per person or family  
If the recreation area is indoors, create a shift system to limit the number of persons in the room adhering to the stipulated physical distance |
| **Ventilation* (indoor air quality)** | Minimum of 15 cubic feet of air exchange per minute per person required  
or 20-30 cubic meters of airflow/exchange per person per hour |
| **Temperature inside shelter** | Between 20-25 °C if AC units are available |
**Sleeping arrangements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping Arrangements</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single cot</strong>: Distance of 2-2.5 ft between head and sides of the cot and 1.5 to 2 ft between aisles.</td>
<td>Arrange cots/beds in alternating ‘head-to-toe’ arrangement to reduce transmission of any communicable diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bunk cot</strong>: Same distance between head and sides of the cot with 65 to 95 cm vertical spacing between cots and 2 to 3 ft between aisles</td>
<td>Allot additional space between cots and aisle for wheelchair-bound persons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**: Due to the physical distancing and sleeping arrangements, some countries may have to allocate additional shelter approved buildings to house additional people.

**Table 1: Ventilation**

1. Natural ventilation is the best method of circulating fresh air and potentially removing COVID-19 virus.
2. Split AC does not refresh air; therefore, it is suggested that persons with or showing signs of respiratory illness should be placed in a room with natural ventilation.
3. Central AC should have an open-air refreshing vent to allow fresh air to be mixed with the re-circulated air.
4. Natural ventilation can be achieved by leaving windows/doors open to harness natural cross ventilation or use fans with windows/doors open if the shelter does not have access to natural cross breezes.
# Infection control and prevention

## Table 2:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Check-in/ Screening area</td>
<td>Refer to Appendix A ‘Daily epidemiologic surveillance form’</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Note: contact tracing of an individual showing signs of respiratory illness should be conducted at this stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation of ill persons</td>
<td>Separate ill individuals in a location previously identified until transfer to the nearest hospital/polyclinic COVID-19 testing centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning intervals of designated areas</td>
<td>Clean heavy traffic areas and surfaces every 6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disinfection of areas</td>
<td>Surface disinfection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation areas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sleeping/Living area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Doorknobs and handles</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refer to Appendix B</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPE for shelter use</td>
<td>A Standard PPE kit should contain apron, gowns, gloves, surgical masks, safety glasses, biosafety bags. Refer to Appendix D ‘PPE Sequence’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note- Upon entry to the shelter please adhere to the appropriate Government entity on the use of face mask in public spaces.

## Table 2: Isolation

1. Surface disinfection- refer to Appendix B for a breakdown of the chemical cleaning solution.
2. Syndromic surveillance- sheltered individual assessment should occur at admission to the shelter, daily if suspected of COVID-19 symptoms. Shelter staff should be assessed every 24 hours.
3. A sheltered person in contact with a person showing signs of respiratory illness should be isolated, follow protocol in Table 4.
4. If the shelter does not have adequate space for a temporary isolation room, create makeshift walls (tarp, plastic, whatever can make a non-permeable barrier) that are floor to ceiling or as close as possible to the ceiling.
5. Observe the distance recommended in Table 1 for individuals suspected to have a respiratory illness (Suspected COVID-19 patient) in a predetermined temporary isolation room/area.
6. Limit the amount of staff and staff crossover working in the isolation area. Holding areas for persons with COVID-19 should only be entered by medical staff with fully protected PPE (gowns, gloves, mask, goggles) Refer to Appendix D ‘PPE Sequence’.
7. Perform hand hygiene before entering and exiting the isolation area.
8. Posters of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 should be placed strategically throughout the shelter.
9. Patients should be referred out of the temporary isolation room to the nearest hospital/polyclinic COVID-19 testing centre as soon as possible.

Shelter Hygiene standards

Table 3:

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td>1 toilet per 20 females 1 toilet per 40 men 1 urinal per 40 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showers</td>
<td>1 per 30 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwashing station</td>
<td>Handwashing stations must be in key areas e.g. common area/recreation, entrance of facility, bathrooms, dining area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Must have soap and paper towel per 1/30 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen/ Dining area</td>
<td>Kitchen should be cleaned on 3-hour intervals during use and dining area per shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Refer to Table 5 for cleaning solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As much as feasibly possible, dining should be done in shifts to maintain a physical distance of (4.5 ft) from others, per person or family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste disposal</td>
<td>1 (48 or 64-gallon) garbage bin per 30 people a day</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garbage bags per family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall-mounted hand sanitizers</td>
<td>Place dispensers of alcohol-based sanitizer in visible places E.g. entrance of facility, common area/recreation, sleeping area, isolation area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection (Refer to Appendix B)

1. There should be designated bathrooms and showers for male, female and handicapped/disabled persons. If possible, designate a separate bathroom for COVID-19 persons who tested positive.
2. Wear a disposable mask, goggles, fluid-resistant apron, shoe covers and disposable gloves (PPE) while cleaning toilets and showers. Refer to Appendix D ‘PPE Sequence’
3. The toilet (when possible) should be flushed with the lid down to avoid drip splashes and spray clouds.
4. The cleaning of waste containers such as trash cans should be strengthened and disinfection of trash cans should be done after garbage collection, cleaning with water and soap and then spraying or wiping with 0.5% chlorine-based disinfectant.
5. Common and high-touch surfaces (such as door handles, light switches, handrails, tabletops, chairs, bed/cot frames) should be cleaned at least twice daily with 70% alcohol solution.
6. Floors should be cleaned daily or more frequently if a spill occurs with 0.1% chlorine solution. Air dry for 10 minutes.
7. Bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day (0.1% chlorine solution). Regular household soap or detergent should be used for cleaning first and then, after rinsing, regular household disinfectant containing 0.5% sodium hypochlorite, leave for 10 minutes then rinse.
8. Any form of bedding (sleeping bags, blanket, sheet, pillows) should not be shaken out within the shelter, but outside downwind of the shelter and away from people. Bed linen should be washed twice weekly, with chlorine solution added to the detergent.
## COVID-19 Precautions

### Table 4:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referral to closest testing centre and quarantine facility</td>
<td>The shelter manager should inform relevant Infection Control Specialist of the suspected individual status and contact tracing information to the receiving facility. The shelter should have a coordinated process that enables the communication between the shelter and the receiving facility to reduce infection transmission in the shelter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social distancing</td>
<td>Observe the distance mentioned in Table 1. To reduce contact of respiratory droplets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early detection/suspected cases</td>
<td>Refer to Appendix A ‘Daily epidemiologic surveillance form’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical waste disposal</td>
<td>Use a puncture-resistant container for needles and contaminated sharps.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Suspected cases of COVID-19

1. Regularly and frequently clean the surfaces touched in the entire care area of the family member with symptoms.
2. Use soap or household detergent to clean surfaces first then after rinsing use a disinfectant solution with 0.1% concentration or a 70% alcohol solution.
3. Bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected at least once a day (0.1% chlorine solution). Regular household soap or detergent should be used for cleaning first and then, after rinsing, regular household disinfectant containing 0.5% sodium hypochlorite, leave for 10 minutes then rinse.
4. The kitchen (floors, counters, equipment and appliances) and dining area should be cleaned and sanitised on 3-hour intervals and as needed (0.1% chlorine solution). Regular household soap should be used for cleaning first and then, after rinsing, regular household disinfectant containing 0.5% sodium hypochlorite, leave for 10 minutes then rinse.
5. Wear disposable mask, goggles, fluid-resistant apron, and disposable gloves (PPE) while cleaning contaminated areas. Appendix D ‘PPE Sequence’
6. Wear disposable mask, goggles, fluid-resistant apron, and disposable gloves (PPE) while handling sick person until transfer to testing or quarantine facility.

7. Wash hands with soap and water for 40 seconds or use a 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer after removing PPE.

8. The toilet (when possible) should be flushed with the lid down to avoid drip splashes and spray clouds.

9. Be sure to dispose of nose, mouth, eye tissues in designated biohazard waste bag.
APPENDIX A

Daily epidemiologic surveillance form (symptomatic) (*a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of hospital, health care facility, shelter:</th>
<th>Location (town/district)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person completing form:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Health status/symptoms**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Signs, symptoms, or conditions</th>
<th>Age group</th>
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<th>Total</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>Fever and cough</td>
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<td>Fever and urticaria (skin rash)</td>
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<td>Fever and petechiae (hemorrhagic spots on skin)</td>
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<td>Diarrhea</td>
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<td>Jaundice</td>
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<td>Other conditions (name them)</td>
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<td>Injured (*)b</td>
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<td>Deaths (*)b</td>
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<td>Patients with disabilities (*)b</td>
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<td>Patients with chronic illness (*)b</td>
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<td>Other important health information (*)c</td>
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(*a) In shelters, this form is designed for use by non-health personnel with some medical knowledge. The aim is to gather information on a daily basis from shelters and to inform and alert medical personnel responsible for the area about health conditions in the disaster-affected population, and to assist in decision making.

(*b) Write the condition and name of person affected.

(*c) Record only new cases occurring for the day.
APPENDIX B

Environmental cleaning and disinfection of the shelter is a high priority and should be frequently conducted.

Table 5: How to dilute chlorine stock solution (approximate volumes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stock solution of (unscented) household bleach (5.25% say 5%) Sodium hypochlorite Commercially Available</th>
<th>250 mg/L</th>
<th>500 mg/L</th>
<th>1,000 mg/L</th>
<th>2,000 mg/L</th>
<th>5,000 mg/L</th>
<th>10,000 mg/L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0.025%</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cap of bleach bottle is 10 ml</td>
<td>teaspoon</td>
<td>1 cap</td>
<td>2 caps</td>
<td>4 caps</td>
<td>4 oz</td>
<td>9 oz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: How to make a 0.05% chlorine solution

1. Use ordinary unscented household bleach of 5.25%. The cap of a one-gallon bottle is 10 ml.
2. Add 10 ml (1 cap) of bleach in a litre of water or 100 ml (10 caps; 2/5 of cup) in a 10-litre bucket.
APPENDIX C

Active Monitoring Form for Asymptomatic Workers

**Instructions:** Healthcare workers (HCWs) should communicate with the healthcare facility or public health authority at least daily and report on subjective or measured temperature and the following symptoms. This form should be completed by the healthcare facility or public health authority by checking the appropriate boxes. HCWs without fever (subjective or temperature below 38.0°C/100.0°F) or any of the following symptoms can report to work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCW Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Date of last exposure</th>
<th>Monitoring Personnel Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day # After Exposure</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Temp</th>
<th>Subjective fever</th>
<th>Cough</th>
<th>Sore</th>
<th>Shortness of breath</th>
<th>Runny</th>
<th>Chills</th>
<th>Muscle aches</th>
<th>Headache</th>
<th>Fatigue</th>
<th>Abdominal pain</th>
<th>Nausea or vomiting</th>
<th>Diarrhea</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

1 Complete form beginning on the day it is determined that monitoring is necessary.
COVID-19
Coronavirus Disease 2019

HOW TO PUT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

STEP 1
- Identify hazards & manage risk. Gather the necessary PPE
- Plan where to put on & take off PPE
- Ask a friend to help or put on in front of a mirror
- Discard all PPE in an appropriate waste bin

STEP 2
Put on a gown

STEP 3
Put on surgical mask or respirator*

STEP 4
Put on eye (goggles) or facial protection (face shield)**

STEP 5
Put on gloves (over cuff)

* Surgical mask or respirator (N95 or similar), depending on the level of care. For aerosol generating procedures (AGP), wear a respirator (N95 or similar)
** e.g. visor, face shield, goggles (consider anti-fog drops or fog-resistant goggles)
HOW TO TAKE OFF PPE

- Avoid contamination of self, others and environment
- Remove the most heavily contaminated items first

**STEP 1**
Remove gloves then remove gowns

**STEP 2**
Perform hand hygiene

**STEP 3**
Remove eye or facial protection from behind

**STEP 4**
Remove surgical mask or respirator from behind

**STEP 5**
Perform hand hygiene
**COVID-19**

Coronavirus Disease 2019

**HOW TO PUT ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

When all the PPE items I need it

**STEP 1**

- Identify hazards and manage risk. Gather the necessary PPE
- Plan to where to put on and take off PPE
- Do you have a friend? Mirror?
- Do you know how you will deal with waste?

**STEP 2**

Put on a gown

**STEP 3**

Put on a mask

**STEP 4**

Put on eye protection•

**STEP 5**

Put on gloves (over cuff)

*eg. visor, face shield, goggles (consider anti-fog drops or fog-resistant goggles). Caps are optional if worn put on after eye protection

**HOW TO TAKE OFF PPE**

**STEP 1**

- Avoid contamination of self, others and environment
- Remove the most heavily contaminated items first
- Remove gloves and gown
- Peel off gown and gloves and roll inside-out
- Dispose of gloves and gown safely

**STEP 2**

Perform hand hygiene

**STEP 3**

Remove cap if worn*

**STEP 4**

Remove mask from behind

**STEP 5**

Perform hand hygiene

* Remove eye protection from behind. Put eye protection in a separate container for reprocessing

Ministry of Health

PAHO

Pan American Health Organization

World Health Organization

BE AWARE. PREPARE. ACT.

www.paho.org/coronavirus
References