

## Frequently asked Questions – Re-opening of Establishments

These FAQs are from DGS and posted on the DGS website in Portuguese

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

**When can I open my establishment/company/service and what are the recommended opening hours?**

The phasing and timetable for the reopening of establishments/companies/services has been defined by the Government in specific rulings.

**Are the Directorate-General for Health's Technical Guidelines mandatory?**

The Operational Guidelines issued by the Directorate-General for Health in the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic serve as a standard of conduct and best practice to be followed in order to minimize the risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and the impact of the disease. As such, the objective is to raise awareness and to educate people/the population so that they will adapt their activities.

Notwithstanding the above, they may have the force of law when so defined by the Government in specific legislation.

**Is it mandatory to draw up a contingency plan on the procedures to be taken when a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified? Should this plan be made public?**

When reopening establishments, it is good practice to draw up contingency plans, i.e. to determine what procedures to follow when a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified.

There is no obligation to publish the contingency plan, but all employees of the establishments/companies should know the procedures to be followed when a suspected case of COVID-19 is being or has been identified.

**When it is not possible to have a dedicated room for "isolation" in an establishment/company, what should be done?**

"Isolation" areas aim to prevent employees or customers from being exposed to SARS-CoV-2 when a person with symptoms consistent with the disease is identified. As stated in Guideline 006/2020 the "isolation" area does not have to be a room or an office, but may be a section or an area, as long as it meets the objective of separating the suspected case from the other people in the establishment/company. The person with symptoms should only be kept in the "isolation" area, with a surgical mask, until the appropriate means are activated - call SNS24 and comply with the guidelines issued by this service.

Guidelines available at: <https://covid19.min-saude.pt/orientacoes/>

### CAPACITY / DISTANCES

**Is it mandatory to reduce the maximum capacity of catering and beverage establishments as exemplified in the appendix to Guideline 023/2020?**

The figures serve only as suggestions for table and customer layout. This suggestion should be adapted to the specificities of the catering and beverage establishments and to the characteristics of the users (e.g. if cohabiting or not).

Guidelines available at: <https://covid19.min-saude.pt/orientacoes/>

**What is the maximum capacity of catering and beverage establishments? Should it be posted at the entrance?**

The maximum capacity allowed and the display of this information at the entrance to the various establishments are defined by the Government through specific legislation and current legislation must be followed.

**Must aisles be 4 metres wide for customers to circulate (2 meters on each side of the customer on the move)?**

The aisles must ensure the distance recommended by the Directorate-General for Health between clients who are seated. Since the exposure time between a passing client and a seated client is limited, the width of these aisles does not have to be 4 metres.

Nevertheless, queues in the aisles (e.g. for payment or for access to sanitary facilities) should be avoided as there is an increase in exposure time between moving and seated customers. In aisles where there are likely to be queues, a distance of 2 metres between all persons should be ensured.

**Can physical barriers, made of materials such as acrylic, glass or curtains, serve to reduce the distance of 2 metres?**

The physical barrier can be a method that helps to minimize transmission between people during a period when people have to be without a mask. The physical barrier can also reduce the physical distance recommended by the Directorate-General for Health.

**PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT/ MASKS**

**Is the use of a mask by customers mandatory at the entrance and while moving around the catering and beverage establishment?**

Customers should consider using masks while circulating inside closed establishments, when they are not at their table and/or eating.

**When the use of a mask is recommended, can it be replaced with a visor?**

The visor should be used in conjunction with a barrier method to protect the mouth and nose.

**What should be done when customers are not able wear a mask due to the type of service being provided (e.g. face treatments, shaving, eating, etc.)?**

Employees should wear a mask when serving customers, especially when providing a service at closer proximity than that recommended by the Directorate-General for Health. Whenever there is physical contact with the customer, there should be enhanced hand hygiene after the procedure.

## **HYGIENE**

**To serve food or drink should preference be given to disposable materials or can normal dishes continue to be used? Is it possible to wash the dishes without a machine?**

The choice of material used must be made by the respective establishment, taking into account its characteristics. Disposable consumables made without plastic already exist on the market and have less environmental impact.

Regardless of the type of material chosen, the establishment must make sure that cleaning and sanitation standards are met, following the rules of best practice and/or specific guidelines.

Dishwashing should be done in a dishwasher (preferred) with a cycle that includes pre-washing (to remove the dirt/grease), followed by washing with hotter water and ending the cycle with thermal disinfection.

If there is no machine, the dishes can be washed by hand with water and detergent, immersed in 0.05% sodium hypochlorite solution for at least 5 minutes, then rinsed with water at the highest possible temperature and left to air-dry; do not use cloths for drying.