



Procedures for workplace quarantine – general

Contractors, specialists and migrant workers (referred to as workers throughout these procedures) who travel to Iceland for assignment while quarantine procedures are in effect for people traveling to Iceland from abroad must fulfil certain criteria and follow precautions as instructed by the Chief Epidemiologist for Iceland to be permitted to work during the quarantine period.

Criteria and limitations of this modified approach to quarantine:

1. Companies and individuals who need imported workers must **apply** for modified quarantine to the chief epidemiologist prior to arrival in Iceland, providing rationale for the need for work to commence during the quarantine period rather than adjusting the schedule so that quarantine can be completed prior to the start of the project. These instructions may be adjusted for specific situations if required and companies are encouraged to consider the circumstances on their premises when reading these procedures and if concerns arise about the application of these procedures to a specific location or situation, further guidance may be sought via covid19@landlaeknir.is.
2. Companies and individuals applying for this modification should provide information on likely or intended contacts of quarantined workers during the quarantine. The chief epidemiologist will keep this list and it may be used to aid in contact tracing efforts if illness due to COVID-19 occurs among quarantined workers. Downloading the [mobile application](#) used in case of diagnosis of COVID-19 in a quarantined individual is **highly recommended**. This application keeps information on locations of the mobile device for 5 days and makes tracing unknown/casual contacts considered at risk of infection possible. Therefore, it is requested that those who download it wait until 5 days after leaving Iceland to delete the application again in case the data for the last day in Iceland and/or travel from Iceland is needed for contact tracing purposes. Please note that the data **cannot be accessed** by the authorities unless the individual diagnosed with COVID-19 gives **permission** for use of the location data.
3. The worker(s) will be registered into quarantine no later than on arrival if travel route has included [risk areas for COVID19](#). The chief epidemiologist is responsible for labeling the individual as allowed to perform certain tasks despite quarantine once application has been processed. Failure to apply for modified quarantine or imperfect adherence to the required precautions during modified quarantine may therefore lead to a worker being found in violation of [quarantine rules](#) (in Icelandic), which may result in [fines](#) (also in Icelandic).
4. At any time, changes in the execution of national response measures may result in additional demands on companies or individuals requesting a modified quarantine. This may include testing for SARS-CoV-2 by PCR or rapid antigen test (at this time no rapid tests are validated or licensed for use in Iceland). This would require a nasopharyngeal swab, ideally with throat swab as well. While uncomfortable, this test is not invasive. Another possibility, once validation has been completed, is that serological tests will be used to assess likelihood of prior immunity to the disease. This type of test would require a blood sample and would be on a voluntary basis in order to potentially reduce the limitations during the quarantine period. Certificates of disease or immunity from other countries are not currently valid in Iceland due to the lack of reliable, validated documentation and tests.

5. Exemption from the full quarantine procedure applies only to the tasks and under the conditions described in the application for exemption. The worker must have travelled solely for work and must follow to the letter instructions given by the chief epidemiologist according to the current rules in effect in Iceland on hygiene and distancing measures to avoid infection while at work (see below). Outside of tasks and situations related to their work, they should observe the [requirements for quarantine](#).
6. Should the worker be notified of exposure to COVID-19 infection occurring in the 14 days before coming to Iceland, whether the exposure is at work or within the family or circle of friends, the involved party is **no longer eligible for this exemption** and must **cease all contact** with unrelated individuals and remain in accommodation for his **private use** or be transferred to a local, official quarantine facility to observe fully the quarantine instructions as put forth by the chief epidemiologist for Iceland.
7. Workers in quarantine must pay careful attention to any symptoms of illness:
 - a. Cold symptoms or sore throat, sudden changes in sense of taste or smell
 - b. Cough or breathlessness
 - c. Fatigue, body aches or headache
 - d. Fever over 38°C

If any of a-c arise the worker must check their temperature. Even if there is no fever the worker should contact their employer who should help them get in touch with the closest primary care clinic or national helpline (1700/+354 544 4113) who will assist in seeking appropriate medical care and/or accessing testing for COVID-19 disease. The helpline should also provide them with information and clarifications on the [requirements for isolation](#). If applicable, the company and the worker may find instructions for cleaning and other considerations on the website for the [Directorate of Health](#).

Please note that illness that is confirmed to be related to COVID-19 may result in quarantine for colleagues and anyone else the person who is ill has been in contact with while symptomatic or 24-48 hours prior to symptoms according to [current rules in effect in Iceland](#).

Overview of precautions for working while in quarantine in Iceland:

1. Hygiene measures and general infection control measures
 - a. Workers should practice strict infection control throughout the assignment, including during travel. This includes maintaining 2 metre distance from others as much as possible during travel, avoiding touching common surfaces without gloves and/or strict hand hygiene afterwards. Carrying hand disinfectant while traveling and during the assignment is strongly recommended, to be used frequently.
 - b. Disinfectant should be available in the workplace to sanitize common surfaces after touch. See also workplace measures below (#4).
 - c. Disposable gloves and masks may need to be available for certain tasks or situations.
2. Travel between KEF international airport and accommodations or worksites
 - a. In all areas where other people may be encountered, such as the airport and hotel lobby, persons in quarantine should practice strict infection control measures, such as maintaining at least 2 metre distance from all other people, avoidance of touching common surfaces and strict hygiene measures, especially careful hand hygiene.
 - b. Persons in quarantine may use rental car or taxi for all domestic transport in Iceland. Please note that taxis may limit the number of passengers allowed during the COVID19 crisis.
 - c. Use of public transportation is prohibited while in quarantine, this includes domestic air travel. Special infection control measures may be instituted by certain agencies involved in public transport to allow for transport of quarantined individuals, for example on ferries.

- d. Accommodations and the workplace should be in the same region of Iceland as travel between areas should be avoided during quarantine due to the possibility of accidents and need for first responders to come into contact with workers in quarantine. For the same reason, traveling between worksites should be avoided during the quarantine. In rare instances, if the application includes sound reasoning for necessity for travel between areas in Iceland, this may be accommodated within reason.
3. Outside of workplace:
 - a. During the stay in Iceland the workers should observe the general [rules for quarantine](#), with the sole modification that they are allowed to perform the tasks required for their assignment in Iceland in specified settings with precautions in place.
 - b. When not at work, quarantined individuals should remain in their hotel room or other [appropriate accommodations](#), and dine in their room. All necessities must be delivered by the employer or friends/colleagues who are not in quarantine or ordered online for delivery or pickup without interaction with staff in the store/restaurant.
 - c. Persons in quarantine can go for a walk for the purposes of exercise but must maintain careful distance from passersby and should avoid potentially crowded areas such as downtown Reykjavik and tourist attractions.
 4. Worksite precautions:
 - a. Workers in quarantine on assignment should practice strict infection control measures, such as maintaining at least 2 meter distance from all other people, avoidance of touching common surfaces and strict hygiene measures, especially careful hand hygiene and disinfection of surfaces that must be touched with bare hands.
 - b. Direct interaction with the quarantined worker(s) should be avoided by other staff who are not in quarantine themselves. When interaction is unavoidable workers should maintain 2 metres distance from each other as much as possible. Interactions should occur only in well ventilated areas and last only as long as necessary. Any interaction longer than 15 minutes may result in quarantine for the exposed person(s) should a worker in quarantine fall ill with COVID-19 within 48 hrs. of the interaction. It follows that workplace meetings that require the participation of a quarantined worker should be held entirely on an electronic platform if at all possible, or partially on such a platform and partially in person, with the in person interaction limited to 15 minutes or less, if at all possible.
 - c. The area where a task is performed by a quarantined worker should be cleared of other personnel if feasible during the completion of the task.
 - d. Workplace facilities:
 - i. The company should pay careful attention to providing hygiene facilities for the quarantined workers, as persons in quarantine should not use hygiene facilities used by others. If sufficient facilities are not available and use of facilities needed for other workers is unavoidable, they should be sanitized after each use by workers in quarantine. The company should arrange for labeling and thorough [cleaning](#) of the facilities used by the quarantined individual after the workday or once the quarantined individual no longer requires the facilities. In urgent situations, if use of public facilities is unavoidable, the quarantined individual should sanitize all surfaces touched and maintain careful distance from others in such facilities.
 - ii. Persons in quarantine may not use public spaces, whether inside buildings (waiting rooms, lobbies, restaurants, break rooms, cafeterias etc.) or outside (park benches, outside dining facilities and so on). Meals during the working hours should be delivered to the person in quarantine in the designated area and consumed there or alternately they may return to their hotel rooms/accommodations for meals.