



County Manager's Office
2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Building C, Room 301
Viera, Florida 32940

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

May 19, 2020

The Honorable Halsey Beshears
Secretary
Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation
2601 Blair Stone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1027

RE: Re-opening Vacation Rentals in Brevard County

Dear Secretary Beshears:

As you work with Governor DeSantis to safely re-open the state of Florida, Brevard County respectfully requests that short term vacation rentals in Brevard County be allowed to re-open.

Section 4 of Executive Order 20-123 states that Counties may seek approval to operate vacation rentals with a written request from the County Administrator and the County's safety plan for vacation rental operations submitted to the DBPR Secretary. Please accept this letter as our written request. Should you grant us approval to operate vacation rentals, we will allow operation under the following safety plans for vacation rental operations, plus any additional expanded guidance you may provide as well as comply with all of the Governor's executive orders:

- Property owners and managers shall adhere to all Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) sanitation guidelines that are already in place as addressed under 61C-3.001 Sanitation and Safety Requirements of the transient lodging statutes;
- Property owners and managers shall adopt the CDC related guidelines that are for public spaces, businesses, schools and homes. These re-open guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting expand upon what the State of Florida & DBPR already have in place for safety and sanitation for all lodging. This can be an extra safety measure for protection against the spread of COVID-19;
- Property owners and managers shall provide COVID-19 guidance of local restrictions that are in place during the guest stay including closures, curfews, and other related local information;
- Property owners and managers shall supply employees and contractors with CDC related safety guidance while operating the short term rental units to alleviate the transmission of the virus and provide further protection for employees and guests;
- All vacation rentals shall follow the SAFEHOME Vacation Rental Housekeeping Professional (VRHP) and Vacation Rental Management Association (VRMA) Cleaning Guidelines for COVID-19 which is both attached and can be found here:

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<https://www.vrma.org/page/vrhplvrma-cleaning-guidelines-for-covid-19>;

- Existing guests currently in homes may continue to extend their stay; and
- Any person coming from a highly-infected area, as defined per the Governor's guidelines, must reserve a minimum stay of 14 nights and follow CDC self-quarantine guidelines.

Brevard County and I stand ready to work with you and your staff to discuss or provide you with any additional information you may need to approve our request. I thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. Brevard County thanks you and Governor DeSantis for your continued leadership during this crisis. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Frank Abbate
Brevard County Manager
Brevard County, Florida

Brevard County Plan for Opening Short-term Rentals

May 19, 2020

These guidelines (when implemented in addition to standards set by the CDC and the Department of Business and Professional Regulation) seek to establish an industry wide best practice to ensure guest safety. The County recognizes the importance of keeping residents and visitors safe, and state the following conditions should apply to reopen short term rentals pursuant to the requirements of Executive Order 20-123.

Vacation Rental Reservations from Areas Identified by Executive Order

Vacation rental reservations, from areas identified by Governor DeSantis as high risk, through Executive Orders, must be for periods longer than the quarantine period established in that Order. Guests occupying those vacation rentals must adhere to the quarantine restrictions or be subject to established criminal and civil penalties.

Staffing Standards and Guidelines

Vacation Rental Management Companies shall strive at all times to adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1. Social Distancing**
 - a. Encourage associates to maintain a safe distance (at least 6 feet) and not to gather in groups of larger than 10 people.
 - b. Stagger arrival times to prevent congregating
 - c. Limit access to break areas and look for areas where staff can spread out for breaks. Allow staff to eat their meals in their assigned areas, where possible.
- 2. Masks, gloves and other personal protection equipment**
 - a. Masks and gloves should be worn by all employees who interact with the public, unless a physical barrier such as a Plexiglas barrier separates the staff member from the guest is present. Appropriate cleaning supplies will be provided to clean their work areas and stations
- 3. Wellness Checks**
 - a. All staff members should receive a wellness check upon arrival to work. The wellness check, at a minimum, will consist of a temperature check.
 - b. Staff members who have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be permitted to work.
- 4. Hygiene**
 - a. Wash/sanitize your hands frequently especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces
 - b. Avoid touching your face
 - c. Sneeze or cough into a tissue or inside your elbow.

- d. Disinfect your work area frequently throughout a shift and before/after a shift if it is a shared space
 - e. Individual hand sanitizers will be provided to employees for their assigned work area and for staff members who move through the property and/or community.
- 5. Mandatory Training**
- a. All staff members will be required to train on and adhere to the minimum standards established by this plan.

COVID-19 Disinfection and Sanitization

- Surfaces should be cleaned and then disinfected.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should dispose of gloves and use hand sanitizer before entering their vehicle.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should follow CDC handwashing guidelines throughout the day.
- All cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should wear splash goggles that protect their eyes from air and/or liquid.

Products, Cleaning Agents, and Equipment

- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should use cleaning products in line with the EPA's list of products with "Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus claims for use against SARS-CoV-2."
- Disinfecting procedures should allow for required dwell time to kill the viruses and microbes.
- Disinfectant products should be used on all major surfaces.

Cleaning and Inspections

- Extra time must be allowed for enhanced cleaning procedures to take place.
- Guests should be asked to turn on all ceiling fans and/or HVAC fans when leaving to facilitate air circulation.
- Remote check-ins should be made available when possible to cut down on face-to-face interactions.

Common Areas - Lobbies, Pool Decks, Elevators, etc

- Lobby areas should be monitored, and appropriate signage displayed, to ensure social distancing protocols are adhered to
- Lobby areas should be monitored and disinfected throughout the day
- Hand Sanitizer should be provided in all common areas, including lobbies, pool decks and elevators

- Elevators should be disinfected throughout the day.
- Pool furniture should be spaced to encourage social distancing (6ft apart)
- Pool furniture should be disinfected between each use.

Soft Surfaces and Upholstery

- A pressurized pump sprayer should be used to distribute a sanitizing product across all soft surfaces.
- Dirty linens and bedding should be handled and sanitized in such a way as to safeguard cleaning staff and prevent the spread of viruses and germs. (See VRMA/VRHP recommendations.)
- Linens and bedding should be professionally laundered for proper cleaning.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should remove gloves, use hand sanitizer and put on fresh gloves after handling dirty linens.
- Blankets/comforters should be removed for laundering and replaced with a freshly washed item, or covered with a freshly washed duvet cover as an alternative.

Trash Removal

- For both inside and outside trash gathering, gloves and masks should be worn at all times.
- Disinfectant should be used on the trash barrel, and a fresh liner or bag should be used inside the barrel or bin.

Maintenance

- All guests should vacate property before maintenance staff enters.
- Technicians should wear gloves and masks at all times, and dispose of those properly after exiting. Staff entering a property less than 18 hours after guests have vacated should wear splash goggles.

Owner and Guest Policies

- Extra throw blankets, decorative pillows or other soft objects should be put away until further notice.

All owners and tenants shall comply with the attached guidelines from the Department of Business and Professional Regulations and CDC guidelines.

VRHP/VRMA Cleaning Guidelines for COVID-19



May 1, 2020

Cleaning a vacation rental is no small task, even when we are not faced with a global pandemic. A housekeeper is expected to take a property that is in disarray from departing guests and completely reset it—eradicating the microbes that have been left behind in the property and creating a like-new experience for arriving guests. Vacation rental professionals understand that cleaning a property effectively requires specific training, appropriate supplies, and a systematic process.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Vacation Rental Housekeeping Professionals (VRHP) and the Vacation Rental Management Association (VRMA) are recommending that existing cleaning programs be augmented to include even more rigorous sanitization and disinfection protocols. These recommendations are below.

All vacation rental field staff/housekeepers/technicians or other employees should complete training regarding proper and safe cleaning techniques and property security. Teams need to understand how to safely use chemical products (such as germicides used to clean bathrooms) and dispose of trash, cleaning supplies, and biohazards appropriately. **Note: VRHP offers these types of training programs and can assist with questions from members about their programs.**

Disclaimer: These voluntary guidelines are for the information of VRHP and VRMA members. Each business owner must decide for itself which cleaning and related practices to implement. These guidelines are derived in part from federal agency regulations and recommendations, but they do not constitute legal or medical advice, nor do they necessarily take into account the various requirements of all states, counties, and municipalities. VRHP and VRMA make no warranty or representation that following these guidelines will ensure the health of employees, clients, guests, or others, or preclude the possibility of contamination. While these guidelines are intended to be comprehensive, they do not contain all available information on the subject matter. These guidelines were prepared based on available information existing at the time of publication and therefore may be superseded by later developments.

COVID-19, Disinfection, and Sanitization

- Small viral particles can hang in the air for many hours. The [currently available WHO information](#) suggests that respiratory droplets can last up to 3 hours in the air. Respiratory droplets are heavier than smaller aerosol particles, which can linger in the air for a longer time. To date, the scientific research is still unclear as to how long smaller COVID-19 particles may stay suspended in air, and what possible infection rates may stem from aerosols. A study published in The [New England Journal of Medicine](#) found that the COVID-19 virus can survive up to three days on hard metal surfaces and plastic and up to 24 hours on cardboard. During that window of the time, the virus does begin to

weaken. In light of these findings, VRHP/VRMA recommends that waiting for the majority of airborne droplets to settle (at least 3 hours) is the safest course of action. A timeframe of up to 24 hours between the last exit from a property and next entry is reasonable, if the business needs can accommodate longer wait times.

- VRHP/VRMA strongly emphasizes the importance of ensuring the appropriate use of all personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks, disposable gloves, and, in some cases, splash goggles for any entry into a property, even after the 24-hour waiting period. Splash goggles to cover the eyes and a mask that covers the nose and mouth and creates a good seal against the face should be required for any entry to a property within the 3-hour timeframe for respiratory droplet settling.
- Cleaning is defined by the CDC as “the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.”
- Disinfection is a separate step that should come *after* cleaning. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned prior to disinfection.
- Disinfection vs. Sanitization: These two activities are not the same. Sanitizing refers to reducing the number of germs to a safe level by cleaning. Disinfecting refers to killing nearly 100% of germs on surfaces or objects, according to the CDC. It is important to note that when a surface has been disinfected, if there are virus particles in the air, those particles may settle on the newly cleaned surface. This means that the surface is now in a sanitized state, not a disinfected state. This concept holds true, regardless of whether we are talking about the COVID-19 virus or other viruses, bacteria, dust, or other particles. For this reason, VRHP/VRMA recommends being careful with advertising that properties are truly “100% disinfected” and suggests language instead that says that your company is using disinfecting products and/or that properties have been through a disinfection process.
- Properly dispose of gloves and use hand sanitizer when finished and BEFORE entering your vehicle and especially before touching the steering wheel.
- All field staff should continue proper hand washing protocols throughout the day and should avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. The CDC handwashing guidance is at: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>.

Proper PPE Usage

- All staff (housekeepers, inspectors, maintenance technicians, or anyone else) should wear masks and disposable gloves. It is imperative that all staff are trained in correct mask and glove usage. (<https://vimeo.com/400609879> and <https://vimeo.com/400609879>)
- Gloves should be changed between properties and also between certain in-property tasks. Hands should be washed as soon as possible after gloves are removed.
- Always wash hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds, throughout the day but especially when gloves are removed. According to the CDC, “If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.”
- Once a mask is moist or wet it is no longer effective and should not be used anymore. For a disposable mask, discard it appropriately. For a cloth mask that can be reused or washed, carefully place it in a zipper bag (such as Ziploc®) to be disinfected later.
- Splash goggles provide the best protection against air movement across the eyes. Splash goggles are different from regular safety glasses in that they provide a seal that protects your eyes from the air and/or liquid.

Products, Cleaning Agents, and Equipment

- The EPA offers a list of products with “Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus claims for use against SARS-CoV-2.” <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- VRHP/VRMA strongly recommends that you check your existing products against this list and also work with your preferred janitorial product supplier(s) to obtain additional products as needed.
- All disinfecting products require dwell time. Dwell time is the amount of time needed for a product “sit” on the surface and kill the viruses and microbes.
- Use disinfecting products on all major surfaces and pay attention to all high-touch areas, including door knobs (inside and out), lockboxes or electronics lock panels, elevator buttons, stair railings, telephones, light switches, remote controls, arms of chairs, refrigerator door handles, sliding door handles, toilets, faucets and knobs, clothes hangers, touch screens, and play sets/toys, to name a few.

Cleaning and Inspections

- Extra cleaning time should be allocated to existing turnover timeframes. How much time is a business decision for each company. The two major factors in how much time is needed are:
 - The amount of time required to sanitize/disinfect high-touch areas that may not have previously been rigorously cleaned on every turn.
 - Allowing a certain amount of time for the nebulized virus particles to settle out of the air.
- As per the most recent guidance, it can take up to 3 hours for larger COVID-19 particles to fully settle to the ground. Waiting longer is likely the safest course of action and 24 hours between the last exit and next entry is reasonable.
 - If the business need requires entry to a property sooner (e.g., in the case of a same-day turn), VRHP/VRMA strongly advises that that staff strictly and judiciously follow all PPE best practices (wearing mask, gloves, and/or other protective gear such as splash goggles) and follow all cleaning and disinfecting best practices to ensure safety.
- As part of the guest departure duties, if guests can be asked to turn on all ceiling fans and/or HVAC fans, that would be ideal. When the cleaner or inspector arrives, they can open a few windows to air property out if fan use is not possible. Make sure windows are closed when staff leave the property.
- If a large property requires more than one cleaner or other staff member to be present, staff must ensure that proper social distancing protocols are followed (by remaining at least 6' apart at all times and wearing masks and gloves).
- As per the guidelines above, a guest would ideally check into a property 18-24 hours after the property has been inspected (post-cleaning). Remote check-ins, where guests go directly to their properties and not into a vacation rental office, is preferable. Each business will have to plan for what can reasonably be accomplished.
- Note that these additional cleaning and wait times may make it impossible to allow early check-ins or late check-outs. How to handle those requests is an individual business decision.

Soft Surfaces and Upholstery

- To date, there is limited information regarding how long the COVID-19 virus can live on fabric or other soft surfaces.

- Most soft surfaces (such as upholstery) can only be sanitized.
- Using a pressurized pump sprayer to distribute a sanitizing product across all soft surfaces is best. Be sure to know the limitations of your product and that it is safe to use on the soft goods in the property.

Linens and Bedding

- Linens and bedding should not be shaken, so as not to disperse viral particulates into the air.
- There are multiple ways that dirty linen can be removed from the property and placed in a vehicle. A few ways that VRHP/VRMA recommends are:
 - Dirty linens can be placed into a dissolvable laundry bag. The dissolvable bag can then be tied closed and placed inside your regular linen bag or large plastic trash or contractor bag. Once at the laundry, the dissolvable bag can be removed from the regular plastic bag and placed directly in the washing machine. The regular trash bag can be recycled.
 - Linens could be placed in a plastic trash or contractor bag, and then that bag can then be tied closed and placed inside your regular linen bag.
 - Linens could be placed in your regular linen bag, closed, and then encased in a plastic trash or contractor bag.
 - A disinfecting product that is approved for soft surfaces and fabrics may be applied to bagged dirty linens, if desired.
- The housekeeper should remove gloves (safely, as per guidelines) after removing the dirty linen and securing them in bags. Hand sanitizer should be applied and fresh gloves put on before putting the clean linen on the bed.
- Ensure that all pillows have pillow protectors on them and the mattress has a mattress pad covering it. These items could be changed as often as needed or as seems reasonable.
- There are different ways to handle blankets, comforters, or other top-layer bedding.
 - Blankets/comforters should ideally be removed for laundering and replaced with a freshly washed item.
 - Blankets/comforters could also be triple sheeted with freshly laundered sheets.
 - Blankets/comforters could also be covered with a freshly washed duvet cover as an alternative.
- Linens and bedding should be professionally laundered, at the correct temperatures and with the correct chemical chemistry for proper cleaning and sanitization. If you only have the option to launder in the property, extra time will be required as a longer dry time at the highest setting the linen will allow is required. Be aware, fabrics that require a low temperature are not going to be sanitized.

Trash Removal

- For both in-property trash gathering or outside trash in container collection and removal:
 - Gloves and masks should be worn at all times.
 - When picking up trash one should always be aware of sharps and jagged pieces of glass or metal that could cut the individual as they are carrying the bag.
 - One should never use their hand to push "compact" the trash bags in the trash bin so more bags can be added. This should always be done with an engineering device such as a stick, shovel, rake, etc.
 - Use a disinfecting product on the trash barrel or bin and place a fresh liner or bag inside.

Maintenance

- Triage your maintenance requests. VRHP/VRMA recommends letting guests know that some smaller requests that can wait until guest departure may not be able to be honored. Whether or not to compensate the guest for not addressing an issue is a business decision for your company.
- The safest policy is to only dispatch a maintenance technician or third-party vendor if the issue is truly something that needs to be handled immediately, while the guest is still in residence. Non-essential visits should be severely limited or restricted.
- VRHP/VRMA strongly recommends that all guests should vacate property for the maintenance tech to enter. Entry when guests are present should be discouraged.
- Technicians should wear gloves and masks at all times, disposing of those properly after exiting. In addition, VRHP/VRMA strongly recommends that anyone entering a property less than 18 hours after guests have vacated the premises should wear splash goggles.

Owner and Guest Policies

- In light of the stringent cleaning protocols, VRHP/VRMA does not recommend that owners or guests be allowed to clean with no follow-up work from your company.
 - If an owner or guest offers to clean, and you wish to allow this, VRHP/VRMA recommends that you implement a "Professional Disinfection Cleaning" that does a once-over with disinfecting products after the owner or guest has done their version of cleaning. How much to charge for that is a business decision for your company.
- VRHP/VRMA recommends that all extra throw blankets, decorative pillows, or other soft objects should be boxed or bagged up and put away until further notice.
- Additional pillow protectors, pillows, mattress pads/protectors, blankets, comforters (or duvet covers) should be purchased, as possible, so they can be easily changed and laundered.

Telling Your Story

- Consider placing a "This property has been properly cleaned and sanitized for your arrival" door hanger on the front door or put other signage in the property.
- Create a page on your website or blog that outlines what you are doing to clean, sanitize, and disinfect and keep guests safe.
- Send an email to your database of guests informing them of all you are doing to clean, sanitize, and disinfect to ensure that properties are safe.
- Consider adding a sentence to each property listing description stating that your properties are clean and safe for arrival and ready for the guests' vacation.

INFORMATION FOR VACATION RENTALS

PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-123 AS ISSUED MAY 15, 2020

RECOMMENDED SAFETY MEASURES

Effective May 18, 2020, the following measures are recommended as minimum standards for vacation rentals that are accepting reservations and guests for any length of stay:

- Maintain adequate time between the conclusion of a guest stay and the check-in of the next guest stay for appropriate cleaning and sanitation.
- Clean and disinfect all frequently-touched surfaces in the property between each guest stay.
- Wash all linens, dishware, and other service items available for use by guests between each guest rental.
- Provide sufficient soap and surface sanitation supplies for guests to utilize in the vacation rental property during the guest's rental period.
- Ensure adequate safety protocols are in place and publicly displayed, in line with CDC guidance, regarding shared or multi-residence amenities such as pools, gyms, and other communal spaces.

OTHER BEST PRACTICES

Effective May 18, 2020, the following best practices are also recommended for vacation rentals that are accepting reservations and guests for any length of stay:

- Use mobile platforms for customer service and communication with guests, including the acceptance of payments by mobile or electronic methods.
- Minimize direct guest contact with property owners or managers through remote check-in and check-out procedures.
- Post signage or other notices regarding the cleaning practices that are completed prior to each guest stay.
- Display signage or notices to guests in the rental property to frequently remind guests to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including the wiping and sanitation of touched surfaces.

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