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## The Environmental Health Services of Porvoo instruct food industry actors to follow guidelines related to the coronavirus (COVID-19)

### Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's (THL) website

<https://thl.fi/en/web/infectious-diseases/what-s-new/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-updates>

### Finnish Institute of Occupational Health's guidelines for service industries:

<https://www.ttl.fi/en/fioh-guidelines-for-workplaces-to-prepare-for-the-coronavirus-epidemic/>  
<https://www.ttl.fi/en/cleaning-guidelines-for-the-prevention-of-covid-19-infections%e2%80%af/>

### Finnish Food Authority's answers to frequently asked questions (in Finnish)

<https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/henkiloasiakkaat/tietoa-elintarvikkeista/kasittely-ja-sailyttaminen/usein-kysyttya-covid-19-koronaviruksesta-ja-elintarvikkeista/>

Different industries are also publishing guidelines that should be followed and complied with.

### Guidelines taken from the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health's website on 13 March 2020:

#### HOW IS THE CORONAVIRUS TRANSMITTED?

The novel coronavirus is primarily transmitted through droplet transmission when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus cannot survive in the air. It is possible that the virus is also transmitted by touch. However, coronaviruses do not persist on surfaces for several days in fluctuating temperatures. No cases of the virus being transmitted via the handling of goods have been observed. There is currently no information available on whether COVID-19 infections have been caused by food products or transmitted by means of food products.

#### CONDUCT IN CUSTOMER SERVICE SITUATIONS TO PREVENT INFECTIONS

- If possible, avoid working in the immediate vicinity of the customer, and avoid handshaking when greeting.
- If the customer coughs or sneezes, turn your face away from the customer for a moment. Offer the customer a clean tissue that they can cough into, if necessary, or ask the customer to cough into their sleeve.
- Wear gloves, preferably disposable ones, where possible, if you have to touch items touched by customers. If you wear non-disposable gloves in your work, wash them at the end of your shift and dry them well. See the glove removal instructions (in Finnish): Remove the gloves without touching their contaminated outer surface. Removed gloves must be deposited in a mixed waste collection bin.
- If you cannot wear gloves, have some alcohol-based hand sanitiser near your workstation. Rinse your hands with it after touching a customer's items. Apply a good amount of hand sanitiser (approximately a tablespoonful) to your hand, rub your fingertips and thumbs

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in it and then rub it all over your hands. You should also clean your hands with hand sanitiser after removing gloves.

- Washing your hands with warm water and soap is preferable to using hand sanitiser if there is a washbasin available.
- Customers must also be provided with the option of washing their hands and instructions for doing so. There must be enough soap and preferably disposable paper towels at each washbasin. If hand washing is not possible, have some alcohol-based hand sanitiser available. Please see the hand washing video, coughing hygiene guidelines and material on instructing customers.

### **IMPROVING CLEANING EFFICIENCY IN CUSTOMER PREMISES**

- Any surfaces touched by customers (such as door handles, guardrails, furniture, table surfaces, touchscreens and other keyboards, toilet and washing facilities) must be cleaned thoroughly and as often as possible.
- Use a mildly alkaline all-purpose detergent for basic cleaning. The cleaning of sanitary facilities and other facilities, if necessary, can be enhanced by using a disinfectant. Please refer to our cleaning instructions.
- Surfaces should be preferably wiped with disposable wipes. If you use wipes that can be washed, collect used wipes in a separate container. Cleaning wipes and other cleaning equipment must be cleaned and dried thoroughly every day. Wash laundry in a temperature of at least +60 degrees Celsius and using disinfecting detergent.
- Use leakproof and easily removable bags in waste bins. Monitor waste bins and do not let them get more than three-quarters full. Empty waste bins daily, especially in public premises. The collected bin bags must be closed tightly and disposed of in mixed waste for incineration.

### **FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING IN RESTAURANTS**

- Remind employees that food products, food preparation equipment and serving dishes may only be touched with clean, healthy hands. Make sure that there are enough disposable gloves available.
- Wash your hands often with water and soap. To prevent skin problems resulting from constant washing with water, you can also clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitiser when your hands are not visibly dirty.
- If there are foods offered at the restaurant that customers take themselves, there must be tongs available for doing so. There is currently no information available on whether COVID-19 infections have been caused by food products or transmitted by means of food products. If COVID-19 becomes an epidemic in Finland, it may be preferable to start serving bread and other similar products as ready-made portions.
- Food tongs, bread and butter knives and cloths used to cover foods, such as bread, must be replaced several times a day. The cleaning frequency of buttons and handles that customers touch when portioning food and drinks must also be increased.

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## **WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU FALL ILL OR SUSPECT A CORONAVIRUS INFECTION**

- If you suspect you have been infected by the COVID-19 coronavirus, contact your occupational health service provider or on-duty public health services phone. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's website contains information on when a COVID-19 infection must be suspected.
- Be sure to also contact your immediate supervisor.

## **SKIN CARE**

Efficient hand washing practices may result in skin problems, such as drying of the skin. To prevent skin problems, we recommend using skin lotions free of fragrances and preservatives.

### **Further information**

City of Porvoo, Environmental Health Services  
 Tel. +358 (0)40-168 8844 (Mon–Fri 9:00–12:00)  
[ymparistoterveydenhuolto@porvoo.fi](mailto:ymparistoterveydenhuolto@porvoo.fi)