

## NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND FACTS ON HOUSEHOLD SELF-ISOLATION

Like the current contact restrictions, household self-isolation is an officially imposed protective measure that aims to help contain the spread of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). In this leaflet, you will find important points which you should observe during the imposed isolation.

### When and why is household self-isolation imposed?

**Household self-isolation can be imposed by the public health office in the case of so-called well-founded suspicions if there is a high risk of infection:**

**This generally applies if you have come into close contact with anyone who has had a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis within the last two weeks. Close contact means that you have spoken to the person for at least 15 minutes or have been coughed on or sneezed on while the person was contagious.**

In the case of close contact of this kind, the assumption is that such persons are infected and can spread the novel coronavirus. This might be true even if the person is not (yet) showing any symptoms. As such, household self-isolation can be imposed as a protective measure to prevent the further spread of the pathogen. The duration of this measure is currently 14 days. This is the period of time between potential infection with the virus and the appearance of symptoms.

You do not have to self-isolate if you have only been in the same room as someone who has had a COVID-19 diagnosis within the last two weeks (where no close contact was involved) or if you have been in an area where there are increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases.

### What are you required to do during household self-isolation?

- ▶ Follow the instructions issued by the public health office.
- ▶ Do not leave your home.
- ▶ Do not receive visitors.
- ▶ Take your body temperature twice a day and keep a record of any symptoms. Make a note of who you have had face-to-face contact with.
- ▶ The public health office will enquire regularly about your state of health.



Please contact your public health office immediately if you experience a fever, a cough, breathing difficulties or severe illness.

### The main hygiene tips:

You can take simple measures to protect yourself and others from infectious diseases.



Sneeze or cough into the crook of your arm or into a tissue



Keep your hands away from your face



Maintain sufficient distance from people who have a cough, cold or fever



Avoid physical contact with other people (e. g. handshakes and embraces)



Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly (for at least 20 seconds) using soap and water

### What hygiene tips should you observe?

Anyone in the vicinity of a person infected with the novel coronavirus is at risk of becoming infected themselves. In order to protect yourself and members of your household from spreading the pathogen, you should consistently follow the hygiene measures recommended by the public health office. These include:

- ▶ If possible, use different rooms to those used by other household members or – in the case of meals, for example – use rooms at different times as far as possible.
- ▶ Avoid close physical contact and keep a **distance** of at least 1.5 metres from others.
- ▶ Regularly **ventilate** the kitchen, bathroom, living room and bedrooms.
- ▶ Do not share household items such as dishes and linen with others without first **cleaning** these items in the usual way.
- ▶ Surfaces and objects which you come into contact with should be cleaned regularly using household cleaning agents.
- ▶ You and others in your household should **wash your hands with soap** regularly, thoroughly and for at least 20 seconds.
- ▶ Keep your hands away from your face, especially your mouth, eyes and nose.
- ▶ Follow the rules for **coughing and sneezing**: When you cough or sneeze, keep the greatest possible distance from other people and turn away if possible. Sneeze or cough into the crook of your arm or into a disposable tissue, which should then be thrown away. Wash your hands thoroughly after sneezing or blowing your nose.

### What do I do if I fall ill?

- ▶ **If you feel ill or develop symptoms such as a fever, a cough, breathing difficulties and a severe feeling of sickness, notify your public health office immediately.**
- ▶ **If you need medication or medical treatment for another illness or an existing illness, contact your general practitioner or the relevant specialist surgery by telephone.**
- ▶ **In urgent cases, call the telephone number 116117 (medical emergency service). When reporting your situation, be sure to mention you are in household self-isolation. The emergency number 112 or a rescue service should only be used for acute emergencies (e.g. breathing difficulties).**

### Where can you find support during household self-isolation?

- ▶ Ask family members, friends or neighbours to provide you with food, medication and other daily necessities. Ideally they should leave the purchases on your doorstep.
- ▶ Food which you order from a delivery service should also be left in front of your home, as should mail-order parcels.
- ▶ If you have a dog, have friends or family members take care of walking it.
- ▶ If you have problems coping, contact your public health office or call your local authority to ask for support.

### How can you reduce the pressure on yourself and your child / children?

- ▶ Isolation measures can be very stressful for you as well as for the children in your household. Explain the situation to your child/children in an age-appropriate manner. Take any fears seriously. Try to be reassuring and confident when dealing with the child.
- ▶ It is helpful to give the day a reliable structure: If possible, ensure there are fixed times for getting up, eating and sleeping as well as time for school work and other educational activities including breaks.
- ▶ Make sure your children's media consumption is appropriate for their age and addresses any questions they might have. Examples include "Kakadu" (Deutschlandfunk), "Sendung mit der Maus" (WDR), "LOGO" (ZDF), "Die Politikstunde" (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and "Schule daheim" (ARD-alpha).
- ▶ You and your child/children should not come into direct contact with people outside your household, but you should still maintain social relationships as best you can. Keep in touch with family and friends by phone and other media, for example. Enable your child to do so as well.
- ▶ Try to ensure that you and your child/children get physical exercise. On the internet you will find lots of suggestions for gymnastics in the home and for child-friendly, playful exercise – either inside or in the garden, if available.
- ▶ Please do not hesitate to seek help or assistance should you need it.

- ▶ Hotlines have been set up in many areas to provide telephone assistance regarding any issues surrounding family life. Visit your district or city council's website for further information.

### What legal regulations apply to household self-isolation?

- ▶ In Germany, household self-isolation is regulated by the Infection Protection Act (IfSG) and is imposed by the public health office.
- ▶ Employed persons who suffer a loss of earnings due to an imposed self-isolation are entitled to financial compensation. If you have any questions, please contact your public health office.
- ▶ Please note: Any breach of imposed self-isolation can be punished by fine or imprisonment.

### Where can you find additional up-to-date and reliable information?

Information on the novel coronavirus and how to protect yourself is provided by the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) at

<https://www.infektionsschutz.de/coronavirus-sars-cov-2.html>

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) provides answers to frequent labour and employment law questions arising in connection with the novel coronavirus at

<https://www.bmas.de/DE/Presse/Meldungen/2020/corona-virus-arbeitsrechtliche-auswirkungen.html>

The Robert Koch Institute (RKI) offers an up-to-date risk assessment and comprehensive (technical) information at

[https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges\\_Coronavirus/nCoV.html](https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/nCoV.html)

Further information for citizens on the subject of self-isolation can be downloaded from the website of the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) at

[Tips for household self-isolation](#)  
[COVID-19: Tips for parents](#)



Your contact person on site

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