

# CONTINGENCY PLAN COVID-19

06 March 2020

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| 1.  | INTRODUCTION .....  | 3  |
| 2.  | OBJECTIVES .....  | 3  |
| 3.  | ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES .....  | 4  |
| 4.  | GUIDELINES AND MEASURES FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION .....   | 4  |
| 5.  | MEASURES FOR CLEANING AND HYGIENE IN FACILITIES.....  | 6  |
| 6.  | STEPS TO TAKE IN CASE OF SUSPECTED INFECTION .....  | 7  |
| 7.  | ISOLATION ROOM.....   | 7  |
| 8.  | WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF CONFIRMED INFECTION .....   | 9  |
| 9.  | CLEANING AND SANITIZING ISOLATION ROOM AFTER SUSPECTED CASE .....   | 9  |
| 10. | CLEANING AND SANITIZING WORKPLACE OF THE ILL .....  | 10 |
| 11. | STEPS TO TAKE FOR AN ASYMPTOMATIC PERSON RETURNING FROM AN AREA WITH<br>ACTIVE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION IN THE LAST 14 DAYS ..... | 10 |
| 12. | STEPS TO TAKE FOR AN ASYMPTOMATIC PERSON IN CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED<br>CASE .....  | 11 |
| 13. | OTHER MEASURES.....   | 11 |
| 14. | PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING CLOSE CONTACTS.....   | 12 |
| 15. | MEASURES FOR CONTINUING ACADEMIC ACTIVITY.....  | 13 |
| 16. | MEASURES FOR CONTINUING CENTRAL SERVICES .....  | 13 |
| 17. | INFORMATION AND DISSIMULATION .....   | 14 |
| 18. | PREVENTION OFFICE   COVID-19 .....  | 15 |

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Government has released guidelines (Dispatches n. 2836-A/2020 of 02.03 and 2875-A/2020 of 03.03) for employers to observe, with practices of prevention and infection control for the new Coronavirus (COVID-19). Namely, their directions advise the preparation of Contingency Plans.

This Contingency Plan consists of a set of measures defined with the goal of protecting the health of Iscte's students and employees through prevention and infection control of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in order to ensure the normal functioning of this Higher Education Institution.

These procedures were defined based on the guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the General Directorate of Health (GDH).

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of this Contingency Plan is to provide an operational response that minimizes the conditions of virus propagation to maintain the normal activity of Iscte in the face of the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

In case of necessity, this Plan contains the measures necessary to ensure the minimum services of the institution, as well as, as a worst-case scenario, to consider the closure of services or of Iscte.

In connection with the responsible public health services, Iscte will provide the proper information and recommendations as the situations evolves. Consequently, the plan may be revised and updated whenever necessary.

### 3. ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Iscte seeks to ensure the maintenance and functioning of the following activities:

- Governance of the Institution;
- Teaching activities;
- Attendance for students and higher education applicants;
- IT support for the community;
- Other Support services (Cleaning and Building Security);
- All the necessities for the functioning of the Institution.

### 4. GUIDELINES AND MEASURES FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

#### Guidelines

To contain the propagation of COVID-19, the following measures are recommended, foreseeably until 15 May 2020:

- **The cancellation or postponement of trips**, especially to regions in which there is active COVID-19 transmission in the community. The use of distance-working methods should be prioritized. The list of countries where active transmission of the new coronavirus has been confirmed is updated daily on the DGS site (<https://www.dgs.pt/corona-virus>);
- **The cancellation of in-person meetings, academic and otherwise**, whenever possible, if there is the involvement of international participants or high concentrations of participants, as this could risk the creation of a transmission hub.
- **The postponement of international conferences** scheduled by Iscte whenever possible, and the cancellation of the participation of members of the Iscte community in similar meetings;

**The members of the Iscte community and visitors that have been in locations where transmission of the new coronavirus has been confirmed should engage in a period of quarantine for 14 days** and:

- Stay alert for the appearance of fever, cough or respiratory difficulty;
- Check if any of the people with whom you live closely have developed symptoms (fever, cough or respiratory difficulty);
- In case one of the symptoms mentioned appears (in yourself or your cohabitants), do not go immediately to health services; instead, call the health line 24 (808 24 24 24),

follow the directions that are given to you and inform Iscte of the situation through the contacts defined for this purpose;

- At the beginning of the period of quarantine, you should describe your situation to your respective School or Service.

### **Measures of prevention and protection**

In the entryways of buildings, at security desks, in locations of public attendance such as Academic Services, the Treasury, the Expedient, and in places of heavy traffic flows of students, visitors and suppliers, antiseptic hand sanitizer should be available.

It is recommended that the entire Iscte community:

- Frequently wash their hands with soap and water, scrubbing them well for at least 20 seconds;
- Increase handwashing before and after the preparation of foods, before meals, after bathroom use and whenever hands are dirty;
- As an alternative for hand hygiene, use an alcohol-based solution;
- Use (single-use) paper towels to blow your nose;
- Dispose of used paper towels in a trash bin and wash your hands afterwards;
- Cough or sneeze into your arm with your elbow bent, and not into your hands;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with hands that are dirty or contaminated by respiratory secretions;
- Promote social distance, primarily by not staying in locations that are highly frequented or enclosed unless absolutely necessary (excepts for classes and professional activities);
- Avoid greetings with physical contact;
- Frequently clean surfaces and equipment with which you are in contact (keyboard, desk, mobile phone);
- In case a symptom like cough, fever, or respiratory difficulty appears (in yourself or in your cohabitants), reduce social contact, and do not go to health services; instead, call Line SNS24 (808 24 24 24).

## **5. MEASURES FOR CLEANING AND HYGIENE IN FACILITIES**

As concerns cleaning and hygiene, prevention and infection control will be augmented through the following measures:

- Releasing products fit for hand-washing, disinfection and drying.
- Checking the ventilation of the facilities and air-conditioning equipment, promoting ventilation in all locations.
- Cleaning surfaces with an adequate disinfection product, mostly common objects and equipment such as:
  - ✓ Door handles (both sides)
  - ✓ Tables
  - ✓ Handrails
  - ✓ Light switchers
  - ✓ Internal and external surfaces of elevators (buttons)
  - ✓ Chairs
  - ✓ Common-use phones
  - ✓ Calling buttons and interiors of elevators
  - ✓ Reception desks in the different buildings
  - ✓ ATMs in the different buildings
  - ✓ Common copiers
  - ✓ Self-service machines
- Cleaning and disinfecting sanitary installations according to the existing procedures.
- Cleaning of computers and tables (screens, keyboards, mice) in study rooms and the library.
- Waste resulting from cleaning and disinfecting can be discarded as usual.

To complete these tasks:

- Cleaning should be done using gloves, namely in removing trash.
- Door handles should be cleaned on both the interiors and exteriors of rooms.
- Cleaning cloths should be frequently washed.

*Note: recording sheets should be available in places with heavy traffic and should be signed by the workers that execute these tasks, with an indication of day and time.*

Hygiene and cleaning of food facilities, as the responsibility of the respective concessionaries, should obey the guidelines and recommendations of this plan and DGS.


## **6. STEPS TO TAKE IN CASE OF SUSPECTED INFECTION**

### **What are the signs and the symptoms of a suspected case?**

Infected people may present signs and symptoms of acute respiratory infection, such as fever, coughing, difficulty in breathing, sore throat, muscular pain, joint pain, headache, nausea, vomit or diarrhea.

### **What to do?**

Measures to take in case of identifying a suspected case:

1. **Call the Iscte emergency number: 217 930 101;**
2. Go to the Isolation Room: Building II, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, room C204;
3. Put on gloves and mask;
4. Immediately contact the number of the Health Line 24  808242424, and follow the instructions they give;
5. Wait in the room with doors closed for external medical emergency services, avoiding contact with other people.
6. Prohibit all other people from accessing the room.

## **7. ISOLATION ROOM**

The Isolation Room is located on Floor 2 of Building II (Room **C204**) and has the following characteristics and equipment:

- Natural ventilation;
- Proximity to sanitary facilities (which are isolated and prohibited for other users);
- Furniture for resting;
- EPI (Individual Protection Equipment):
  - ✓ Surgical masks;

- ✓ Disposable gloves;
- ✓ Alcohol-based antiseptic solution (Gel disinfectant)
- ✓ Paper towels;
- ✓ Bottled water;
- ✓ Telephone;
- ✓ Disposable thermometers.

Once you have arrived in the Isolation Room, the procedure is as follows:

- The ill person should follow the instructions made available:
- Check your temperature.
- Use gloves and a mask. Check if the mask is well adjusted (adjust it to your face, so that it fully covers your nose, mouth and the sides of the face). Whenever the mask becomes wet, it should be replaced with another.
- When replacing gloves, masks and other materials that could be contaminated (disposable paper sheets, towels), deposit them in the rubbish bin with a pedal inside the room. The container should be lined with a white plastic bag and identified.
- In the room is a telephone with external connectivity so that the person in isolation can immediately contact Line Saúde 24 – 808 24 24 24 and give an account of their health status. The health professional from SNS 24 will question the patient to determine whether the signs, symptoms and epidemiological connections suggest a suspected case of COVID-19.
- Contact should be made between the person in isolation and those responsible for the Contingency Plan by telephone.

**After the evaluation, SNS 24 will inform the patient:**

**If they are not dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19:** they will define the appropriate procedures for the clinical situation of the patient.

**If they are dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19:** SNS will contact the Medical Support Line (LAM) of the General Directorate of Health to confirm this suspicion. The testing could result in:

- **An Invalid Suspected Case**, which eliminates the possibility of COVID-19. SNS 24 will define the appropriate procedures for the clinical situation for the patient. The patient should then inform those responsible for the Contingency Plan of this outcome, who should inform the administration;



- **A Valid Suspected Case**, which will cause DGS to alert the INEM and the Regional Health Authority, starting an epidemiological investigation and contact management. In this case, the patient should remain in the area of “isolation” (with a mask until their condition permits), until the arrival of the National Institute of Medical Emergency (INEM) team, alerted by DGS, to manage the patient’s transport to the reference Hospital, where biological samples will be taken for laboratory tests.

While waiting for the arrival of the emergency medical team or directions from Saúde 24, the patient should remain in the room, avoiding any contact with colleagues or others, keeping the door closed, and avoiding movement within the rooms of the building. Access to this room by any other person is prohibited.

## **8. WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF CONFIRMED INFECTION**

DGS will inform the regional health authorities of the lab results, and regional health authorities will alert local health authorities.

Local health authorities will inform the Rector of the lab tests:

- If the case is **not confirmed**, the possibility of COVID-19 will be eliminated, and the usual procedures in case of disease, including cleaning and disinfection, will take place, so the contingency plan measures are suspended.
- If the case is **confirmed**, the contingency plan team should provide cleaning and disinfection (decontamination) to the “isolation” area. In case other directions from DGS are not defined, entry to the isolated area should be prohibited until it is decontaminated (cleaned and disinfected) by local health authorities, which will communicate information about the measures taken in the facilities/building to DGS, as well as information about the health status of close contacts of the sick individual.

## **9. CLEANING AND SANITIZING ISOLATION ROOM AFTER SUSPECTED CASE**

- Clean and disinfect (decontamination) the Isolation Room;
- Clean and disinfect all furniture, equipment and surfaces;
- Keep all waste of the confirmed case in a plastic bag (50 or 70 micron thickness) that, after being closed (ex. with a clamp), should be separated and sent to a licensed operator for biological hazard management of hospital waste.
- Open the windows and close the door to enhance natural ventilation.

Cleaning should be done using gloves, a protection mask and disposable scrubs. Cleaning tissues should be thrown away after being used.

#### **10. CLEANING AND SANITIZING WORKPLACE OF THE ILL**

When the direction is given to proceed with sanitizing a space due to the presence of an individual presumed to be infected with COVID-19, the cleaning team should be taken to the location and complete the following tasks:

- Open the windows of the space, closing the door (wherever possible) to promote natural ventilation.
- Proceed with the general cleaning of the space, including the handles and knobs of the doors and windows, the tables, the arms and legs of the chairs, the computers (monitors, keyboards, mice), and any remaining equipment.
- Exchange the bag in the rubbish bin.
- Proceed with the cleaning of the floor.
- When the warning of possible infection is given outside of the workday, the security guard should record this occurrence in the proper file and place a warning on the door of the workplace:

***“PLEASE DO NOT ENTER, AWAITING CLEANING TEAM”***

In completing these tasks, the following should be considered:

- The cleaning should be done with gloves, a protection mask and a disposable gown.
- The cleaning cloth used should not be used for any other procedure.
- Liquid disinfectant should be used for this procedure.

#### **11. STEPS TO TAKE FOR AN ASYMPTOMATIC PERSON RETURNING FROM AN AREA WITH ACTIVE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION IN THE LAST 14 DAYS**

##### **What to do?**

DGS recommends in these cases:

- Stay alert for the appearance of fever, cough, or respiratory difficulty;
- Measure your body temperature two times per day and record the values;

- Check if any of the people with whom you live closely have developed symptoms (fever, cough or respiratory difficulty);
- In case one of the mentioned symptoms appears (in yourself or your cohabitants), do not go immediately to health services;
- First, call SNS24 (808 24 24 24) and follow their instructions.
- Promote social distance, primarily by not staying in locations that are highly frequented or enclosed unless absolutely necessary;
- Avoid greetings with physical contact.

## **12. STEPS TO TAKE FOR AN ASYMPTOMATIC PERSON IN CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED CASE**

### **What to do?**

- Stay alert for the appearance of fever, cough, or respiratory difficulty;
- Measure your body temperature two times per day and record the values;
- Stay in preventative isolation certified by the Health Authorities for 14 days, informing the responsible individual as defined by this entity;
- Call Line SNS24 to inform them of your contact with a confirmed case, in case you develop symptoms; you should only go to health services if so advised by Line SNS24;

Other people (asymptomatic or not) that have not returned from an area with active community transmission and have not had contact with a confirmed case should still complete basic measures of hygiene.

## **13. OTHER MEASURES**

Notwithstanding the application of the rules proposed by the General Directorate of Health, from the moment in which cases of COVID-19 occur, the following measures must also be considered:

- The individual responsible for the Plan will give directions to use masks to those that find themselves performing functions with greater risk of contagion.
- Directions will be given for measures of hand disinfection to be applied at the entrances of buildings.
- Directions will be given so that in the workplaces in which it is possible, the functions and tasks will be executed through telework.

- Depending on how the situation changes, directions to suspend all the activities that are not essential to the functioning of the University may be given in order to minimize the risk of contagion.
- In the worst-case scenario, directions may be given to close a School or Service for a to-be-determined period.

#### **14. PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING CLOSE CONTACTS**

“Close contact” refers a member of the Iscte community that does not present symptoms at the moment, but has had or could have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. The close contact’s type of exposure will determine the type of monitoring they are under.

Close contacts with a confirmed case of COVID-19 can be classified as:

- **High risk of exposure**, which includes:
  - Colleagues who have shared an office, room, section or area of up to 2 meters with a confirmed patient;
  - Members of the academic community or others who have been face-to-face with a confirmed patient or with them in a closed space;
  - Colleagues that have shared dishes (plates, cups, silverware), towels or other objects and equipment (telephones, printers) that could be contaminated with respiratory droplets with a confirmed patient.
- **Low risk of exposure**, which includes:
  - Members of the academic community who have had sporadic (momentary) contact with a confirmed case (ex. greetings in passing);
  - Members of the academic community who have provided assistance to a confirmed case, as long as they followed the measures of prevention (ex. appropriate use of gloves and mask, respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene).

The estimated incubation period of COVID-19 is from 2 to 12 days. As a measure of precaution, close contacts will be actively monitored for 14 days after the final date of exposure.

The monitoring of close contacts with “High risk of exposure” entails:

- Active monitoring by the Local Health Authority for 14 days after the final exposure;
- Absence from Iscte during those 14 days;
- Daily self-monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, cough or difficulty breathing;

- Restricting social contact to only that which is essential;
- Not traveling;
- Being reachable for active monitoring during the 14 days after the final date of exposure.

The monitoring of close contacts with “Low risk of exposure” entails:

- Daily self-monitoring of COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, cough or difficulty breathing;

If no symptoms arise in 14 days after the final exposure, that concludes the situation for the purposes of preventing and combating COVID-19.

## **15. MEASURES FOR CONTINUING ACADEMIC ACTIVITY**

The maintenance of academic activity at Iscte during the situation of contingency due to COVID-19 infection entails ensuring that the community has continued safe and healthy conditions, following the general principles of prevention.

Those responsible for the continuation of academic activity are the Directors of Schools and Research Units. Under the present Plan, teaching staff and researchers who are affected by COVID-19 should be replaced to the furthest extent possible, and the measures adopted should be communicated to the Rector.

Alternatively, as closely as possible, the responsible individuals mentioned should ensure the continuation of the teaching-learning and research processes, namely by using the platform *e-learning*, preparing recovery plans for academic activity and altering evaluation periods, but without sacrificing quality or the standards of this Higher Education Institution.

## **16. MEASURES FOR CONTINUING CENTRAL SERVICES**

Attendance for students and applicants to higher education and other programmes as well as the IT support for the community are guaranteed by Academic Services (SGE), Information and Documentation Services (SID), IT Infrastructures and Communication Services (SIIC) and the International Relations Unit (URI) (which also monitors incoming and outgoing exchange students in connection with the Schools and SGE, and communicates with the National Erasmus Agency, partner universities and international student recruitment agencies). Those responsible for these services should identify the tasks necessary for the completion of their

objectives and define the minimum amount of services necessary for their functioning. These measures should be reported to the Office of COVID-19 Prevention by the date 5 business days after the release of this Plan.

The reduction of an attendance period may also be considered, and attendance through e-mail or telephone (not in-person) is advised.

During public attendance, basic measures of hygiene should be completed. Those responsible for these services should ensure that their workers knows these measures and the steps taken towards their achievement.

In order to guarantee the provision of activities and/or services, you may resort to internal mobility (through the allocation of workers from other Services to SGE, SID and SIIC) and, provided an appropriate rationale, the formalization of services provided.

In exceptional cases, strictly when necessary and possible, according to the nature of the workplace, procedures of flexible schedules and work from a distance (telework) can be adopted by means of a proposal approved by an immediate superior.

As regards cleaning and building security services, the individual responsible for the UER should contact the companies that provide these services so that all the measures of the present plan can be completed, namely those which refer to the sanitization of buildings, the Isolation Room, and other defined by the Office of COVID-19 Prevention.

## **17. INFORMATION AND DISSIMULATION**

- Placement of information cards in visible locations:
  - ✓ The entryways of Building 1, Building 2, and Ala Autonomia;
  - ✓ TV screens;
  - ✓ Elevators;
  - ✓ Hallways in the various building;
  - ✓ Meal spaces;
  - ✓ Library;
  - ✓ Rooms of attendance for students;

- ✓ Study rooms;
  - ✓ Sanitary facilities;
  - ✓ José Pinto Peixoto Residence.
- 
- Dissemination on the site (<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/>) and by email of DGS informational material on the prevention of the Coronavirus (COVID-2019) and the Contingency Plan.
  - Questions may be submitted for clarification to this email address: [covid19@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:covid19@iscte-iul.pt);
  - Iscte emergency contact: 217 930 101.

## **18. PREVENTION OFFICE | COVID-19**

The individual responsible for the Iscte Contingency Plan before the relevant authorities is the Rector, who is responsible for maintaining the procedures defined in the Contingency Plan for COVID-19, as well as for monitoring the DGS recommendations and other instructions applicable to the Public Administration in general, or to Public Higher Education Institutions.

The individual responsible for the Contingency Plan will define a Team that will constitute the Office of COVID-19 Prevention.

The responsibilities of the Office of COVID-19 Prevention include:

- Assuring that adequate assistance is provided to any suspected case that occurs within the Iscte facilities;
- Ensuring the completion of the measures described in the Contingency Plan;
- Collaborating with the Local Health Authorities to identify the close contacts of a patient;
- Providing information to the Rectory on any situation that occurs within the Iscte facilities related to COVID-19;
- Updating the Contingency Plan when there are new internal or external instructions;
- Ensuring that an individual in isolation makes contact with others through telephone to guarantee that adequate assistance is provided until the exit of the isolation area;
- In case of necessity, accompanying or providing assistance to an ill person should always be done while using a disposable mask and gloves, along with the completion of basic precautions of infection control such as hand hygiene after contact with an ill person.

The Iscte community is responsible for following the directions of the current Contingency Plan, as well as the measures established by DGS, the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization.