

# RESPONSE PLAN

## HOW TO HANDLE PROPERTY SHOWINGS AND INSPECTIONS

It's important for all landlords to continually monitor guidance from the CDC, to keep up-to-date with any changes and to help protect themselves and others, and to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Before creating a best practices safety plan, it's important to have a clear understanding of the terms quarantine and isolation. Both require abstaining from physical contact with others, but for different reasons.

Here are the CDC definitions for the terms quarantine and isolation:

### QUARANTINE

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Someone in self-quarantine stays separated from others, and they limit movement outside of their home or current place. A person may have been exposed to the virus without knowing it (for example, when traveling or out in the community), or they could have the virus without feeling symptoms. Quarantine helps limit further spread of COVID-19.

### ISOLATION

Isolation is used to separate sick people from healthy people. People who are in isolation should stay home. In the home, anyone sick should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick" bedroom or space and using a different bathroom (if possible).

**CDC Website: Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation. Keep Your Distance to Slow the Spread**

Currently, CDC guidance advises anyone who has been in contact with a person who is infected with COVID-19, or recently traveled outside of the U.S. to self-quarantine. On the other hand, anyone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should self-isolate. [See symptoms to look for.](#)

At this time, it's important for anyone who experiences symptoms to follow the CDC's self-isolation guidelines. [This page is updated regularly.](#)

Additionally, anyone who has traveled to or been in contact with anyone from a Warning - Level 3 Country should be advised to work remotely and follow CDC guidance to self-quarantine for 14 days.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Additionally, as a landlord, you should follow CDC guidance on social distancing whenever possible. Any contractors or personnel who visit or enter a home should be asked to follow this guidance as well.

Social distancing is especially important for [anyone who is at a higher risk of getting very sick.](#)

Here is the CDC guidance on social distancing:

- Stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people
- Do not gather in groups
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

Other precautionary measures that field personnel should be asked to take includes:

- Wearing disposable gloves
- Wear protective facemasks
- Wear disposable booties
- Repeated and careful hand sanitization: "Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available." ([CDC](#))

**See a complete list of CDC guidance on education for helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

## CONDUCTING SHOWINGS

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At Renters Warehouse, we are currently continuing to conduct move-in inspections and property showings as necessary in situations where it is safe to do so, and will be taking the appropriate precautions. Our agents are also prepared and equipped to perform inspections or showings via FaceTime (video and audio).

If you find yourself with a vacancy, now may be a good time to transition into a high-tech, no-contact method of showing and renting units. One idea is to install a keypad lock, so that entrants can just use the lock code instead of having to worry about the transfer of physical keys.

Another idea is to go digital with your interview process. Consider using an app like Skype or Zoom, or even arranging a phone call to conduct interviews with applications, rather than conducting traditional face-to-face interviews. Prepare your questions ahead of time, and then run your applicant through them. Just make sure you use the same screening criteria and interview questions on all of your applicants to ensure compliance with The Fair Housing Act.

When it comes to showings, you can do virtual walk-throughs by creating videos, and taking plenty of good photos –both inside and out. Most people will be able to get a fairly good idea about whether they're interested in a property with these steps. You can also evaluate applications, and sign a lease without ever meeting an applicant in person.

When you do find a tenant and need to hand over the keys, you can use the keypad lock, or if you don't have one, swap the keys at a distance. One way to do this is to arrange to meet at the property a specific time. You can then leave the keys in the door and wait in your car until they arrive. This is also a good way to allow serious applicants a chance to see the property in-person, before they move in.

If you're planning to show a property in-person, make sure you check your state's regulations on business activities first.

### Important Steps All Landlords Should Take Now:

It is important to send out email communication to all residents at this time. An email template can be found via the following link:

- [Example communication to Residents](#)

**Important:** Residents should be notified and instructed in an email that if someone in their household is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is scheduled for repairs or maintenance, they should inform you as soon as possible.

Residents who have any questions or concerns should be instructed to notify you as well.

### Taking Steps to Limit In-Person Interactions:

Real estate services, including property management, have been classified as part of the nation's critical infrastructure as outlined in the [Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency \(CISA\)](#) memorandum guidelines published on March 28, 2020.

However, at Renters Warehouse, we are proactively working to eliminate any unnecessary in-person interactions. It's a good idea for any landlords with this capacity to work toward this step as soon as possible.

Whenever possible, move-in and move-out inspections should be conducted after residents have vacated in order to minimize in-person interaction.

You should also advise your residents to continue to utilize your online platforms or to call the office rather than visiting for any needs they may have.

