



Health Service Executive
HEALTHCARE WORKER
ACCOMMODATION
National Guidance Document For
Staff Accommodation during
Covid-19

Date: 09 April 2020

Version 01

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Purpose

The HSE is very much aware and appreciative of the commitment, dedication and the hard work that all Healthcare Workers are showing on the frontline. This document is to provide accommodation guidance in relation to the steps taken by the HSE to support Healthcare Workers in response to Covid-19.

This national operational guidance document describes the following:

- Access to the accommodation service
- Guidance for healthcare workers
- Guidance for Accommodation Providers
- Next Steps
- Useful Links.

Infectious disease outbreaks, like the current Covid-19, can cause significant disruption to daily life and can affect your mental health. While you may be anxious, there are many things you can do to support and manage your mental health during such times. You may find it helps to stay in touch with friends or relatives by phone or on social media. See yourmentalhealth.ie for more advice. In addition, the Employee Assistance and Counselling Service (EACS) is available as a national independent service free of charge to all employees in HSE funded hospitals and community health organisations and divisions. You can phone or email the service in your area directly. You do not need to discuss this with any one and you can access it at a time and place that suits you. Please go to HSE.ie or <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplacehealthwellbng/stfsuprts/eacounsel/eacs-providers-150617.pdf> for further guidance.

If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms like fever and/or cough, you should immediately self-isolate regardless of travel or contact history. If you are experiencing these symptoms and are concerned you have been in contact with a person infected with Covid-19, self-isolate and contact your GP (family doctor) by phone. Do not go to your GP surgery in person. Your GP will assess you and decide if a test for Covid-19 is necessary. You can also call **HSE Live** on **1850 24 1850** for further guidance.

1. Scope of Document

The following document sets out a single process for Healthcare Workers if they have been affected by Covid-19 in some way, to ensure temporary accommodation is available at suitable locations within their immediate work area.

This staff accommodation service will operate under the existing governance structures of Covid-19 Area Crisis Management Teams (ACMT). A nominated local manager will manage referrals as received from Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) / Hospital Group / National Ambulance Service (NAS) / Private Nursing Home levels for the provision of accommodation during the period of Covid-19.

Healthcare Worker data and any other files associated with persons availing of this service will be managed by local management and will respect GDPR guidelines.

Healthcare Worker Profile

The term “Healthcare Workers” refers to all staff working in frontline healthcare provision including HSE staff, community healthcare staff, staff working in Section 38 and 39 organisations including voluntary hospital staff, NAS staff, staff in private nursing homes and long-term residential facilities in disability and mental health, home support and personal assistant staff both directly employed or through voluntary / private providers across Older Persons Services, Disability Service and Mental Health Services for the period of Covid-19.

In the interest of the current public health policy, it is envisaged that the following Healthcare Workers will be eligible to apply for the voluntary accommodation service:

- Healthcare Workers whose family members are self-isolating and who are therefore not able to return home
- Healthcare Workers who are living with vulnerable persons
- Healthcare Workers who require emergency accommodation due to urgent response or mitigating factors
- Healthcare Workers who require accommodation in order to facilitate rosters
- Healthcare Workers, other than couples or co-habiting family members who normally live together, sharing accommodation who are at an increased risk of contracting and/or spreading Covid-19
- Healthcare Workers returning from overseas who are contracted to work and require accommodation
- Healthcare workers who reside in congregated domestic living arrangements e.g. hostels, direct provision centres etc.
- Other needs as agreed at local level.

It is anticipated that both short and longer term accommodation may be required and decisions will be made at local management level.

Where Healthcare Workers are residing in congregated domestic settings, such staff are advised of the risks associated with their current living arrangements and are encouraged to consider their eligibility to re-locate to alternative temporary accommodation. By re-locating to more appropriate accommodation, staff will be facilitated to comply with public health advice in regard to limiting social interaction as follows:

- reducing interactions with people outside the workplace and the home
- avoidance of communal sleeping areas
- avoid crowded areas
- avoid spending more than 15 minutes in close contact with other people.

In addition, Healthcare Workers are advised of the benefits for themselves, other staff and service users in opting for the temporary accommodation service, which includes the interruption of transmitting the disease and preventing onward spread in long-term residential settings and the community.

The effectiveness and efficiency of this temporary accommodation model will require on-going review. Therefore, the information provided in this document is subject to further change as the Covid-19 situation evolves and as feedback from Healthcare Workers, CHOs, Hospital Groups, Private Nursing Homes, Private Homecare Providers and NAS is received. This document along with any future versions of same will be uploaded onto the HSE website.

2. Access to the Accommodation Service

As a pre-cursor to the procedures outlined below, the nominated local manager in each CHO, Hospital Group and NAS will actively engage with their local Estates Offices in order to ensure that a sufficient demand led supply is in place at all times. Refer to Appendix 1 for the list of local contacts. Refer to Appendix 3 for the list of local property representatives per CHO region. In CHOs the local manager will also represent, communicate and collate the demands arising from S.38, S.39, Private Nursing Home and Private Residential Care organisations also.

Each ACMT, CHO, Hospital Group and NAS can routinely obtain a log of all accommodation availability in their areas from their local property representative in Estates. This log comprises hotels, apartments, houses, student accommodation, pro bono offers etc.

In some instances, Estates will already have vetted premises, room rate arrangements and other terms and conditions. In other cases, they will not. It is reasonable to understand, that either way, a lead-time will exist where a new or replacement arrangement is required and this should be considered in order to avoid urgent requirements escalating.

In examining and deciding on accommodation options, accommodation will be located as close as reasonably possible to the Healthcare Worker's place of work. However, where transport is required, local arrangements may be made. Further information will be made available, in due course, on the HSE website. Consideration should also be given to the availability of food options as not all accommodation options will provide this service. Criteria around the necessity for a food offering should be discussed and made clear to the local Estates office prior to acquisition.

The following outlines the access procedure for Healthcare Workers requiring temporary accommodation:

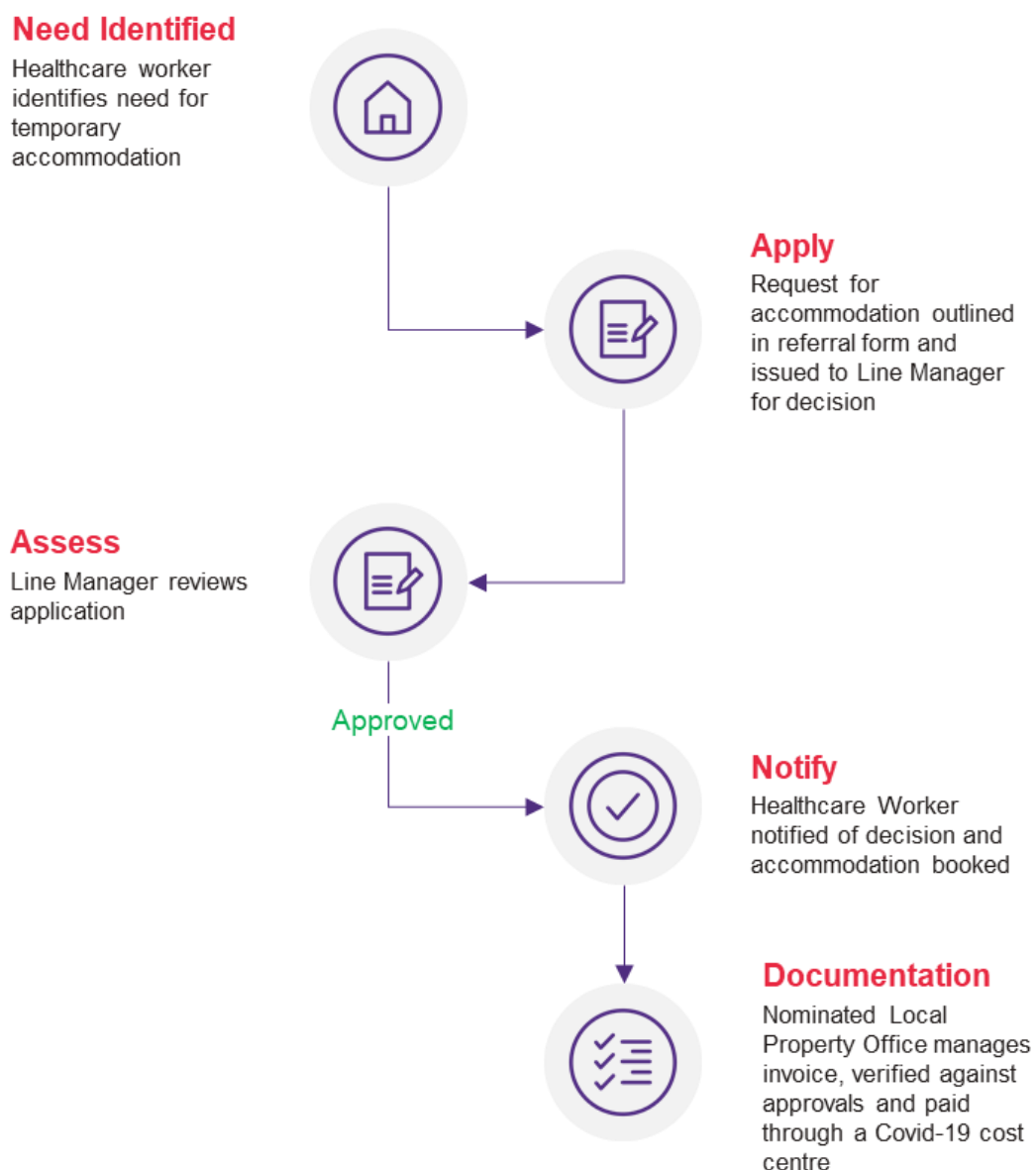
- Requests for application for temporary accommodation should be made by the Healthcare Worker through a referral form (example shown in Appendix 4) and returned to the local line manager for approval through local agreed arrangements
- On receipt of the application, and on making a decision to grant approval for temporary accommodation, the local manager should review the existing accommodation stock in place for their area and make the necessary accommodation allocation for the staff
- It is the responsibility of the local manager to ensure that suitably matched allocations are made so as to limit interactions of Healthcare Workers from different clinical settings and clinical care systems sharing the same accommodation
- Where a decision is made to decline an application for any reason, the applicant's line manager should be informed by the decision maker with a reasoned explanation outlined for onward communication to the applicant
- Payments for temporary staff accommodation made under these procedures will be processed and managed by the local Estates offices
- On receipt of the invoice, the local Estates Office will contact the local manager and request that they properly vouch for the number of bookings made during the subject billing period in order to validate the payment
- It will be the responsibility of the local manager to keep a log of bookings per day / per property in order to assist with this payment process
- Once properly vouched in a timely manner, Estates will process the invoice for payment
- Where an invoice query arises Estates, with the local manager will jointly assist in clarifying with the accommodation provider Where arrangements are acquired outside of this process (either before the issue of this guidance or after), it is expected that the service

continues to manage the arrangement including making payments directly to the accommodation provider

- Healthcare Workers who claim expenses in line with HSE National Financial Regulations, therefore need only claim the daily subsistence rate if appropriate (HSE National Financial Regulations with regard to travel and subsistence apply, refer to HSE website)
- It is the responsibility of the local manager to cancel rooms as soon as possible and to note same on the referral form. Individual Healthcare Staff are advised to inform their nominated line manager as soon as possible if they wish to cancel rooms.

Any queries relating to the staff accommodation process should be brought, in the first instance, to the attention of your local Line Manager.

An overview of the temporary accommodation process is outlined in the page overleaf:



3. Guidance for Healthcare Workers

Healthcare Workers will:

- Limit the amount of contact with accommodation staff and other residents
- Limit interaction with staff from different clinical settings and, where possible, not mix with staff from other clinical care systems
- Practice physical distancing (minimum 2 metres)
- Stay in their rooms as much as reasonably practicable
- Minimise time in communal areas to reduce risk of infection to colleagues
- Where possible, limit to 1 or 2 people at a time in lifts, or to use the stairs if appropriate
- Ideally eat in their room. If meals are provided with the accommodation, practice physical distancing and sit at tables at least 2 metres apart
- Place all rubbish/waste in bins provided
- Clean hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol gel if available
- Not allow visitors into their accommodation in order to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus
- Adhere to additional requirements that may be introduced based on Public Health guidance (<https://www.hpsc.ie/>)
- Respect protocols and procedures put in place by the Accommodation provider specific to that particular location
- Follow guidelines, should they develop symptoms that could indicate Covid-19
- Healthcare Workers may be asked, where possible, to wipe down frequently touched objects and surfaces in their rooms including door handles, taps, kettle, toilet flush, TV remote control etc. using a detergent wipe/detergent spray which will be supplied by the accommodation provider.

To ensure adherence to infection control protocols, Accommodation Personnel will not clean rooms with Healthcare Workers present.

At all times, all Healthcare Workers are advised to consult the Health Protection Surveillance Centre website <https://www.hpsc.ie/>, which provides up to date guidance on Covid-19 and IP&C advice for staff.

4. Guidance for Accommodation Providers

The local HSE Estate's Property Office will engage with the accommodation providers to ensure:

- Accommodation providers are advised to consult the Health Protection Surveillance Centre website <https://www.hpsc.ie/>, which provides up to date guidance on Covid-19 and Infection Prevention Control advice
- Accommodation providers operate in accordance with an agreed set of protocols and standards specific to the accommodation facility e.g. opening hours, check-in procedures, access, cleaning regimes etc.
- Accommodation providers maintain Health and Safety responsibility for the accommodation facility at all times
- Accommodation providers adhere to fire safety measures to include designated fire evacuation areas which allow for staff staying at the accommodation to gather while facilitating physical distancing
- Accommodation providers maintain and upkeep the accommodation facility

- Where Estates deem necessary, the HSE's local Environmental Health Office will be consulted re food hygiene or environmental standards

5. Next Steps

- Each CHO / Hospital Group has nominated person(s) to respond to accommodation enquiries (see Appendix 1).
- Information including updates will be available on the HSE website in relation to the staff accommodation process.
- The process for accessing accommodation may be updated in due course, including a web portal to make online bookings.

6. Useful Links

- HSE Coronavirus - <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
- Yourmentalhealth - www.yourmentalhealth.ie.
- Health Protection Surveillance Centre website - <https://www.hpsc.ie/>
- HSE Employee Assistance and Consulting Service - <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-unit/employee-assistance-and-counselling-service/>
- HSE Mental Health Engagement - www.hse.ie/mentalhealthengagement/
- HSE National Financial Regulations - <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/financial%20regulations/>
- Mental Health Ireland - www.mentalhealthireland.ie
- GROW - www.grow.ie
- Aware - www.aware.ie
- Shine - www.shine.ie
- Family Carers Ireland - www.familycarers.ie

Appendix 1 – List of Contacts per CHO Region / Hospital Group / National Ambulance Service

CHO Region / Hospital Group / National Ambulance Service	Nominated Representative	Email address
CHO1	Siobhan Patten	Siobhan.Patten@hse.ie
CHO2	Martin Greaney	martin.greaney@hse.ie
CHO3	Anthony Floyd	anthony.floyd@hse.ie
CHO4	Spencer Turvey	spencer.turvey1@hse.ie
CHO5	Jeanette Dwyer	hosc.southeast@hse.ie
CHO6	Edward Meaney	edward.meaney@hse.ie
CHO7	Jamie Regan	jamie.regan@hse.ie
CHO8	Paul Hannon	paul.hannon@hse.ie
CHO9	Ann Curley	headofhr.dncc@hse.ie
National Ambulance Service	William Merriman	william.merriman@hse.ie
Royal College of Surgeons In Ireland (RCSI)	Sheila McGuinness	coo@rcsihospitals.ie
Dublin Midlands Hospital Group (DMGH)	Sonia Shortt	sonia.shortt@hse.ie
Ireland East Hospital Group (IEHG)	Sinead Brennan	sbrennan@iehg.ie
Saolta University Health Care Group	Ann Cosgrove	ann.cosgrove@hse.ie
Children's Health Ireland (CHI)	Trevor Murphy	HRD@nchg.ie
South / South West Hospital Group (SSWHG)	Annette Dennehy	Annette.dennehy@hse.ie
UL Hospital Group	Joanne McNamara	joanne.mcnamara4@hse.ie



Appendix 2 – CHO and Hospital Group Map



Appendix 3 – Nominated Property Representatives per CHO

CHO Region	Estates Representative	Email address
CHO1 – Donegal	Kathleen O’ Dwyer	KathleenM.ODwyer@hse.ie
CHO1 – Sligo and Leitrim	Martin Beirne	martin.beirne@hse.ie
CHO1 – Cavan and Monaghan	Alicia Daly	Alicia.Daly@hse.ie
CHO2	Hugh Forde	Hugh.Forde@hse.ie
CHO3	Sandra Sheahan	sandra.sheahan@hse.ie
CHO4	Kevin O’ Connor	Kevin.OConnor@hse.ie
CHO5	Elaine Daly	Elaine.Daly@hse.ie
CHO6	Derek Gilmartin	derek.gilmartin@hse.ie
CHO7	Derek Gilmartin	derek.gilmartin@hse.ie
CHO8 – Meath and Louth	Alicia Daly	Alicia.Daly@hse.ie
CHO8 – Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath	Brenda Colgan	brenda.colgan@hse.ie
CHO9	Alicia Daly	Alicia.Daly@hse.ie
<p>Note: Hospital Groups incl. CHI, National Ambulance Service, S.38 & 39 Organisations, Private Nursing Homes etc. all to follow geography of CHO boundaries for contact details.</p>		

Appendix 4 – Example of Temporary Accommodation Referral Form

 Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte Health Service Executive	Temporary Accommodation Referral Form	 Coronavirus COVID-19 Public Health Advice
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Any queries relating to the staff accommodation process should be brought to the attention your local Line Manager.

Health Care Worker name			
Healthcare Address			
		Email	
Tel/Mobile #			
Personnel Number		Discipline	
Area			
Reason for Accommodation			
Total Nights (including dates)			
<i>Specify any transport requirements</i>			

Line Manager			
Healthcare Address			
Signature		Date	
Email		Tel/Mobile	
Form Submitted to		Date	

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