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# How Can Property Managers And Gated Communities Fight COVID-19?

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A Handbook for Property Managers, Facility Managers, Owners Associations and Security Agencies



# Foreword

TheHouseMonk is currently working with 100's of Owner Associations, Property Managers, and Facility Management companies to help manage real estate assets for over 7 years now. The past few days have been unprecedented and many organisations are struggling to cope with the sudden change in protocols.

The following is a simple handbook to help such organisations navigate the next few weeks/months.

Please note - We are not offering any medical or legal advice through this document, but are simply sharing our view points and best practices as seen across the world.

# Agenda

1. Covering The Basics
2. Best Practices for Staff On-Site
3. Rules to Implement for Residents
4. Property Management Guidelines
5. Measures to Take at Main Gate
6. Community Management Tips
7. Managing Accounts and Finance
8. COVID-19 Self Declaration Form Template
9. Concluding Thoughts



# Covering The Basics

Before going into specifics, it's very important that we have our bases covered.



# Covering The Basics



## Full Lockdown Immediately

No one goes in or out, unless it is an exceptional case. Exceptions can be made for residents going to buy essentials from the local stores but strictly on a need basis

## Single Communication Channel

Whether through WhatsApp/Telegram, or through Apartment Management Apps, ensure communication to all residents is done through a single source to avoid spread of misinformation

## Identify The Vulnerable

Make a list of elderly people living by themselves, physically handicapped people and those with special needs, and those living alone - these 3 groups would need extra support during this time

# Covering The Basics



## Self Declaration Forms

Collect data about residents pertaining to recent foreign travel, foreign visitors and interaction with a positive case of COVID-19. This is for monitoring and record keeping purposes

## Cover the essential supplies

Whether through a store within the community, or through vendors/delivery companies - ensure a solution is provided to residents to procure essential supplies

## Implementation of technology

For visitor/parcel management, collection of dues, reporting complaints, etc. - everything should be app based. Technology can be good way to communicate during social distancing

# Best Practices for On-Site Staff

Extremely important to ensure that your staff is trained well to handle this situation



# Best Practices for On-Site Staff

## Keep only necessary staff members

- Reduce the number of workers on premises immediately. Keep only those who are **ABSOLUTELY** essential. Remove most of your housekeeping team, unnecessary security personnel, accountant, gardener, etc.

## Educate the staff

- Give clear instructions on safety protocols to staff members, especially around hygiene and best practices. Repeat these instructions daily, so they understand the importance

## Increase their pay

- The team that is working during these times are literally risking their lives - they fall under the 'Heroes' category. Ensure you compensate them by increasing their pay



# Best Practices for On-Site Staff

## Mandatory temperature screening

- Ensure temperature checks twice a day for staff who are working. Even the smallest sign of any illness warrants sending them back to their respective homes

## Equipment for staff

- Protective clothing, masks and gloves to be made compulsory while working on site. The same should be provided by the management committee/property management company

## Health insurance

- Most workers don't have adequate health insurance. Ensure that the staff members and their families have coverage under good health insurance



# Rules to Implement for Residents

Set up a few ground rules, and be robust in ensuring compliance to them.



# Rules For Residents

## 01 Mandatory quarantine for all residents

A non-negotiable home quarantine for all residents. Only exceptions can be procurement of essentials, but limited to specific time slots

## 02 No social gatherings or events

Residents should not be allowed to enter each other's houses for any reason (including birthday parties, tuition classes, etc.). social meetings at common areas (like park, etc.) should also be discouraged

# Rules For Residents

## 03 Domestic helps to be given mandatory leave

Unless they are a live-in help, housekeepers/cooks/drivers, and other types of help should not be allowed inside the premises

## 04 'No - Guests' policy

Residents should not be allowed to invite their friends or family over for social reasons at this time. For exceptional reasons, the same can be done after consent from management

# Rules For Residents

## 05 Daily walks for pets

This can be permitted, but it's advisable that all pet-parents communicate with each other about timings to ensure that there is not crowding. Important to ensure that a 6 foot gap is maintained if multiple people are walking pets at the same time

## 06 Daily exercise/walks

The best practice during times like these would be home work outs. People can spend time in their balconies for a breath of fresh air. If really necessary, apartments can consider opening their terrace, but with restricted access timings

# Property Management Guidelines

Critical to prioritise and strategise correctly to ensure premises is maintained well.



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# Property Management Guidelines

## Clean zones

- Clean zones and isolated rest sites to be implemented for those who move around the apartment. This space is meant for staff only, and not for anyone else

## Washbasins In common areas

- Washbasins and restrooms in common areas are to be supplied with soap to ensure that disinfection is mandated throughout the facility

## Waste disposal

- Separate trash disposal with insulation seals provided by management for bio wastes, gloves, masks and toothpicks

# Property Management Guidelines

## Common amenities to be shut down

- Clubhouse or other amenities are to be shut for at least a month and fees to maintain the same is to be waived off. These are hotbeds for infection and spread of viruses

## Elevator sanitation

- Elevators and their buttons to be covered with plastic wraps which should then be constantly replaced to ensure proper sanitation

## Disinfection of commonly touched objects

- Regular soap water disinfection of doorknobs, bells and handles to be conducted preferably 4 times a day



# Property Management Guidelines

## Fumigation protocols

- Fumigation through aerosols and floor disinfection are to be conducted twice a day to curtail the spread

## Stocking up on essentials

- Maintenance of surplus stock of diesel and water to overcome power and drinking water scarcity in the near future is a must

## Prioritise maintenance works

- Not every maintenance task that has been scheduled needs to happen during this period. Unless an asset breaks down, or maintenance is required to provide essential services to residents, it should be postponed




## Measures At The Main Gate

Movement should be restricted and monitored at the main gate.



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# Measures At The Main Gate



## Temperature screening

Ensure temperature is recorded of everyone moving into the community (visitors, deliveries, etc.) through infrared temperature guns

## Handling parcels

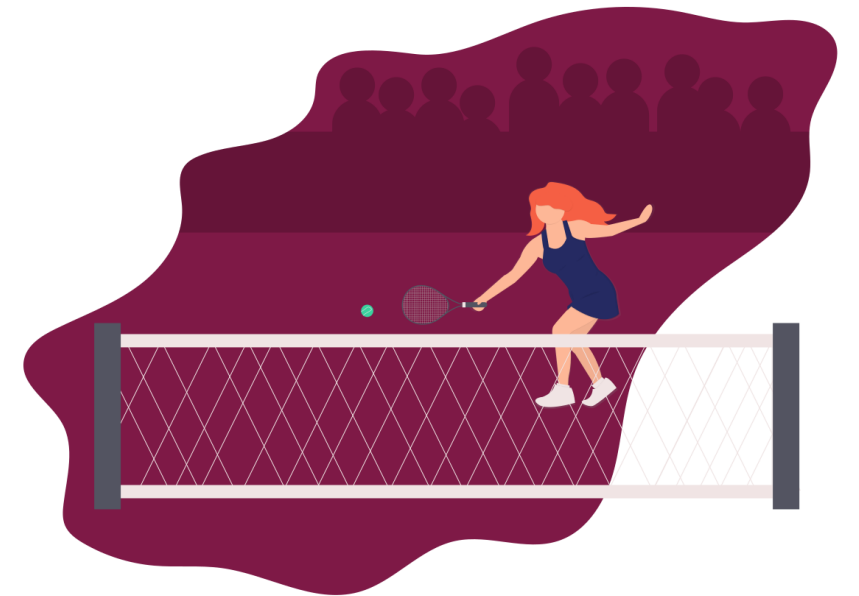
All parcels should be collected and disinfected at the main gate using aerosol based disinfectants. Residents can come and collect the same at pre-scheduled time slots

## Restricted entry

Security staff to be instructed not to let unnecessary movement in or out of the gates. Entry of non-residents should be done only after the pre-requisite permission is taken, and necessary temperature checks are done

# Community Management Tips

These amenities have a tendency to be points of interaction between residents.



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# Community Management Tips

## Move classes online

- Community organised classes residents (which happen in clubhouse or common areas) can be organised digitally to ensure that there isn't too much disruption for residents

## Volunteers to help those in need

- Residents can nominate themselves as volunteers to help the most vulnerable with their requirements including food, cleanliness, medical assistance, and others.

## Virtual play-dates for kids

- This period can be especially difficult for kids who have short attention spans. Organising digital community meet-ups for kids so they can see their friends would be a much appreciated initiative



# Managing Finances and Accounts

Financial prudence is of utmost importance



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# Managing Finances and Accounts

01

Retain financial policies as before

It is important to try and ensure BAU (Business As Usual) continues. Payment policies on receivable and payables should be same as before

02

Dipping into the sinking funds

These extraordinary circumstances would justify spending from the communities sinking fund, so in the case of the current account balance running low, this is always an available source of capital

# Managing Finances and Accounts

## 03 Payments to staff and vendors

Ensure payments are made in full and on time to the staff and vendors who are working through this, as they would suffer the most despite putting maximum effort during the pandemic

## 04 Postpone statutory compliances

Property taxes, GST, and other payments can be paid later (as most Govts. have relaxed the norms). Conserve that cash now to make essential payments



# COVID-19 Self Declaration Form

Learn the travel history, medical history and predisposition of your tenants to provide better safety. Use this template to generate your own self declaration form.

[Get the form Here](#)



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# Concluding Note

We are living in unprecedented circumstances and it requires extraordinary actions by all stakeholders to come out ahead. TheHouseMonk has created this report after speaking to many professionals involved in the industry and is sharing it with the community to help everyone during these tough times.

If we can help any business, small or large, get through these tough times, we would be more than happy to offer assistance. Please reach out to us through any of the modes mentioned below.

We are all in this together.

Website: [www.thehousemonk.com](http://www.thehousemonk.com)

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Thank you!



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