

10 Tips for Owners' Management Companies During COVID-19

All decisions should reflect the advice and guidance of the HSE and Department of Health. Up to date information is available on the HSE's website: [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus).

1. Display HSE COVID-19 Posters

Consider putting up HSE posters in common areas with advice on preventing the spread of COVID-19. These posters are available from the HSE website: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>.

2. Get Guidance and Advice from the Estate Management Agent

OMC directors should seek advice from the management agent and be guided by their experience and expertise. The agent is a trained property professional and should be licensed by the PSRA.

3. Consider Prioritising the Cleaning of High-Contact Common Areas

Identify ways to prioritise the cleaning of common areas, particularly sanitising door handles, push plates, keypads, lift buttons, and handrails. Consider if resources could be diverted from non-essential works, e.g. gardening or litter-picking, to facilitate these measures.

4. Communication with OMC Members

Clear, consistent communication is recommended with a balance between sufficient communication and too much. Ascertain whether formal online channels, such as Blockman or alternative online tools, are available for communications. Consider other options available through social media channels operated by residents' groups.

5. Communication with Residents

Remember that about 80% of apartment residents are renters/tenants, and therefore not members of the OMC. Communication by notices posted to letterboxes, or posters erected in lobbies, halls, lift cars, and carparks may be most effective.

6. Contact Other Stakeholders

Engagement with local authorities, Housing Bodies, or commercial organisations owning homes in the estate may be beneficial in achieving communication with all residents.

7. Curtailment of Access to Non-Essential Common Areas

Consider curtailment of access to or the closure of high contact but low priority parts of the estate, such as playgrounds, gyms, halls, or other amenities.

8. Hold Board Meetings by Telephone or Online

It would be best for OMC directors to meet and take decisions by way of virtual means, or written resolution over email. Check that your OMC Constitution allows for these arrangements.

9. Postponing the Annual General Meeting

AGMs may be held up to 15 months apart. The MUD Act requires a meeting in each year. The date of the 2019 AGM will determine whether the 2020 AGM can be delayed. The implications of this for the OMC's finances should be carefully considered. Directors should be mindful of their duties and responsibilities under company law.

10. Consider Employees

Does the OMC have direct employees? Consider the health and safety of all staff members.

Information provided above is general in nature. It should not be considered to amount to legal advice, and no reliance should be placed on it. The Housing Agency cannot be held responsible for actions or failure to act on foot of the information provided. Professional legal advice may be necessary in relation to the individual circumstances or facts of a particular case.

For further information email
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