

General guidance for commercial, residential and mixed condominiums

Updated April 7, 2020

On April 7, 2020, the Health Department of Costa Rica issued a new update (v4) of the general guidance for commercial, residential and mixed condominiums, with regards to the COVID-19 crisis.

Because of the authority granted to the Health Department, such general guidance is mandatory and it will remain valid and enforceable until it is revoked by the authority.

The main changes are the following:

- a) It is not authorized the use of the built common recreative areas of the condominiums (club house, rooftops, jacuzzi, gym, BBQ, cinema, social rooms, etc.).
- b) The non-built common recreative areas (green areas, sports courts, etc.) can be used for walk, following the social distancing rules.
- c) Pools, in both common and private areas, shall be closed.
- d) The constructions and repairs of common areas and private areas (units) are authorized.
- e) A suggestion to use the elevators only by people of the same unit in each trip.
- f) If the guidelines are not followed, the Administrator or the Management Board are authorized to restrict the use and establish new measures.

The new guidelines are below.

Guidelines for the management board or the administrator

- 1.1. Establish a communication channel with the owners, tenants, residents and users in case that one of them can be considered a suspicious case of COVID-19 or he/she was in contact with a suspicious case, in order to coordinate with the Health Authorities thru the 1322 phone number. Please remember to keep any information of suspicious cases or confirmed cases confidential.
- 1.2. Keep the tenants and owners informed of the rulings and notices sent by the Health Department, as well as the daily reports issued by the Health Department.
- 1.3. Keep informed the owners and tenants about the services and employees of the condominium that will remain in duty. Such employees will need to follow the protocol and guidelines issued by the Health Department about social distancing.
- 1.4. Attend the suppliers, tenants/owners and customers by phone, email and video call.
- 1.5. HOA and management board meetings can be held by electronic means (it is not possible on all the cases because of the internal bylaws); however, it can be in-person if the social distancing (1.8 meters distance) and 50% capacity usage of the premises are followed.
- 1.6. The access of employees (maids, maintenance personnel, teachers) cannot be prohibited. The same rules apply for the delivery of food, medications and other goods.
- 1.7. Suggest that the elevators are used only for residents or users of the same unit in each trip, to reduce the possibility of spread of the virus between units.
- 1.8. Intensify the cleaning measures, especially in the surfaces frequently touched such as: handles, furniture, elevator buttons, door knobs, etc.
- 1.9. Guarantee that the administrative, maintenance and security personnel has protection products like: soap and water, masks, gloves, gel alcohol, disinfectant, disposable towels, etc.
- 1.10. Place the sneeze and cough, hand washing, no touching the face, greetings and population at risk protocols in visible spaces.



1.11. Ensure the access to toilet paper, antibacterial soap, disposable towels for drying hands and gel alcohol in public restrooms, that need to be properly disinfected.

Obligations of tenants and owners

2.1. In case there is one person in the condominium that has symptoms associated with respiratory disease, contact the administrator.

2.2. In case there is an individual with a sanitary order issued by the Health Department, follow the rules and guidelines issued by the same.

2.3. Keep the sneeze and cough, hand washing, no touching the face and greetings protocols as preventive and contingent measures.

2.4. Follow the social distancing protocols issued by the Health Department, as stay-at-home and avoid the physical contact warnings.

2.5. Keep informed through the official sources <https://www.ministeriodesalud.go.cr/>

Please do not hesitate to contact us in case you need further information.

Guillermo E. Zuñiga, socio, ECIJA Legal Costa Rica