

# GUIDANCE FOR GYM OPERATIONS WITHIN UN PREMISES IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

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DHMOSH Public Health Section

This DHMOSH guidance developed by DHMOSH Public Health Section provides guidance on the necessary precautions to be in place if decision is made to re-open/continue operations of gyms and/or other fitness facilities within UN premises. This guideline is in the context of community transmission of COVID-19 in your duty station.

Further updates may be made to this guidance as new evidence emerges. For any questions on this document, contact [dos-dhmosh-public-health@un.org](mailto:dos-dhmosh-public-health@un.org).

## COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS FOR GYM OPERATIONS

### 1. Quota on users / Scheduled entry

- You should establish the maximum numbers of individuals to be permitted in the gym at one time. The numbers should allow for appropriate physical distancing of 2 meters (6 feet) at all times.
- Ensure that UN personnel pre-book time slots to prevent overcrowding or lines outside of the gym area.

### 2. Hand washing

- All personnel should sanitize hands when entering and leaving the gym and as needed throughout their session.
- Hand washing stations with liquid soap and water, or hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol, should be placed in multiple locations throughout the gym area.
- Use touch-free hand washing stations, where possible (i.e. automatic sinks or foot pedals).
- Make sure restrooms are well stocked with soap and drying materials.

### 3. Physical distancing and placement of gym equipment

- All gym users should maintain at least 2 meters (6 feet) distance between each other at all times.
- The gym layout should be rearranged to accommodate the above.
- A one-way traffic flow route should be implemented throughout the building/gym and signage posted up or on floor to clearly indicate direction of flow.
- Gym machines should be turned back to each other in order to reduce face-to-face contact with others.
- If rearranging of machines is not an option, place “do not use” signage and turn-off/unplug select equipment to allow for proper social distancing.
- Pieces of gym equipment should be an appropriate distance apart so as to comply with social distancing guidelines and with a suitable margin for adequate circulation or one-way routes. This can be achieved by moving equipment, using screens to separate equipment or taking equipment out of use. Clearly visible tape should be put around pieces of gym equipment to denote social distance.



- For shared open areas, such as dance and exercise studios, establish temporary floor markings to define the required spacing per individual.
- Assign specific monitoring personnel who can monitor the physical distancing adherence within the gyms.
- Review how people move their way through the gym and consider how to reduce congestion and contact between individuals (e.g. queue management or one-way flow, where possible).

#### **4. Use of masks**

- Individuals should wear a mask when interacting with other people to minimize the risk of transmitting the virus.
- Wearing masks is most important when physical distancing is difficult and when exercise type and intensity allows. Vigorous-intensity exercise should be done outside when possible and staff members should stay at least 2 meters (6 feet) away from other individuals if unable to wear a mask.
- If possible, masks should be worn when walking on an indoor track or when doing stretching or low-intensity forms of yoga indoors.
- Staff members should wash their hands before adjusting their mask and review information about proper use, removal, and washing of masks.

#### **5. Monitoring for infection control adherence**

- All staff members should be briefed on infection control policies and procedures e.g. via a virtual town hall or an all-staff broadcast, prior to re-opening of gym facilities.
- A staff member should be present on-site at the gym to monitor for adherence to gym capacity, physical distancing, hand hygiene, ensuring stationary equipment is not moved, and cleaning of shared equipment, etc.
- Anyone identified ill should immediately be isolated from others, and the UN medical officer should be notified immediately, and necessary SOPs followed.

#### **6. Use of shared equipment**

- Avoid use of shared objects (e.g. towels, robes, balls, weights, rackets, balls, scoring equipment, sports clothing) unless they can be cleaned or sanitized between users.
- Each time an equipment is used, it should be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.

#### **7. Ventilation**

- Maintain good ventilation within the gym. For example, open windows and doors frequently, where possible.
- Work with facilities management to adjust the ventilation so that the maximum amount of fresh air is delivered to occupied spaces while maintaining the humidity at 40-60%. If possible, increase filter efficiency of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units to highest functional level.
- Portable high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units may be considered to remove contaminants in the air of poorly ventilated areas.
- If freestanding fans are used, position them in a way that does not direct air from one patron to another.
- Allow for breaks during opening hours in which the room can be ventilated (opening all doors and windows) without visitors inside.

#### **8. Cleaning and Disinfection:**



- Frequently clean work areas and equipment including stationary gym equipment between use, using your usual cleaning products. Do not rely on the fact that the person before you wiped the area down correctly.
- Frequently clean objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including stationary gym equipment, free weights, mats, balls, etc.
- Provide disinfectants and cloths and instructions for users to wipe down each machine.
- Maintain current rigorous cleaning procedures in increased high-risk spaces including main thoroughfares, touch points and walls and floors in circulation routes (corridors, lifts, foyers, landings, stairs, lobbies).
- If equipment cannot be cleaned after each use, it should not be used.
- Further guidance on cleaning and disinfection can be found [here](#)

### 9. Use of water fountains

- The use of water dispensers and supplying of disposable water cups should be discontinued.
- Recommend that gym users should bring their personal water bottle.
- Ensure that any water fountains have signage which prohibits face-to-tap drinking (no receptacle) and that these facilities are used only to refill personal bottles or containers.

### 10. Changing areas, saunas, steamers

- Saunas and the steamer should NOT be used by UN personnel.
- Care should be taken to manage congestion and ensure social distancing such as limiting use of lockers, or ideally limiting use to only those with special needs and/or removing use of showers.
- Encourage individuals to arrive at the facility in athletic wear and where possible to go back to their room to change/shower. Use of changing rooms and showering facilities in the gym should be avoided where possible.

### 11. Additional considerations

- All venues should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission.
- Outdoor gym/fitness areas are better than indoor ones as they allow for improved ventilation. To ensure physical distancing, stationary equipment should be placed at 2 meters (6 feet) apart. Please see example below:





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