



April 30, 2020

Dear Governor Holcomb,

Thank you for asking for industry feedback during these unprecedented times. Over the last several weeks, apartment owners and operators have been working to develop measures to keep residents and employees safe during this crisis. The apartment industry has responded to the hardships that many renters are facing by implementing customized payment plans, deferring rent payments over a 6-month period or longer, waiving late fees, and also providing valuable resources to residents seeking assistance.

With over a third of Hoosiers currently renting their home, rental housing employees play a vital role to ensuring the properties are maintained, emergency repairs can be made and residents have access to housing especially during this time when they are sheltered in their homes and we appreciate your executive order classifying apartment personnel as “essential employees.”

In order to continue to provide a safe and healthful workplace as we begin the gradual process of returning to work, the Indiana Apartment Association recommends the following policies and procedures for our members following CDC and OSHA guidelines:

- All companies should update and provide an infectious disease control policy in conjunction with the recommendations from OSHA guidelines.
- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing, including by providing workers, customers, and worksite visitors with a place to wash their hands. If soap and running water are not immediately available, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Encourage workers to stay home if they are sick.
- Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Provide customers and the public with tissues and trash receptacles and hand sanitizer if available.
- Flexible work hours (e.g., staggered shifts), or work from home policy where feasible.
- Practice 6 feet social distancing among employees and residents.
- Discourage workers from using other workers’ phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- Maintain housekeeping practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other elements of the work environment with emphasis on high traffic areas.
- Workers are encouraged to wear personal protective equipment (PPE). This includes mouth and face coverings, gloves and booties for maintenance when entering a resident’s apartment to make repairs.

Most recently the CDC published COVID-19 Guidance for shared or Congregate Housing. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/shared-congregate-house/guidance-shared-congregate-housing.html> This information has been widely shared with our membership to give further guidance specific to the multifamily housing industry.

Our members have identified the following concerns in complying with the guidance being issued above as well as the executive order establishing a moratorium on evictions:

- Availability of PPE (face mask, gloves, booties).
- Availability of hand sanitizer, disinfectants and other cleaning products.
- Instances of crime, domestic abuse and resident threats have continued to place additional hardship on multifamily properties that are densely populated. While we understand the purpose behind the moratorium, we ask that if the eviction moratorium be continued, it be limited to nonpayment of rent to allow for emergency evictions. This would align with the federal eviction moratorium that is in place until the end of August.

Thank you for this opportunity to give an overview of our industry practices and make recommendations as we face these challenging times. We appreciate your leadership and openness as you move Indiana forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne Petersen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynne Petersen, CAE  
President/CEO