

## **Guidelines for Swimming Pool / Public Swimming Pool Managers**

### **to prevent the spread of COVID-19**

The Ministry of Health, within the framework of its competences for the protection of public health, issues a series of guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in swimming pool facilities and urges their staff to implement the following protective measures.

It is noted that for the purposes of these guidelines, swimming pool staff shall mean the personnel having contact with the public or working in areas visited by the public.

These measures shall be considered as the minimum measures to be implemented. Swimming pool managers are advised to develop similar and additional measures depending on the configuration and conditions of their facilities.

In particular, the use of swimming pools implies:

- the need for strict compliance with the general hygiene rules and terms;
- the need to take personal hygiene measures both by swimmers and employees;
- the cleanliness and disinfection of public and ancillary spaces;
- the need to ensure the quality of the water in the swimming pools throughout their operation.

These measures aim at preventing the propagation of pathogens between the swimmers during the operation of the swimming pool.

#### **PERSONAL HYGIENE MEASURES**

- Swimming pool staff (Reception, Cafeteria, Cleaners, Technicians, Instructors, Coaches) should implement the Guidelines for Health and Safety at Work during the Coronavirus pandemic issued by the Ministry of Health:

[https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/MEASURES\\_AGAINS\\_COVID-19\\_AT\\_WORKPLACES.pdf](https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/MEASURES_AGAINS_COVID-19_AT_WORKPLACES.pdf)

<https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/delivery.pdf>

- The staff is responsible to oversee whether the clients/swimmers observe the guidelines.
- The management of the swimming pool should provide written guidelines and training to the staff on how COVID-19 is spread, its symptoms and how to recognise them in a timely manner. The aim is to be able to seek appropriate medical assistance and laboratory testing and minimise the risk of infection for both the public and the employees.
- Moreover, the management is responsible to act immediately in case a client has a symptom, take him away from the facilities and at the same time inform the person in charge.
- Before entering the swimming pool area, clients should disinfect their hands at the entrance.
- Use of masks in case the 2-meter distance is not respected. Adopt proper hand hygiene.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; Throw used tissues immediately in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow.

Each swimming pool should prepare cleaning and disinfection schedule and instructions in writing.

In particular, the schedule shall set out:

The swimming pool should be thoroughly cleaned before its operation.

### **What needs to be cleaned / disinfected and how often**

It must be ensured that all public spaces (reception, toilets, corridors) and frequent contact points (steps, stairs, peripheral corridors, stands, changing rooms, wardrobes, toilets, WC, showers, washbasins, taps, running boards, the board of the pool, floors, walls, desks, handles, stair railings, telephone devices etc.) are sufficiently cleaned and disinfected daily and regularly. Some surfaces should be cleaned only with soap and water either because they are not frequently touched or because the use of disinfectants is not safe for children using the swimming pool and its areas.

Outdoor areas require regular cleaning and not disinfection.

In general, surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected daily. One (1) minute of contact with the following antimicrobial agents is necessary: solution containing 0.1% of sodium hypochlorite or 70% of ethanol or 0.5% of hydrogen peroxide. The disinfectant should be spread on all surfaces which should remain wet for the contact time required. The sodium hypochlorite solution should be prepared (adding chlorine products in water) shortly before use. Appropriate gloves should be used during cleaning and disinfection and hands should be thoroughly washed with soap and water at the end of the procedure.

A reasonable period of time should lap between schedules so the meeting area (around the swimming pool) can be cleaned and disinfected effectively at the end of each session and as soon as all trainees have left the area, according to the directives of the Ministry of Health.

### **Protective Measures for swimmers and spectators**

#### **Swimmers**

Swimmers using the swimming pool should:

- Comply with the suggestions and instructions of the staff
- Observe the rules of personal hygiene displayed all over the swimming pool area (hand washing, bathing, use of sandals in the changing rooms).
- take a shower **obligatorily** before using the swimming pool.
- **take a shower every time** they use the toilet.
- use obligatorily the foot basin which contains a 0.3-0.6% chlorine solution to disinfect their feet before entering the swimming pool.
- wear waterproof head gear (swim cap).
- not enter the swimming pool if they suffer from a dermatological disease. People with extended abrasions, blisters or open wounds should get information about the risk of infection and avoid entering the swimming pool.

#### **Maximum number of swimmers per swimming pool:**

Taking into consideration the measures of physical distancing (2 meters) and in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus, the maximum number of swimmers in the swimming pool at any time shall be calculated for the moment as follows:

- outdoor swimming pools: 1 swimmer per 5 sqm of water surface;
- indoor swimming pools: 1 swimmer per 10 sqm of water surface.

The above ratio shall be updated by further instructions and based on the new scientific data according to the evolution of the Sars CoV2 pandemic.

### **Spectators**

- Spectators should observe the requested distances (2 m) when they are in the stands.
- Spectators should remain in the stands and not enter the swimmers' areas

### **VENTILATION**

All the areas of the facilities should be well ventilated. Where the use of natural ventilation is not possible artificial ventilation should be used. [http://www.cylaw.org/KDP/data/1996\\_1\\_368.pdf](http://www.cylaw.org/KDP/data/1996_1_368.pdf)

The ventilation of the facilities should not generate direct currents towards the swimmers.

### **Measures to protect the water quality in the swimming pool**

Particular care should be taken to ensure the water quality in the swimming pool and the disinfection which should comply with the provisions of the Public Swimming Pools Regulations of 1996. The quality shall be ascertained by sampling and it is recommended to double its frequency (at least 2 samples per week) for the next four (4) months.

The water recirculation system should ensure full renewal of the water in less than (4) hours or in six (6) hours in special occasions. The water renewal should be achieved either with continuous flow of clean water or with the recirculation of the water after being cleaned and disinfected. The water recirculation – cleaning – disinfection system shall operate during the operation of the swimming pool and for as long as necessary to ensure that the water is microbiologically safe.

The WHO suggests that residual chlorine should be kept in the range of 1 - 3 mg/L, while when all hygiene rules are strictly observed (recirculation of water, strict use of showers and foot basin – where possible – before entering the swimming pool, use of swim cap etc.), the value of residual chlorine recommended as a precautionary measure should be 1.5 mg/L. **It is recommended that the residual chlorine test should be carried out 4 times per day. The results are recorded in a special test book.**

### **Disinfection in case of a confirmed SARS CoV-2 case in a swimming pool**

In case of a confirmed SARS-CoV-2 case in a swimming pool, a schedule should be prepared for cleaning and disinfecting the areas, surfaces and objects.

The choice of method and the use of the necessary equipment should always aim at the effective and safe way to manage the viral load of the infected areas, surfaces and objects, without any further generation of pollution or damage to other materials and objects.

For example, the following is requested for infected surfaces:

- 5,000 ppm solution, i.e. 20 tsp (100 ml) of household bleach (with 5.25% sodium hypochlorite) in 4 glasses (1 litre) of water. The required contact time is 10 minutes.
- 1,000 ppm solution, i.e. 4 tsp (20 ml) of household bleach (with 5.25% sodium hypochlorite) in 4 glasses (1 litre) of water. The required contact time is 30 minutes.

After the required contact time has lapsed, the surfaces should be cleaned with water in order to remove the bleach. When the disinfectant has a concentration of over 200 ppm, the surface should be cleaned with fresh water after the required contact time has lapsed.

The above disinfectants cannot be used on fabrics so they should be washed at high temperature (90°C) using laundry detergent or at lower temperature using products with disinfecting properties. In case some objects cannot be cleaned or/and disinfected as above, such as upholstered furniture or mattresses, they can be cleaned with steam.

### **Signs**

- Signs should be placed on the floor of the area outside the swimming pool to ensure the distance of 2 meters between swimmers.
- Information regarding the virus, personal hygiene measures and relevant protections should be displayed all over the pool area.
- The use of changing rooms and indoor showers depending on the relevant decrees.
- Tables and sunbeds in outdoor swimming pools are allowed provided that the distance of 2 meters is observed. The management is responsible for cleaning and disinfecting them whenever there is a new user.
- Maintaining the order and implementing these measures contributes significantly to the avoidance of congestion.
- Suppliers and employees are allowed to enter and exit the swimming pool areas provided that all preventive measures are observed.