

Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

IMSA COVID-19

Guidance on Limited Reopening of Men's Sheds
for Shed Committees



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service

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This document provides advice and guidelines to support the safe reopening of your shed. It is not a list of do's and don'ts and at all times we would ask that you follow government guidelines and public health advice. We recognise all sheds are different and come in different sizes with different groups of people. We hope this resource can support you and your shed to open in a safe and appropriate manner.

June, 2020.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear shedders,

We live in very unusual and challenging times. COVID-19 has changed all our lives, and no-one knows when things are going to go fully back to normal.

We all know how much of a difference sheds have made to their communities, and how important they are to our thousands of members. We understand how painful it has been for all of you to be separated from your sheds over the past few months.

We decided to temporarily close all sheds at an early date, because your safety and health is our number one priority. We would never ask or expect any of you to put your health, or the health of your loved ones, at risk.

As of June 2020, the Irish government and HSE have set out a plan for gradually reopening society, called A Roadmap for Reopening Irish Society and Business.

This document explains how the government's plan affects men's sheds. It will set out the steps your shed and committee need to take, based on public health advice, to reopen your shed in the safest way possible. Please remember that government advice can and will change depending on how the virus behaves at any given time. When those changes happen, these guidelines may also have to change.

Please be aware, **if your shed cannot meet the guidelines in this document, we are strongly advising it should not open until it is in the position to take measures to meet the guidelines.** We all want to get back to normal and to carry on the incredible and important work our sheds do, but only if this can be done safely and with the least amount of risk possible.

I want to emphasise the phrase "limited reopening"; these guidelines do not mean that your shed should fully reopen exactly as it was before. Limited reopening means reopening on a social basis so members can see one another, talk and catch up. It might be some time longer before sheds can return to something approaching complete normality.

We know that asking you not to use your workshop, collaborate on projects, eat together, or shake hands etc goes against the grain of how sheds work. All of our advice is based on sound public health guidance. We all desperately want to get back to normal, but we cannot and will not risk the health or lives of our members by lifting restrictions prematurely.

We also have a special responsibility to keep our members in the 70+ age-group as safe as possible, because these are the most vulnerable to COVID-19. Members over 70 should follow current public health guidelines at all times, as should those who already suffer from a chronic illness.

Until we have the all-clear from the experts who are learning more about this virus every day, we're going to have to do things differently. We will be with you every step of the way, and your health and safety is the only thing that matters to us. It's in that spirit that we have prepared these guidelines.

You can stay up to date with daily updates at www.hse.ie/coronavirus and www.gov.ie and we will continue to post updates on the menssheds.ie website, social media channels and in our bi weekly news bulletins. Our office is open to help you 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on 01-8916150 or through our specific COVID Support email address on covidsupport@menssheds.ie

Barry Sheridan
CEO

Irish Men's Sheds Association

INTRODUCTION

Before reading and acting upon these guidelines, it's vital that all members of the shed committee read and understand the following:

COVID-19 is a new virus which is not yet fully understood by doctors or science. We only know a certain amount about how the virus works, how it spreads and its effects on people. These guidelines should not be seen as hard-and-fast medical guidance, because the IMSA does not have the expertise to give you that.

Until there is a vaccine or an effective treatment for COVID-19, there will always be an element of risk in opening your shed, no matter what guidelines, rules or regulations are put in place. It is absolutely vital that every single member of your shed committee, and every single member of your shed, understands that risk and is able to make an informed decision.

To put it bluntly, until a vaccine or treatment is found, gathering in a confined space with other people could potentially lead to you catching the virus, and while most people will recover, up to 20% will become severely ill, and some of those will unfortunately not survive. The risk of severe complications and death is greatest amongst men in their fifties and older, and amongst those with other chronic medical conditions or in bad health generally.

These guidelines aim to help your shed minimise and manage that risk, but they cannot eliminate the risk altogether. The guidelines are based on public health advice on minimising the risk of infection within indoor and outdoor environments. The more fully your shed can comply with this advice, the lower the risk (although it will never be eliminated completely).

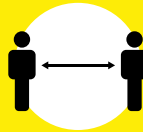
However, we strongly advise that your shed does not reopen unless and until it can answer "yes" to all of these questions:



Can your shed provide running water and soap for handwashing?



Does your shed have sufficient supplies of hand sanitiser/soap for all members attending?



Does your shed have sufficient space to allow members to stay at least 2 metres apart at all times (social distancing?)



Can you ensure that all common surfaces, doorknobs, work surfaces etc are sterilised with disinfectant or disinfectant wipes regularly?



Are all your members familiar with the risks, signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and have read the Guidance Document for Shedders on returning to the shed?



Are all your members aware that they **MUST NOT ATTEND** the shed if they have symptoms of COVID-19, or have been in contact with someone who does?



Do you have at least one, preferably two members of your committee who will act as COVID Implementation Officers who will be present in the shed at all times to ensure that these guidelines are being observed?

RETURN TO GRADUAL SHED REOPENING

The guidelines in this document are based on the Irish government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business. Please note these guidelines are subject to change and are dependent upon further government updates and guidance.

Safety every step of the way

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal.

It is up to all of us to make sure that shed members stay as safe as possible. Shed committees have a special responsibility; we will support you with guidance and advice at every stage of the process. "Safety first" needs to be your watchword in everything you do. If you're not sure, take the safe option every time – it's the responsible thing to do.

We recommend that the committee nominates a number of members as COVID Implementation Officers to carry out and supervise the guidelines in this document. We're asking you to nominate more than one person where necessary, because we want to be sure there's at least one person in the shed at all times who is familiar with these guidelines and can make sure they're observed.

Protection of Shedders is not just the responsibility of the committee, it is the responsibility of every member of the Shed.

Steps to Safety

1. Appointing a COVID 19 Implementation Officer(s) and defining their role
2. Preparing the shed premises for reopening
3. Shed Access
4. Guidelines for safely visiting the shed - arranging rotas for shedders to attend
5. Shed Facilities & Grounds
6. Accessing Support

1. APPOINT COVID-19 IMPLEMENTATION

OFFICER(S) & DEFINING THEIR ROLE(S)

In order to be able to reopen safely, sheds must appoint at least one Covid-19 Implementation Officer(s) – ideally, you should have more than one. The Implementation Officer(s) is responsible for the following measures, which are intended to allow sheds to operate safely in these extraordinary times:

- Plan for the shed to reopen safely (along with the shed committee).
- Liaise with the IMSA office on your sheds plan to reopen.
- Make sure the shed can reopen safely by meeting all the steps in this document.
- Make sure that the shed and all its members follow HSE public health advice at all times
- Make sure the shed has enough COVID-19 information posters, and that they're in the right places to be seen and understood by everyone (please see posters included in your pack).
- Set up and maintain a sign-in system for all visits to the shed; this means keeping a record of everyone who enters the shed – include carers and family members. This is very important, because knowing who was in the shed at any given time will help with contact tracing if anyone tests positive for the virus.
- Make sure social distancing is observed at all times, including when entering and exiting the shed.
- Make sure all members are familiar with the COVID-19 guidance document that has been prepared for shedders, and that all safety measures referred to are being observed.
- If your shed has a workshop, the COVID Implementation Officers should ensure it is NOT USED AT ALL during this time. Until notified otherwise, Implementation Officers should ensure that workshops are not accessible for use.
- Keep an accurate and up-to-date list of shed members' contact details – again, this will be vital for the purposes of contact tracing if needed.
- Keep the IMSA informed on how these guidelines are working out for your shed; if you're having problems with them, or if you think we need to add more guidelines, please get in touch on 01-8916150 or covidsupport@menssheds.ie
- Make sure the shed is well-stocked with hand sanitiser and tissues at all times, as well as bins for safe disposal.
- The IMSA advises, in line with public health guidance, that shedders wear a face-mask or appropriate face covering while at the shed. Cloth face-masks should be washed between each use. Please be careful not to touch your face when putting on or taking off your face covering, and bear in mind that you should still avoid touching your face while you're wearing a mask or covering.

2. PREPARING THE SHED PREMISES FOR REOPENING

Before you reopen your shed, please make sure the following steps are carried out. These are vital to ensuring the safety of your shed and giving everyone peace of mind.



Contact the Irish Men's Sheds Association

Inform the IMSA of your intention to reopen your shed.

Confirm that your committee has read this guidance document and has implemented the necessary measures to ensure the safety of your shedders.

Confirm the 'Guidance Document for Shedders' has been circulated to all shed members.



Contact your shed insurance provider

If you previously notified your insurance provider to amend cover while the shed has been closed please make contact as soon as possible of your intention and date to reopen to reinstate full insurance cover.



Cleaning Protocol

Have the shed **thoroughly** cleaned with household bleach and cleaning products BEFORE it opens its doors again. This includes any outdoor areas/outhouses etc and other facilities that shed members may use.

- Anyone who helps clean the shed before it reopens should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear suitable gloves – public health guidelines recommend 'household or disposable single use non-sterile nitrile gloves are worn'. They should also wear disposable plastic apron (if one is available).
- Open the windows while you are cleaning.
- Clean all surfaces, including furniture, sinks, door-handles, light switches etc with disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent, followed or combined with household bleach (bleach wipes will do if that's what you have). Anything that's likely to be touched or used by shed members MUST be cleaned and disinfected. This includes the backs of chairs, flat surfaces, couches, kettles etc.
- When removing shed waste put all items including used tissues and disposable masks into a plastic rubbish bag and then THOROUGHLY WASH YOUR HANDS afterwards.
- If you share your shed with other groups or people, it needs to be thoroughly cleaned before and after use every day it's open.
- Keep a cleaning rota in the shed and make sure it's updated every day – the COVID Implementation Officer should maintain this. Please see template attached.
- Given that your shed may have been closed up for some time now it can be dangerous to immediately start using pipes and plumbing that have been switched off for a long time – this can result in illnesses such as Legionnaire's Disease. Irish Water's website will tell you what steps to take to make sure your water supply is safe.
<https://www.water.ie/for-business/covid-19-reopening-busine/>



Hand Cleaning Facilities

- Handwashing is one of the most important weapons we have against COVID-19 – warm running water is ideally needed to make sure hands can be washed properly.
- Provide PAPER TOWELS ONLY for hand-drying. Cloth towels and electronic hand-dryers are less safe and can even spread the virus. Paper towels should be disposed of immediately by the person who uses them.
- The COVID Implementation Officer must make sure that hand sanitisers are available at the entrance to the shed (ideally via a dispenser) and that every single person who enters the shed uses them.



Kitchen/ Canteen Facilities

- To help keep the virus at bay, please use disposable (paper or plastic) cups, plates and utensils and BIN THEM IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE.
- Make sure as few people as possible use the kitchen facilities – either the COVID Implementation Officer or a designated committee or shed member should be the only one to make tea/coffee. This person should wear a face mask, wash their hands often, and clean all surfaces and objects in the kitchen after each use.
- If members want to eat at the shed, make sure all foods and snacks are prepared at home, packed safely and brought to the shed. No food should be made or prepared in the shed itself.



Outdoor Facilities

- If your shed has a garden the same guidance applies with regard to social distancing and identifying a rota for shedders to garden safely. Set a maximum number of gardeners who can be in the space at the same time; this number should be based first on the size of the garden.
- Close the garden shed and cut off access to shared tools until further notice. Have gardeners bring their own tools and take them home each time they leave the garden. There should be no shared use of garden tools during COVID-19.
- Set up a handwashing/ hand sanitiser station and encourage all gardeners to wash their hands upon their arrival and departure.
- Require all gardeners to disinfect anything they touch before and after use especially gates, wheelbarrow, mowers, or other large gardening tools.
- The same social distancing measures also apply in any outdoor seated areas at your shed.

3. SHED ACCESS

In the days and weeks before the shed reopens, only shed committee members should have access to the shed premises, for the purposes of cleaning and preparation. They should follow the same advice and guidelines as everyone else on social distancing, hygiene and respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing into a tissue and then disposing of the tissue or coughing and sneezing into your elbow).

In order for a shedder to attend a shed they must:

- Not have been out of the country in the last 14 days.
- Not have been around someone with symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Not be displaying COVID-19 symptoms which include: a fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above), a cough – this can be any kind of cough, not just dry and shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Have a pre-booked time to attend the shed arranged with the shed committee.

If you are over 70 please be vigilant and follow the public health advice under each phase for reopening and as updates are released by the government.



4. GUIDELINES FOR SAFELY VISITING THE SHED - ARRANGING ROTAS FOR SHEDDERS TO ATTEND

We realise that turning up whenever shedders like is one of the great joys of the shed. However, that will have to change during the current pandemic. We need to make sure that too many people aren't in the shed at once, and we need to know exactly who is in the shed at any given time. To achieve this, we are advising committee members to put a rota in place and assign shedders to attend on certain days and time. (Please see sample rota attached)

- Shedders should not turn up without calling or texting ahead and in the interest of coordinating numbers for the committee a rota should be adhered to as best practice. A member of the shed committee, or a shed member who agrees to look after this task, will confirm rota times with all members interested in attending. It is vitally important that you don't allow more men into the shed than can socially distance safely.
- All shedders should make sure their shed has the correct phone or email details so they can be contacted.
- Be mindful of the needs of your members. The last few months have been a difficult time for all of us, some more than others. Some of your members may need the shed now more than ever. Be mindful of those in need and ensure that they are being given adequate access to the shed. Also bear in mind that not all members may wish to come back to the shed throughout this period and may choose to wait longer until the situation is clearer or they consider it safe to do so.
- Attendance is an individual choice and no pressure should be placed on any person to attend the shed.
- Shedders should travel to the shed alone, or only with a member of the same household.
- Cars also need to observe social distancing. Leave as much distance as possible between parked cars. If you have to park close to another car, don't enter or exit the car at the same time as another driver or passenger enters or exits theirs.
- Don't cluster together on the way into or out of the shed – follow the social distancing guidelines at all times.
- Make sure your hands are washed and clean BEFORE you enter the shed.
- Shedders will be encouraged to use the toilet at home before they visit their shed in their guidance document. We want people to use the shed toilet as little as possible, because shared toilets help spread the virus.

5. SHED FACILITIES & GROUNDS

Remember the social distancing guidelines – everyone should be at least 2 metres apart at all times. Think about how this will work within your shed, bearing in mind the size of the shed and its facilities. How many people can fit inside while social distancing? Are there bottlenecks within the shed – areas where you can't stay 2 metres apart – that need to be roped or taped off?

We recommend you do not open your workshop during this initial limited reopening phase.

- Consider changing your opening and closing times to keep the numbers at the shed at any one time as low as possible.
- Put signs up reminding members not to use work tools, paint brushes, game boards, playing cards etc. If shedders want to paint, they must bring their own paints, brushes, paper etc. Similarly, if members want to play musical instruments they must bring and only use their own instruments.
- If possible, have separate entry and exits for the shed.

6. ACCESSING SUPPORT

The Irish Men's Sheds Association have a team of staff ready to answer your queries regarding this guidance document and general advice in relation to gradually reopening your shed during the current COVID pandemic. This document has been devised in line with public health guidance and any advice the IMSA staff will provide you is also in line with public advice. Over the coming weeks the IMSA will be contacting each and every shed to ascertain if your shed intends to reopen or to continue to remain temporarily closed. No shed is under any pressure to reopen. These guidelines are here to support and guide you to open safely if your committee chooses to open. The IMSA highly recommends that you utilise this document and adhere to the guidance in your preparation and official reopening phase.

Contact us on **01 891 6150** or email us for specific COVID-19 support on covidsupport@menssheds.ie Our office is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

APPENDICIES

Shed Visiting Rota during COVID 19 Example

Name of Shed: _____

Week starting: _____

■ RED GROUP	MONDAYS AM 10AM – 11.30AM	<i>Example:</i> John Byrne Mick Murphy Joe Soap Tom Jones Bill Kelly	<i>Example:</i> Joe Soap accompanied by Carer on Tuesdays
■ BLUE GROUP	MONDAYS PM 2PM – 3.30PM	Mick Byrne Tim Doyle Etc Etc Etc	
■ YELLOW GROUP	TUESDAYS AM 10AM – 11.30AM		
■ ORANGE GROUP	TUESDAYS PM 2PM – 3.30PM		
■ GREEN GROUP	WEDNESDAY AM 10AM – 11.30AM		
■ PURPLE GROUP	WEDNESDAY PM 2PM- 3.30PM		

COVID-19 DECLARATION FORM FOR ALL

ENTERING A MEN'S SHED

To ensure the Safety & Health of all people interacting with _____ Men's Shed, all shedders, visitors and contractors must complete this declaration form prior to entering this shed. If you indicate to us, you have symptoms of COVID-19 OR you have been abroad in the last 14 days you should not attend this shed. Where this is the case, you are prohibited from entering the shed and advised to seek professional medical help/assistance.

1	Have you visited any of the countries outside Ireland?	YES / NO
2	Are you experiencing any cough like symptoms?	YES / NO
3	Are you experiencing any difficulty in breathing, shortness of breath?	YES / NO
4	Are you experiencing any fever like/Temperature symptoms?	YES / NO
5	Have you any underlying conditions?	YES / NO
6	Have you been in contact with someone who has visited an affected region in the past 14 days?	YES / NO

Should any of the above circumstances change please notify a member of the shed committee as soon as possible and do not attend you shed and seek medical advice.

NOTE: When in the shed, please adhere to our shed standard processes/procedures regarding infection control, i.e. hand washing/hand sanitising and general coughing/sneezing etiquette.

Shedder Signature: _____

Date: _____

(Please circle your answers above)

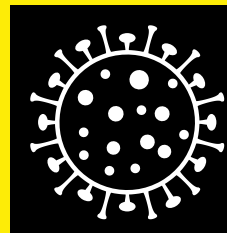
CLEANING CHECKLIST

Week starting: _____

Area/Item to be cleaned	Frequency of cleaning	Days of the week							Shed Committee Covid19 Compliance Officer
		Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	
Tables/ windowsills / door and cabinet handles Method: Clean with neutral detergent, warm water and clean cloth	Daily after use								
Chairs Method: Clean with neutral detergent, warm water and clean cloth	After use by each member								
Vacuum & wash floor covering Method: Vacuum clean to remove dirt Wash with detergent, warm water and clean utensils afterwards	Daily								
Wash hand basins, taps, surrounding counters, soap dispensers Method: Clean with detergent and warm water.	At least daily								
Clean both sides of toilet seat, toilet handles, doorknobs or cubicle handles Method: Clean with detergent and warm water	At least daily								
Toilet bowls Method: Use toilet cleaner as per manufacturer's instructions	At least daily & immediately if soiled								
Empty waste bins Clean bins Method: Using neutral detergent and warm water	Daily								
Mops & cleaning cloths Method: Mop heads should be washed in warm water and detergent, rinsed and air dried Reusable cloths must be laundered daily on a hot wash cycle (at least 60oC) in a washing machine and then thoroughly dried.	After daily use								

NOTES

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & ADVISORY DOCUMENTS

Re-Opening Buildings after COVID-19 Restrictions - Safety of Water & Wastewater Systems in Non-Domestic Buildings

<https://www.water.ie/for-business/covid-19-reopening-busine/IW-CUST-GL-01.pdf>

HSE COVID-19 Easy to Read Public Information Booklet

<https://www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HNC01340.pdf>



Irish Men's Sheds Association
Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.

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Email: covidsupport@menssheds.ie

Email: info@menssheds.ie

Website: www.menssheds.ie



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www.facebook.com/Irishmensshedassociation



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