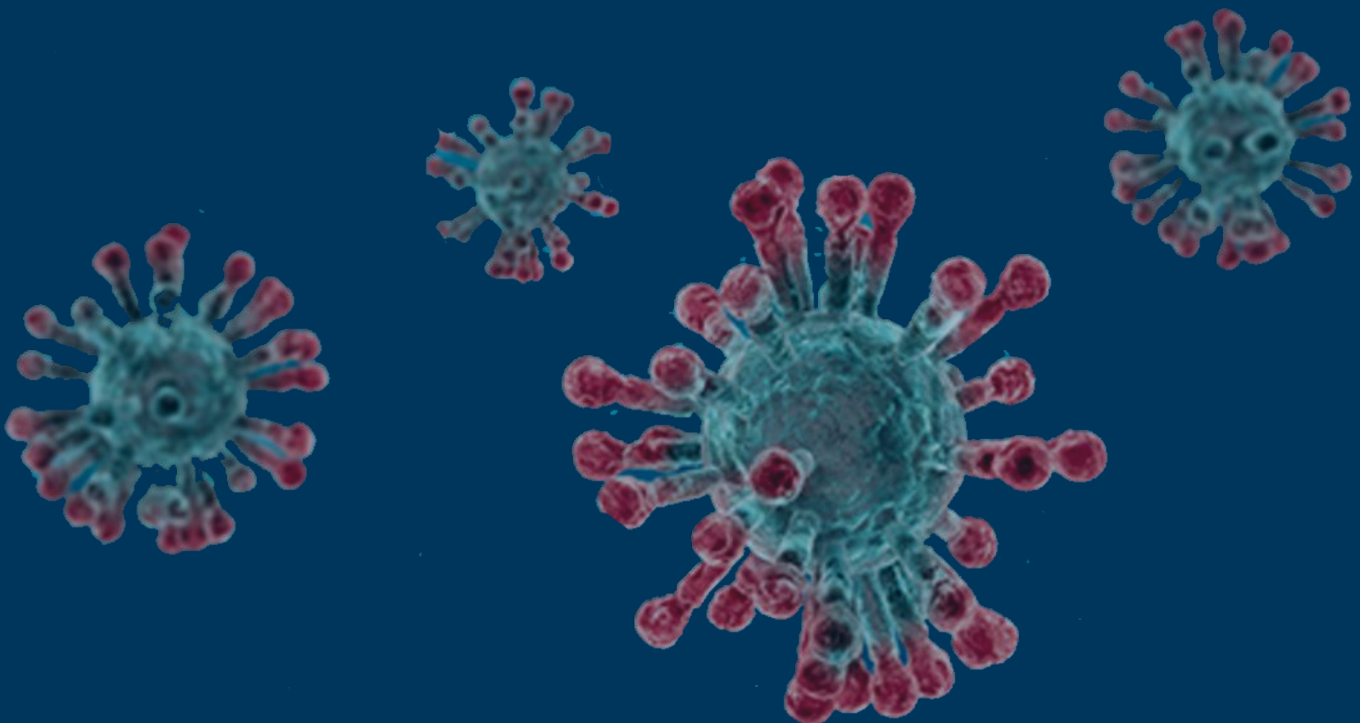


# **Beyond Covid-19**

## **Reopening your Shopping Center**

This document is designed to give guidance on preparations and consideration for reopening your Shopping Center post the Covid-19 pandemic.

Stay updated and always follow the recommendations from local authorities and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

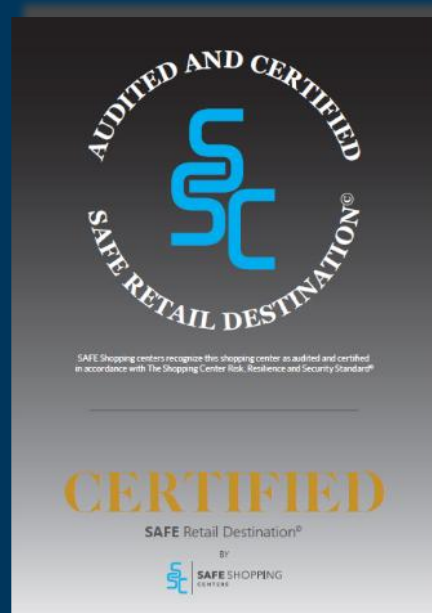


# About SAFE ShoppingCenters

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Headquartered in Sweden, SAFE Shopping centers is an independent advisory company and certification body, supporting the shopping center and retail community.

SAFE Shopping Centers comprises shopping center, risk management and crisis management experts with vast experience in delivering solutions for strengthening the resilience, mitigating non-financial risks, and improving operational excellence at retail destinations worldwide.



We provide a range of services for the shopping center industry related to operational risks, including:

- SAFE Retail Destination certification, according to the "Shopping Center Risk, Resilience and Security Standard"
- Corporate and center management advisory
- Framework and organizational development
- Crisis management procedures and training
- Business continuity planning
- Security and Risk management

# Introduction

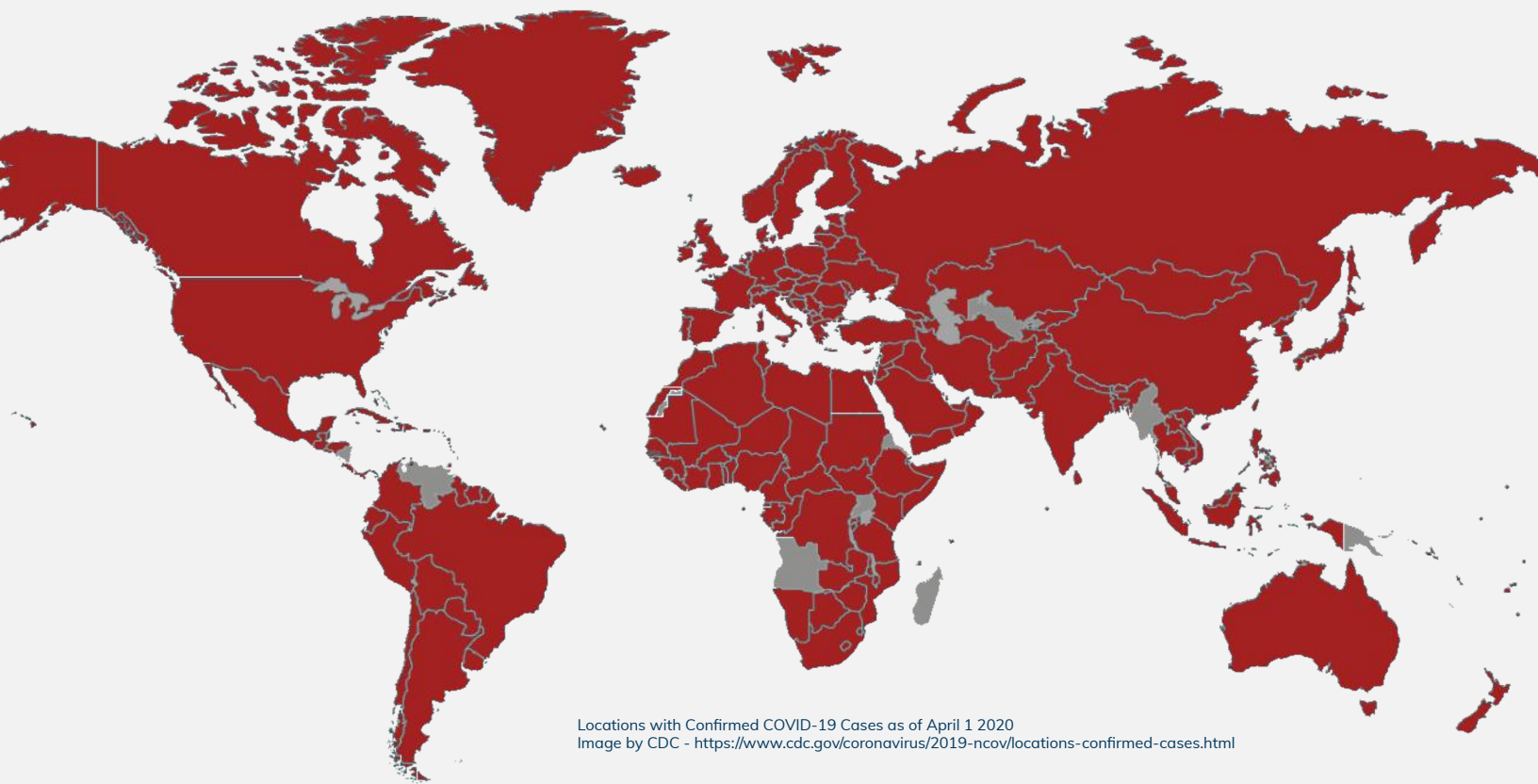
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As communities around the world respond to the Covid-19 pandemic with various restrictions directly impacting on business, this time presents unique challenges for both retailers and landlords.

With the current development, no one can predict when the restrictions will be lifted or what the situation will look like once they are.

Throughout this time, you will have to live with quick changes and a significant amount of uncertainty. You may have to make harsh decisions that can impact your business in the foreseeable future.

Nevertheless, this crisis will come to an end. And when it does, you must be prepared to restore your operation as quickly as possible. This document aims to be a support in your preparation for that moment.



Locations with Confirmed COVID-19 Cases as of April 1 2020  
Image by CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>

# 1 Planning

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Establish clear objectives and priorities for your shopping center.

Make a risk assessment for reopening the shopping center, make sure to include reputational risks.

Develop a plan for your reopening, include anchor tenants if possible.

Be prepared for a second wave of the corona virus, develop contingency plans to handle that.

Stick to your objectives, but adapt your actions depending on the current situation and your risk assessment.

Your priorities could be:

- 1) Safety and security of staff, tenants and visitors
- 2) Ensure continuous operation of the shopping center, or part thereof
- 3) Support tenants

## Continuous assessment and crisis management

The situation is fast changing, which requires constant monitoring and assessment.

1. Get a clear overview of the current situation. Evaluate your sources of information and follow official recommendations.
2. Make assumptions based on current information. Take decisions and implement plans to reach your overall objectives and follow up on them. Prepare alternative plans based on "what if"-scenarios.
3. Make regular updates on the situation. Stick to your objectives, and do not be afraid to make changes to your plans if the situation changes.
4. Communicate to relevant stakeholders about the current situation, what you are doing, and your intentions.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 continuously!

- Understand and accept your situation
- Establish clear objectives and priorities for your shopping center.
- Make sure to develop your plan
- Stick to your objectives, but adapt your actions depending on the current situation.

## 2 Communication

Uncertainty and lack of information are fertile ground for rumors and fear. Be sure to take the initiative and fill the information vacuum with your message.

1. Prepare a countdown to reopening scheduling actions using this checklist as a guide.
2. Once your reopening date is known, communicate it to all relevant parties in the sequence of your countdown schedule.
3. Be transparent and honest
4. Communicate to relevant stakeholders about the current situation, what you are doing, and your intentions.
5. Review your communication plan and prepare statements for possible scenarios.
6. Make sure staff are aware of what they should say and where to refer journalists and the media.
7. Monitor social media. Act swiftly to interrupt any rumors or false information.
8. Have a continuous dialogue with tenants in order to detect any issues as early as possible.
9. Be visible in your primary catchment area. Communicate your situation and initiatives to your local community to show you are part of the community and stay at the forefront of their minds.
10. Review and increase in-mall communications with rules and guidelines related to Covid-19
11. Monitor social media posts of your center and respond to these as soon as possible. Bad communication can do incredible damage if not managed properly.



# 3 Center Management

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Even if what you perceive as your immediate crisis has blown over, and your shopping center is about to reopen, keep in mind that staff and tenants may be dealing with crises of their own, both personal and business-related. People may have lost friends and family or seen their life's work destroyed in a short time. As a consequence, we must be prepared to face and handle irrational and desperate behavior.

## General

- You may need to establish additional policies in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. These may include policies around working from home, sick leave, hand-washing, and sanitation, etc. It's important to clearly communicate policy changes. Put systems in place to get the word out and ensure policies are upheld.
- Establish a staff continuity plan. Consider working in shifts or from home with only part of the workforce in the office at the same time to avoid cross-contamination and the risk of quarantine for the entire management team.
- Keep a dialogue with service suppliers and monitor their situation.
- Have a back-up plan if service suppliers are not able to sustain their operation due to personnel or financial issues.
- Perform regular disinfection of the workplace, including PC-keyboards and cellphones.
- Prepare to be mobile. Take your computer and relevant paperwork home with you, in case you need to work from home tomorrow.
- Make sure tenants and service providers report directly to center management in case of confirmed or suspicion of an infected co-worker.
- Establish meeting areas separate from the center management office to avoid cross-contamination.
- Consider installing Plexiglas sheets for the reception and the info-desk.
- Be visible and available for staff, tenants, and service providers. Listen to their concerns and manage issues before they grow out of hand.

## Tenants

- Communicate any changes in policies and normal routines. Perform regular compliance checks.
- Update staff and contact lists regularly.
- Support your tenants with advice on store safety routines, and if possible, support them with implementation.
- Have a plan and a clear mandate for how to deal with tenants in default and make sure you have a clear understanding of what actions you are legally allowed to take.
- Many retailers will be under extreme pressure, and emotions may be running high. Make sure to consider the safety and security of your staff.



# 4 Technical systems

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The extent of preparations needed will differ depending on how long your shopping center has been fully or partially closed, and the level of maintenance carried out while the center has been out of operation. Always refer to local authorities and your insurance company for any specific requirements before re-opening your center.

## Fire safety

- Test run fire pumps
- Test the fire signalization system
- Verify all emergency exits and escape routes are free from obstruction
- Check all emergency exit doors to ensure the functionality
- Test the fire scenario to ensure the functionality of automatic door releases, speakers etc.
- Test systems for uninterruptible power supply
- Conduct a full property walk prior to reopening

## CCTV

- Check picture quality for each camera to verify the lenses are clean and have not been tampered with

## Access control system and burglar alarm

- Check the functionality
- Review who has access to the building and update permits.
- Confirm tenants staff list and remove access for temporarily laid-off staff and tenants in default.

## Others

- Flush and check the potable water system. If required, renew legionella test
- Check sewage functionality, including grease traps.
- Test all restrooms, including distress alarm functionality.
- Check the functionality of lifts and escalators.

# 5 Other considerations

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## Visitor management

- Update communication at entrances with Covid-19 guidelines and any specific house rules.
- Establish and communicate a queue management policy if social distancing is to be maintained. Be prepared to support tenants to enforce government policy.
- Install floor stickers to indicate the distance between queuing visitors at ATM's and other relevant areas
- Wherever possible, provide hand sanitizing opportunities, particularly at restaurants and food-courts, nursing rooms, kindergartens, cinemas, etc.
- Provide in-mall communication regarding social distancing and direction to nearest hand-wash/disinfection facilities.
- Consider differentiated/extended/early opening hours as a service to at-risk groups.
- Consider coordinated delivery services to cater for people in quarantine
- Minimize queuing.

## Security

- Review and adapt emergency response and evacuation procedures based on prevailing conditions.
- Be prepared to support tenants with queue management
- If required by restrictions, limit the access and access points to the center, and place security at the doors to ensure compliance with the restrictions.
- Have the security guard company check and enforce compliance of any new rules, and health and safety in the center and at tenants.

## Cleaning services

- Follow ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control) recommendations.
- Review cleaning chemicals in use.
- Ensure the availability of suitable chemicals.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning for restrooms, nursing rooms, play areas, food courts, and other risk-prone areas.
- Make sure to regularly disinfect high-touch installations such as ATM's, elevator buttons, interactive navigational displays, etc.
- Ensure there is proper protection, guidance notes, and training in place for all cleaning staff.
- Ensure you have a plan of how to close off and disinfect any area after a suspicious infection if needed.
- If possible, contract with one company for disinfection of both common areas and tenant premises as required. This will provide optimal quality assurance, smooth coordination, and quick actions.



# 6 Tenant operation

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## Tenant reopening

- Check emergency exits routes and doors
- Check the presence and expiry date of fire extinguishers
- Review emergency protocols based on the prevailing situation and staff count
- Update staff list and contact info and send to center management
- Plan for goods delivery and temporary storage
- If the number of customers is restricted in stores, prepare and put up communication.
- Plan for managing queues. If conducted with tenant's guards, this should be coordinated with center management.
- Put up floor stickers for queuing and consider mounting Plexiglas sheets for additional protection.
- Put up in-store communication to remind customers to give each other space and respect social distancing requirements.
- Communicate any and all new protocols and/or ideas to center management.

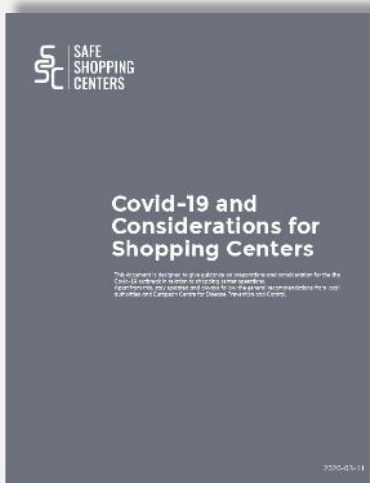
## Store operations

- Employees are following proper handwashing protocol.
- Ill employees do not come to work.
- Employee emergency contact information is up to date.
- Reporting routines to Center management in case of ill employees are well known.
- Stores have made scheduling adjustments to allow for additional disinfecting procedures.
- Employees are aware of COVID-19 prevention information and protocols.
- Employees understand procedures should they present with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Do frequent cleaning of high-touch areas such as counters, door handles, and popular product displays.
- Limit cash handling and close contact with customers.

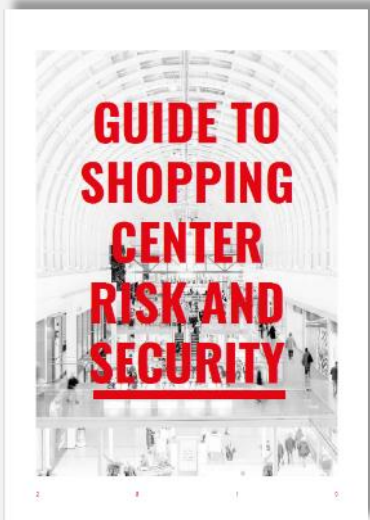
## Others

- Re-opening of risk-prone areas such as cinemas, gyms, and play-areas should be discussed with the operator prior to reopening. Where permitted to operate, make sure operators have self-sustaining plans on how to minimize all risks and how to handle disinfection.
- Review routines for goods reception and limit personal contact where goods are received or handled.

# 7 Resources and downloads



## Covid-19 and Considerations for Shopping Centers



## Guide to Shopping Center Risk and Security

ECDC information portal - <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china>

ECDC Information leaflet - <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/information-leaflet-template-covid-19>

ECDC E-learning - <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/online-micro-learning-activities-on-COVID-19>

ECDC Guidance for environmental cleaning - <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/interim-guidance-environmental-cleaning-non-healthcare-facilities-exposed-2019>

Key facts for event planners - <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19-key-facts-event-planners.pdf>