



# CHRI

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative  
working for the practical realisation of human rights in  
the countries of the Commonwealth

## **CHECKLIST FOR MONITORING PRISONS**

**based on**

**The Ministry Of Home Affairs's  
'Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Handling Arrested Persons,  
Detainees and Inmates During the Pandemic'**

**This document has been prepared by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) to assist State prison departments in periodic monitoring of prisons and ensuring that effective measures are in place to effectively manage COVID-19 in prisons.**

## ABOUT THE CHECKLIST

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India has, in view of the increased vulnerability of prisoners to the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the rise in number of positive cases in prisons, issued an advisory on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020. This advisory titled “*Management of COVID-19 in Indian Prisons - guidelines and protocols which may be followed while dealing with persons arrested, detained and those in Prisons and Correctional Homes*”, has been sent to the Chief Secretaries, DG/IG of police departments and DG/IG of prison departments of all States and UTs. Among other useful guidance, the advisory contains the *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Handling Arrested Persons, Detainees and Inmates during the Pandemic*, prepared in coordination with BPR&D and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, for the safe custody, medical care, transport while avoiding transmission of COVID-19 and also ensuring safety of prison staff.

In order to strengthen prison administration’s response to COVID-19, CHRI has converted the measures as mentioned in the MHA advisory in the form of this Checklist to enable the prison head office to internally monitor the conditions of all prisons in their respective states/UTs periodically. The Checklist lays down minimum standards to be followed in each prison for administrative preparedness, establishment of a precautionary framework and handling of suspected/confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection. It is divided into two parts for, A. Officer-in-charge of Prison; B. Medical Officer of the Prison; based on their respective roles in Prison administration and management. Periodic reporting of the status of minimum standards in form a checklist shall enable the Prison Head Office to be cognizant and prepared for the challenges and requirements of each prison in the State to fight the COVID-19 pandemic in prisons. It is also an opportunity for the officer-in-charge to inform the prison head office about their challenges and seek support, if required.

## GUIDANCE TO FILL THE CHECKLIST

- As the officer-in-charge of prison, please fill part A of the Checklist as directed by the head office. It is divided into several heads: *Infrastructure and Equipment, Identification and Administration of Suspected Cases, Prisoners Intake and Prison Entry Procedure, Other Precautionary Measures, Staff Safety Measures, Discharge of Prisoners and Measures for Ensuring Welfare of Prisoners.*
- Share part B of the Checklist with the medical officer appointed in your prison. In case, no medical officer is appointed at the prison, the officer-in-charge of the prison may request the Chief Medical/ Health Officer of the district, who may also be the ex-officio visitor to the prison to appoint one doctor to visit prison every day. The same doctor may be asked to fill this checklist as well. It includes questions on *Health and Hygiene* and *Prisoners Intake and Prison Entry Procedure*. The Medical Officer may send their report with their respective Checklist to the Officer In-Charge of Prison within the time as fixed by the officer-in-charge.
- The Officer In-Charge may combine both the checklists in a single report and send them to the Prison Head Quarters for internal monitoring of COVID-19 management in prisons.

**A. CHECKLIST FOR THE PRISON IN-CHARGE OR DEPUTY PRISON IN-CHARGE**

Name & Designation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Infrastructure & Equipment**

General Information		
Prison Capacity	Prison Population	Overcrowding

Whether the following are available in your prison?				
Requirement	Yes		No (Please mention specific deficiency)	Remarks
	Capacity	Current Occupancy		
<b>1. Isolation Facility</b>				
<b>1.1 Separate isolation facility to house the symptomatic suspected cases and separate for confirmed cases</b>				
<b>2. Quarantine facility</b>				
<b>2.1 Quarantine facility to house asymptomatic suspected cases</b>				
<b>2.2 Quarantine facility to house new admissions and other prisoners reporting back to custody</b>				
<b>3. Adequate quantity (for at least one month in stock) of disinfectants</b>				
<b>4. Adequate quantity of sanitizers with 70% alcohol</b>				
<b>5. Screening station outside prison main gate</b>				
<b>6. Additional supplies of food, water and medication</b>				
<b>7. Hand Sanitizers, Face Mask and Personal Soaps for all prisoners</b>				

8. Awareness material on Hand Washing Methods, personal hygiene and information on Coronavirus			
<b>Medical Facilities</b>			
9. Number of single accommodation isolation units for quarantine			
10. Adequate quantities of PPE			
11. Adequate quantities of gloves, face masks, face covers and eye covers.			
12. COVID-19 testing kits			
13. Number of Thermal scanners			
14. Mention other medical equipment with quantity, available for symptomatic and positive cases of COVID-19:			

## II. Identification and Administration of Suspected Cases

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it and explain it briefly under 'Remarks'.</b>	
1. There is coordination between custodial/detention staff and health care teams in prisons/detention centre to enable effective identification of suspected cases among prisoners/detainees.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. other than medical staff of prison who is assisting the prison authorities?	
2. Anybody (Prison staff or inmates) having any symptoms of fever, cough, breathlessness, sore throat, is sent immediately for thorough medical check-up and follow up.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. where are they sent for medical check-up?	
3. The detainees, who are asymptomatic but suspected to have been in contact with the COVID-19 positive patient, are sent to quarantine facility.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
4. Detainees who are symptomatic are sent to an isolation facility (as suspected cases) and tested for COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. Is the isolation facility inside prison complex or outside?	
5. All confirmed positive prisoners are transferred to the isolation facility for COVID-19 positive cases and local State Health authorities are immediately informed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. Is the quarantine facility inside prison complex or outside?	

6. In isolation facilities, COVID-19 suspect cases and confirmed cases of prisoner are housed separately.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
7. Staff is extra observant and regularly communicates with prisoners to identify suspected cases of COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. what are the means used to communicate?	
8. Staff is extra observant and regularly communicates with prisoners to identify unusual suspicious prisoner behaviour as a result of restricted movement and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. Is staff provided an orientation to identify?	
9. Proper caution is exercised while shifting the COVID-19 positive inmates for isolation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
10. The COVID-19 inmate is made to wear a triple layer medical mask while shifting.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
11. In isolation facilities, it is ensured that the individual is always wearing face protection when outside of the medical isolation space, and whenever another individual enters.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
12. It is ensured that minimum staff comes in contact with infected prisoners, especially staff belonging to risk groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
13. Inmates under quarantine have a separate dining space maintaining physical distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

### III. Prisoners Intake and Prison Entry Procedure

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it and explain it briefly under 'Remarks'.</b>	
1. All persons entering prisons are carefully screened with Thermal Scanners (Handheld Thermometer) at the screening stations established outside prison entry gates.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
2. Prisoners found as suspected for COVID-19 based on the above-mentioned screening are tested for COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
3. If an inmate is found COVID-19 positive, his clinical status is assessed and put in appropriate isolation facility.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remarks:
4. No one except prisoners, showing symptoms or having experienced symptoms of COVID-19 is allowed to enter prisons. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
5. In case of an influx of detainees, they are housed in holding area until their screening is completed. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
6. Prisoners including new admissions or prisoners reporting back to custody are lodged in separate barracks/cells for a fixed number of days as decided by the health experts. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
7. Only one point of entry/exit is used. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:

#### IV. Other Precautionary Measures

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it and explain it briefly under 'Remarks'.</b>
1. Prison staff has been informed that COVID-19 prevention and response procedures will temporarily impact the ordinary prison routine. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
2. Continuity and contingency plans are prepared and updated to ensure that the prison management is able to perform critical functions with reduced number of personnel, in a manner that does not have a negative impact on the security of the prison. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
3. Contingency plan to call on other uniformed personnel to temporarily support a massive staff shortage (police, military, other uniformed personnel) has been prepared. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. which agencies are involved in the contingency plan?
4. The least amount of staff that needs to operate prison has been determined. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
5. All prison staff has been reminded about the special vulnerability of prisoners and their duty of care as well as importance of conducting operations in accordance with human rights standards. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:
6. A detailed daily register of people moving in and out of the prison is maintained. <input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:

7. Measures of physical distancing, limiting the mobility of people within the prison/detention system and/or limiting access of non-essential staff and visitors to prisons and other places of detention, depending on the level of risk in the specific area have been implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
8. The facility of Mulaqats, i.e., meeting between the prisoners and their family members, has been stopped till the pandemic is controlled.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
9. Video Conference and phone calls between inmates and his family members are allowed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: e.g. Is video-conferencing used for contacting family by prisoners including foreign nationals?	
10. Meal timings for inmates have been staggered to ensure physical distancing. Sitting arrangement for inmates at the dining space have been rearranged to ensure physical distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
11. Group activities that are not of essential nature have been stopped and only crucial group activities are allowed by duly following the guidelines for distance of at least six feet between two individuals.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
12. Only one entry/exit point is used.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

V. Staff Safety Measures

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it and explain it briefly under 'Remarks'.</b>	
1. Physical distancing is observed and use of verbal communication and command is used	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
2. Measures such as limiting direct contact with prisoners, conducting visual searches on low-risk prisoners are implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
3. Staff does not approach or stand directly in-front of prisoners to reduce the risk of prisoners coughing or breathing directly on them.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

<b>4. Staff has minimised any non-essential contact with suspected COVID-19 cases.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>5. Alcohol hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol is used frequently for hand sanitising by the staff.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>6. Staff uses disposable tissue to cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and is educated on safe disposal of the same.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>7. Staff has been educated on avoiding touching of eyes, nose or mouth if hands are not clean.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>8. All prison staff has been briefed on the importance of not coming to work if they show any symptoms of COVID-19, and put into place procedures so they can be paid and are not penalized in other ways for being absent.</b>	
Remarks:	
<b>9. The use of Personal Protective Gear has been regulated as per guidelines prescribed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>10. If a staff member has been in contact with an individual infected by COVID-19 or with symptoms related thereto, they are assigned duties with no or limited contact with prisoners and other staff for a period of 14 days (i.e. external patrol or towers).</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>11. All staff have been alerted about the enhanced risk of COVID-19 infection in people in prisons and other places of detention.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>12. Prison staff has all the necessary information / fully understands the COVID-19 prevention and response procedures.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>13. Prison staff has been made aware of all relevant procedures and protocols and is regularly briefed/ trained and updated on the procedure.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
<b>14. Any staff member showing or having experienced any symptoms of COVID-19 is not allowed to enter prisons.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

15. Signage at essential points has been placed to make the Prison staff and inmates informed of the precautions to be taken to prevent the spread of COVID -19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

**VI. Discharge of prisoners**

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it.</b>	
1. If a person, who has served his sentence, is an active COVID-19 case at the time of release, or is the contact of a COVID-19 case and still within the quarantine period, it is ensured that the person discharged has a place to go where he can maintain isolation in a health facility/quarantine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: How many such prisoners were found?	
2. The local authority is notified that such person has been discharged and it is made sure that transfer and follow-up has been tied up with local authorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

**VII. Measures for ensuring welfare of prisoners**

<b>If the following preventive/precautionary processes are followed, mark the box next to it.</b>	
1. All inmates are regularly made aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the importance of maintaining personal hygiene and social distancing.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
2. Prisoners are duly informed about the temporary impact of COVID-19 on ordinary prison routines (including visits and other services.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
3. The importance of protecting the health of staff, prisoners, and the community is communicated to the prisoners regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
4. Awareness materials and signage have been put up at common areas in prisons for prisoners' awareness.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	
5. Prisoner are shown information posters and explained the information and it is verified that the prisoners understand the content.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Remarks:	

**Mark the methods of raising awareness and information sharing among prisoners being used in the prison.**

Method of raising awareness	Remarks
Posters <input type="checkbox"/>	
Announcements <input type="checkbox"/>	
Closed group interactions <input type="checkbox"/>	
Camps <input type="checkbox"/>	
Audio Visuals <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other Methods being used:	

**Other Remarks:**

**Signature:**

## B. CHECKLIST FOR THE SENIOR MOST MEDICAL OFFICER AT PRISON

Note: In case, no medical officer is appointed at the prison, the prison may request the Chief Medical/ Health Officer of the district, who may also be the ex-officio visitor to the prison to appoint one doctor to visit prison every day. The same doctor may be asked to fill this checklist as well.

Name & Designation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. Health and Hygiene

1. What is the interval of disinfecting the following?					
Various Prison Areas	Once a day	Alternate days	Once a week	Not once in last week	Other/ Remarks
Prison Barracks					
Office Spaces					
Kitchen(s)					
Bathrooms and toilets					
Common areas					

2. Whether the following are cleaned and disinfected frequently?					
Objects of daily use	Several times a day	Once a day	At least once in a week	Once in two weeks or more	Remarks
Objects and surfaces in barracks such as cell doors/bars, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, etc.					
Doorknobs					
Light switches					
Sink handles					
Countertops					
Toilets, toilet handles, Sink handles,					
Recreation equipment (TV, games, books, etc.)					
Kiosks					
Telephones & Kiosks					
Blankets & Bedding					
Clothing					
Office desks, chairs and staff equipment (including radio, phone, handcuff, handcuff keys, etc.)					

3. Whether the staff engaged in physically interacting with prisoners wear the following?			
Self-Protection Equipment	Yes	No	Other precautions taken/ Remarks
Hand Gloves			

Eye Protections			
Face Mask			

4. Whether staff changes clothes and shoes before going home?		
Category of staff		Remarks
All Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff engaged in quarantine facilities, isolation facilities, medical wards, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Staff engaged in physical handling/directing other healthy prisoners	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None of the prison staff changes clothes and shoes before going home	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5. Whether new inmates are provided new or properly cleaned clothing and bedding articles?		
		Remarks
Yes <i>(Either new or properly cleaned clothes and bedding is provided)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6. Whether all inmates have been given the following?			
Essential Safety Item	Yes	No	Other items provided/ Remarks
Personal Soap			
Face Cover/Mask			

7. Whether prisoners are periodically provided with detergent and bleaching powder to clean their clothing?		
Yes	No	Remarks
Once a week <input type="checkbox"/>		
Once in two weeks <input type="checkbox"/>		
Once in a month <input type="checkbox"/>		

8. Whether clothing and bedding of quarantined inmates is cleaned separately?		
		Remarks
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

9. Whether Staff and prisoners have been reminded about hand washing techniques, hygienic sneezing methods and safe disposal or cough, etc?		
		Remarks (If so, what are the modes of communicating this? Eg- by poster, audio-visual, etc.)
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

10. Whether all masks are changed at least once in 8 hours or before if visibly soiled or wet?		
		Remarks
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## II. Prisoners Intake and Prison Entry Procedure

1. What is the frequency of sanitising the holding area for prisoners who are to be screened before intake?	
Frequency	Remarks
Several times a day <input type="checkbox"/>	
Once daily <input type="checkbox"/>	
At least once in a week <input type="checkbox"/>	
Once in two weeks or more <input type="checkbox"/>	

2. Whether the following information is collected from the new admissions and prisoners reporting back to custody?			
Information	Yes	No	Remarks
History of COVID-19 symptoms – cough, fever, shortness of breath, etc.			<i>Please mention who records this information and where is it stored.</i>
Recent travel history to affected areas/contamination zones/COVID hotspots			
Possible contact with confirmed cases in last 14 days			
Any other information which is collected:			

Other Remarks:

Signature: