

# Room Lockdown during COVID-19 Pandemic

During layovers authorities or operators in many countries require complete room lockdown. This is also compliant with the ICAO Public Health Corridor (PHC)<sup>1</sup> concept. The lockdown requirement is either due to the quarantine requirements of the destination country or requirement to avoid quarantine when arriving back to home base.

This complete lockdown may have detrimental effects on mental health, especially if the layover is long, and if further quarantine is required at home base regardless of isolation during layover.

It is not expected that operators or pilot associations would be able to remove these authority requirements but listed below are some mitigating measures that could be recommended. These require agreements between associations and operators, but also agreements and discussion between operators and authorities.

## ROSTERING

- Lockdown layover should be allocated evenly to the crew members
- Long (two days or more) layovers should be on a voluntary basis
- At least the minimum days-off in a roster shall be days without any quarantine requirement

## DESTINATION HOTEL

- A room service or option to order food from outside of the hotel (preferable) should be provided.
- Hotels should have proper internet access provided. This way crew members can maintain contact with their families and friends in addition to finding entertainment.
- A bigger hotel room, especially for longer lockdowns might be beneficial for crew well-being.
- Crew members should be allowed to exercise outside if it is possible to keep safe distance from others.
- During layovers, crew members could be allowed to live in their own crew-bubble with other members operating the flights, i.e. being able to visit each other's room or having

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icao.int/covid/cart/Pages/CART-Take-off.aspx>

allocated a dedicated crew room only for one crew. In any case, crew members are in contact with each other during the flight.

## MAINTAINING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

### Connect socially with others

Even if it is not possible to meet other people face to face, it is suggested to connect with other people by calls, video calls, or social media. The single most important factor in coping with life's stressful events is to have a good social network in place.

Pilot associations and operators should ensure resources are available for crew to seek support if they are battling with loneliness during lockdowns.

### Get Active

Physical exercise improves mental well-being. If exercising or just walking outside of the room is allowed, it is suggested. There are also many free apps for different kind of workouts, stretching, or yoga that can be performed in a hotel room.

### Relaxation

Learn and practice relaxation techniques e.g., breathing or meditation to control stress reactions.

### Keep learning

Learning new things can generate satisfaction and thereby maintain or improve mental well-being. If you have subjects to study or a new hobby to explore, lockdown may be a good time to investigate these things.

Think of things that can be done in a hotel room that you have wanted to do, e.g., read a certain book, a knitting project, write a novel, etc., and think of this as an opportunity to fulfill this.