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## Malls open with heightened precautions

Malls have opened in Delhi and adjoining areas like Noida, Greater Noida, and Ghaziabad by putting a premium on stringent safety measures to prevent the transmission of Covid-19 infection among customers



As the nation begins to adapt to the new normal in "Un-lock, Phase 1", shopping malls in the national capital and its neighboring areas like Noida, Greater Noida, and Ghaziabad have opened their doors to customers — with high safety measures in place to avoid Covid-19 infection.

So, if you are feeling stifled being at home for the last three months and would like to feel the warmth of bright billboards and neon lights, not to speak of people milling around, and savour a positive feeling about life returning to normalcy, be assured about your safety in the malls.

### Safety features at malls:

Developers and promoters of malls have put in place a unique building ventilation design, which automatically disinfects air droplets left by anyone coughing or sneezing inside malls.

"Covid Marshals" have been deputed, one each on every floor, to monitor shoppers and help them follow the Covid-19 norms like hand sanitization, social distancing, etc.

Most of the malls are using state-of-the-art contactless ordering and cashless payments system at all retail stores and food courts in the malls.

Malls have installed plexiglass screens at every checkout and payment terminal to avoid direct contact between customers and the staff.

All the malls are following the strict guidelines of their respective civic administrations which have mandated availability of contactless sanitizers, disinfection of various areas, controlled customer entry at the mall and at each store, immersive disinfection of airconditioning and

fresh air system, encouraging social distancing practices, alternate seating arrangements in all food and beverage outlets, isolation room for customers and staff with symptoms, etc.

Generally, the managements of malls are focusing on sanitizing objects and areas frequently used by visitors like lifts, escalators, lobby entrance, waiting areas, and corridors. These are being cleaned and wiped at least twice daily, apart from cleaning the exhaust fan inside lifts regularly.

Toilet hygiene, too, has been addressed as soap and disposable paper towels have been provisioned in ample quantities, and regularly refilled, apart from hand drying machines available in every toilet and wash-room.

Tables at eateries have been placed at least 1.5 metres away from each other, with some joints providing partition as well, serving as buffer between one table and another; seating arrangements have been modified to reduce direct face-to-face encounters.

Lifts in the malls are being operated by liftmen, with only four people allowed inside at one time.

Some malls which have opened their doors to customers like Ambience Mall in Vasant Kunj (Delhi), Noida's Great India Place Mall and Logix Mall, Gaur City Centre Mall in Greater Noida West (Noida Extension), and Pacific Mall in Kaushambi have assured that all shoppers and staffers are being checked for body temperature and that apart from staffers, customers who have not brought along their face masks are being given one each.

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## Malls open with heightened precautions



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Manoj Gaur, MD of Gaur City Mall in Greater Noida West and prepared our staff to handle shoppers coming to the mall. No one is permitted inside the mall without a face mask and thermal checks are made at every entry point. It is mandatory to wear a mask throughout the duration of the visit inside the mall. Sanitizers are placed at the entry, on each floor, and at every corner inside the mall. Also, sanitization of the floors, handrail of elevators and lifts is done every hour."

Malls are also maintaining air-conditioning systems by disinfecting the vents and maintaining temperatures between 24 degrees celsius and 30 degrees celsius, with an emphasis on circulation of fresh air. Stores are following sanitization and social distancing protocols by controlling shopper density and having contactless cash registers to promote smart payments.

Other precautions against Covid-19 include, restricted parking, maintain car-to-car distance, and sanitization of every vehicle that enters the property. However, wheelchairs, pram, and valet services have been temporarily discontinued.

Arjun Gehlot, director of and Ambience Malls, said: "We are going above and beyond to implement expert technology and techniques, and control the situation to the best of our abilities. After a long period of lockdown, as shoppers look forward to break the monotony of quarantine and indulge in summer shopping, we are prepared to provide an excellent quality of service and create a safe space for millions

of smiles, while adhering to high standards of hygiene and social distancing practices."

Dedicated teams have been deputed at every store inside malls to care for things like hourly sanitization of surfaces, provision of gloves and masks for anybody entering the store.

Aarogya Setu app, that declares Covid-19 safety status of a person, is mandatory at most of these malls and customers must have downloaded it in their mobile phones. You must show your Aarogya Setu app on demand.

Rajiv Suri, MD and CEO of Shoppers Stop, said: "We have made sure to implement every safety precaution as specified by WHO and the retail opening guidelines by the government. We have been studying and tracking openings by other countries to learn from their experiences as well. Social distancing is key and strictly implemented at our locations. Our DCs, offices, and stores have been sanitized and are being consistently managed for safety, to keep consumers and our employees safe and help them shop worry-free and with comfort and confidence."

Abhishek Bansal, ED of Pacific Group, said: "We took a call to be proactive after opening our malls and contribute our bit in the fight against Corona. Apart from various social distancing and hygiene guidelines, we are giving educational messages through online and offline platforms on Covid-19 by use of two characters, Harry and Jazz, in live-size cut outs, social media animations, etc. We have a hospital partner for training and support and a 'Covid-19 Task Force' and ERT for strict adherence and action wherever required."

—AK Tiwary

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