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# Helping You Work Safely

A Guide to Returning to the Workplace

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# Covid 19 - Returning to the Workplace Risk Assessment – things you need to consider?



## MANAGING THE RISK WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

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In order to reduce the workplace risk to the lowest level as possible, the Govt advice stipulates that you must work through the following in order:

1. Increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning
2. Every effort must be made to implement social distancing – keeping 2m apart
3. Where the 2m rule cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, then questions need to be asked if that activity should continue? If the activity is essential for you to continue, further mitigating actions are required – these include:
  - Increasing hand washing and surface cleaning
  - Reducing activity times
  - Use of screens or barriers to separate people
  - Using back to back or side to side working rather than facing each other
  - Reducing the number of people each person has contact with – fixed teams or partnering
4. Always remember to establish whether people working are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 and include them in your risk assessment.
5. Always remember to share the findings of your risk assessment with your staff.
6. Once you have carried out your risk assessment – the Govt are requesting that you display the following poster within your office for all to see <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97d30d3bf7f5d364bfbb6/staying-covid-19-secure.pdf>

# 1 GOING BACK INTO WORKPLACES?

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The company recognises that home working may still be required in some areas of the business. Individual circumstances should be discussed with Management. Issues to consider are given below

## Employee issues

- **Which employees need to be shielded – we need to protect the clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals**
  - Clinically extremely vulnerable – advised not to work outside of the home (received a letter from their GP)
  - Clinically vulnerable – advised to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home (70 or over, and those with underlying health conditions). Where working from home is not possible, 2m rule **MUST** be achieved or further assessment must be carried out to assess acceptable level of risk.
- **Self – Isolating – advices remain the same for those with symptoms. Those with symptoms or those that are living with someone who has symptoms must remain at home**
- **Equality – everyone to be treated equally. The needs of individual workers must be taken into account**

# 2 SOCIAL DISTANCING

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The 2m social distancing rule must be followed wherever possible. This includes:

- When arriving at work
- Departing from work
- Whilst in work – entrances, exits, break rooms, canteens
- Travelling between sites

Where the 2m rule cannot be followed in full, as mentioned on page 1 in relation to a particular activity, then questions need to be asked if that activity should continue? If the activity is essential for you to continue, further mitigating actions are required – hierarchy of measures include:

1. **Increasing hand washing and surface cleaning**
2. **Reducing activity times**
3. **Use of screens or barriers to separate people**
4. **Using back to back or side to side working rather than facing each other**
5. **Reducing the number of people each person has contact with – fixed teams or partnering**

Use the following checklists when planning: how social distancing can be achieved in your workplace, and other areas you need to think about.

## A. Arrival and Departure

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Staggering arrival and departure times – reduce crowding			
Can you provide additional facilities to encourage walking, cycling to work			
Use signage or markings to introduce one way traffic flow at entry and exit points			
Provide hand-washing facilities or hand sanitiser at entry and exit points			
Avoid entry and exit points with touch based security devices			

## B. Moving around buildings and Sites

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Reduce movement by discouraging non-essential trips within a building or around site			
Restrict access between different areas of a building			
Introduce one way flow through buildings			
Reduce maximum occupancy for lifts – consider markings on the floor. Provide hand sanitiser at lifts. Encourage the use of stairs where possible			

## C. Workstations

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Review layout and processes to allow people to work further apart from each other			
Use floor tape to mark areas – keep workers 2m apart			
Only where it is not possible to move workstations further apart - Side by side working or facing away from each other			
Only where it is not possible to move workstations further apart – use screens to separate people			
Manage occupancy levels to enable 2m social distancing			
Avoid hot desking and shared space use – if avoidance is not possible, cleaning regime required			

## D. Meeting Room Options

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Use remote working tools to avoid meetings in person			
Only absolutely necessary participants to attend meetings – 2m separate throughout. Set capacity limits on larger meeting rooms and enforce by removing chairs or marking areas			
Avoid sharing pens etc			
Provide hand sanitiser in meeting rooms			
Establish meeting etiquette while entering and leaving to ensure distancing, cleaning after use.			

## E. Common Areas – areas of common use including canteens, reception areas, areas of worship, toilets, gardens, fire escapes, kitchens, fitness facilities, store rooms

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Working collaboratively with landlords and other tenants in multi tenanted buildings			
Stagger break times to reduce amount of people			
Use safer, outside areas for breaks			
Use space that is not normally used or areas freed up by remote working			
Install screens to protect staff in reception or similar areas			
Encourage staff to bring in their own lunches			
Consider taking fridges out of use if cleanliness cannot be maintained– may need own cool boxes, cool blocks			
Consider using disposable items only. Take cutlery out of use. Or employees keep own items at their desks, put in dishwasher at the end of the day			
Kettles, water machines, taps, microwaves – regular cleaning regimes required – as with ALL frequent touch points			
Re arrange seating and tables to maintain 2m spacings. Reduce face to face interactions			
Encourage staff to remain on site. When off site, maintain social distancing			
Keep personal items with you – coats etc. Store at desk, safely so as not to cause trip hazards			



## ACCIDENTS, SECURITY AND OTHER INCIDENTS

- In an emergency i.e. an accident, or fire, people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe to do so
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitisation measures immediately afterwards including the washing of hands
- Remind staff of emergency procedures, practice drills may need postponing for a while

## 3 MANAGING CUSTOMERS, VISITORS AND CONTRACTORS

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Encourage visits via remote connection where possible			
Where site visits are required, ensure site guidance on social distancing and hygiene is explained – use signage, emails (prior to meeting), website messages			
Limit numbers of visitors, times, only allow required visitors			
Revise visitor arrangements to ensure social distancing and hygiene – clean pen for example if used by visitor			

## 4 CLEANING - PREVENTING TRANSMISSION BY TOUCHING CONTAMINATED SURFACES

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Check that ventilation systems are operating as they should be. Action accordingly if there seems to be any problems (report to landlord/property)			
Open doors and windows frequently to encourage ventilation – only if safe to do so (security risk)			
Cleaning – will take place in most buildings using an external cleaner or one appointed by the landlord. Cleaners use appropriate cleaning products and methods to kill virus's			
Keeping the workplace clean – each and every one of us is responsible for keeping the workplace clean. Frequent and regular cleaning of work areas, equipment between uses, object and surfaces touched frequently (door handles, keyboards) is required using appropriate cleaning products – this is in addition to normal cleaning.			
Removal of waste at the end of each shift			
Limit use of high touch items – printers for example			
Where external cleaners are used – ensure communications with regards to social distancing is in place. All risk assessments and details of products in use to be requested			

## C. Hygiene – hand-washing, sanitisation facilities and toilets

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Reiterate to all staff – their duty of care to themselves and others. Use signs and posters to build awareness of good hand-washing techniques, the need to increase hand-washing frequency, avoid touching face, cough or sneeze into a tissue or your arm if a tissue is not available			
Provide hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to wash rooms			
Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible – floor markings if a queue is likely. Consider taking out of use a sink if too close to the next one.			
Provide more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collections			
Provide paper towels rather than hand dryers			
Changing Rooms and Showers – clear use and cleaning regime required for these areas – social distancing required at all times. Personal items must be removed.			

## D. Hygiene - Use of Vehicles on site

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Cleaning procedure required for goods entering a building			
Cleaning procedure required for the cleaning of any shared vehicle – All vehicles to be cleaned inside, door handles, touch points prior to use of anybody else at work.			
Reiterate to all staff – hand washing requirement once handled any goods			
All staff to regularly clean vehicles that are taken home			
Restrict non business delivery's to work			

# 5 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

When managing the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace, additional PPE beyond what is normally required to protect against non COVID-19 risks is not beneficial. PPE should always be used as a last resort. The risk of COVID-19 must be managed through good hygiene practices and the 2m social distancing rule and fixed teams or partnering – not through the use of PPE. The exception to this rule is clinical settings – hospitals – further advice is available on the Govt Website.

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside of clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. If your environment requires you to wear/use PPE, then your Manager will discuss this with you and provide the necessary information, instruction and training in its use.

## 6 WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

Steps that will usually be needed	YES	NO	N/A
Shift patterns and working groups - Reduce the number of contacts that people have with each other – where staff are split into teams, or shifts, fix these teams so contact is minimal outside of these groups			
Identify areas where people pass things to one another – look at alternatives – drop off points or transfer zones			
<b>Work Related travel</b>			
Minimise non-essential travel – consider remote options first			
If travel is essential with people outside of your own household group, try to share transport with the same group of people each time, and minimise the number of people travelling together in any one vehicle. Increase ventilation where possible			
Cleaning regime required in between shifts or car handovers – ensure all areas touched – doors, locks, steering wheel are cleaned after use. Wash or sanitise hand immediately after use			
<b>Communications and Training</b>			
Provide clear, consistent and regular communications to improve understanding of ways of working			
Engage with workers – explain and agree changes in working arrangements			