

## Safe System of Work for Protecting the Workforce During COVID-19

### Precautions to be taken by management include:

- All Managers and Supervisors are empowered to enforce the measures adopted. Managers will ensure employees are fully briefed so that they have a clear understanding of why measures must be adopted, what measures have been adopted and what the consequences are if the measures are not followed;
- Every effort is made to ensure that working from home is the first option, where this is possible;
- Where working from home is not possible, every effort will be made to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the Government<sup>1</sup> (see below);
- Vulnerable or extremely vulnerable employees, as well as persons who live with them, will be identified and supported following the recommendations set out by the Government<sup>2</sup>;
- **No employees/visitors who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), a new persistent cough and/or loss of smell/taste) are permitted to travel to work and/or enter the place of work;**
- Signage will be placed at entrances reminding employees/visitors not to enter the place of work if they have any symptoms;
- Where employees/visitors who are unwell with symptoms do travel to work and/or enter the premises, this will be dealt with and the area cleaned in accordance with the Government advice<sup>3</sup>;
- Work times/break times will be staggered to reduce the risk of employees meeting;
- The number of washing/toilet facilities will be increased, where possible, and/or limits will be imposed to the numbers of employees using them at any one time (with signage applied to doors), again to reduce the risk of employees meeting. Signage and other resources can be accessed at Public Health England<sup>4</sup>;
- Access/egress points to the site will be improved, wherever possible, to enable social distancing, e.g. using different doors/one-way systems;
- Entry systems that require skin contact, e.g. fingerprint scanners, will be disabled. Where necessary, an alternative system to record who is on site will be kept for emergency purposes;
- Enough space will be provided between workstations and areas where employees need to wait e.g. changing rooms. This will be achieved using signage and/or floor markings, e.g. spaced at 2 metres;
- Employees will be encouraged to use alternative means of travel to work other than public transport or the sharing of vehicles;
- Where employees do use public transport, they are advised to avoid peak times (05:45 – 07:30 and 16:00 – 17:30); and
- Managers are to refer employees to Human Resources for further guidance regarding statutory sick pay, sick notes etc.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

<sup>4</sup> <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/>

**Precautions to be taken to mitigate or reduce the risk of transmission between employees when at work include:**

**Travel to Work:**

- Employees will, wherever possible, travel to work alone using their own transport;
- If employees need to share transport the following measures need to be complied with:
  - Journeys should be with the same individuals with numbers kept to a minimum, e.g. two;
  - Improve ventilation by opening windows back and front, face away from each other or one in the rear and front.
- On arrival all employees must wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitiser; and
- Vehicles should be cleaned following the below advice for cleaning.

**Work Access:**

- Stop all non-essential visitors, see below with regards to maintenance/visitors;
- Use access/egress point, if assigned, and stand at least 2 metres apart or follow the floor markings if present; and
- Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

**Toilet/Changing Rooms and Hand Washing Facilities:**

- Wash hands frequently during the working day;
- Only use the designated facilities for your area, keep 2 metre distance if waiting outside or when inside facility, and keep to the numbers allowed;
- Ensure there is plenty of soap and paper towels, inform management if supplies run low;
- If provided, use a wipe disinfectant cloth to clean any surface that you may have touched; for example, door handles, toilet flush handle and taps etc; and
- Dispose of all paper towels in bin provided (keep lid open or use the foot operated version) and ensure bin is emptied if full.

**Canteen/Rest Areas or when using Client Facilities:**

- Bring your own food and drinks and **DO NOT** leave site to use local shops or visit food takeaway vans;
- Abide by the numbers allowed into the facility and if allocated a time of use;
- Wash hands before entering or use hand sanitiser;
- Maintain 2 metre distancing - do not remove tape where used to screen off tables/chairs;
- Areas to be kept clean with all rubbish placed in the bins provided;
- Avoid using drinks/vending machines - if used then they should be cleaned regularly, and individuals should wash hands after use; and
- Crockery, including cups should not be used unless disposable or cleaned between use.

**Driving for Work:**

- If travelling between sites or undertaking deliveries/collections, then where possible this should be undertaken alone;
- If not possible then the vehicle should be shared by the same person or minimum required to undertake task;
- Keep windows open and face away from each other or site one to the front, and rear seats, before entering and getting out of vehicle;
- Wash hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser if not available;
- Obey client site rules for social distancing etc; and
- Regularly clean vehicle following the below advice for cleaning.

**Cleaning:**

- Cleaning across the workplace will be enhanced, using gloves and with standard cleaning products. Appropriate cleaning materials include:
  - Soap, as it dissolves the fat membrane around the COVID-19 virus so it becomes inactive, hence most soapy water solutions will suffice to clean surfaces;
  - Disinfectant wipes can be used instead of soapy water. Most disinfectant wipes are adequate to kill COVID-19 on surfaces although PHE recommend wipes that also sanitise with at least 60% alcohol.
- Particular attention should be paid to communal areas and common touch points, such as:
  - Taps and washing facilities;
  - Toilet flush and seats;
  - Door handles and push plates;
  - Handrails on staircases;
  - Machinery and equipment controls;
  - Canteen/welfare areas will be cleaned between break times and shifts, include chairs, vending machines;
  - Telephone equipment; keyboards, photocopier, and other office equipment;
  - Rubbish collection and storage areas will be emptied regularly throughout the day and at the end of each day.
- When cleaning vehicles, particular attention should be paid to common high touch surfaces Including:
  - Handles (inside and out);
  - Steering wheel and starter button;
  - Centre touchscreen and stereo;
  - Handbrake and gearstick;
  - Keys and key fob;
  - Indicators and wiper stalks;
  - Windows, mirrors and mirror switches;
  - Seat adjusters.

**Work Planning:**

- Below is an overview of how the risk of transmission will be reduced where work activities must be undertaken. An accompanying checklist will be used to assist with recording.

<b>Eliminate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 will not travel to work.</li> <li>• Tasks will be rearranged to enable them to be done by either one person, or by maintaining social distancing (2 metres).</li> <li>• Skin to skin and face to face contact will be avoided.</li> <li>• Stairs will be used rather than lifts.</li> <li>• Alternative or additional mechanical aids will be considered to reduce the need for worker interface e.g. two persons lifts.</li> <li>• Site meetings will be avoided or will be conducted by telephone or video conferencing.</li> <li>• Where meetings must take place, only necessary meeting participants should attend, attendees will be kept 2 metres apart from each other, rooms will be well ventilated/windows kept open to all air circulation or held outside.</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce</b>	<p>Where the social distancing rules cannot be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The time and frequency employees are within 2 metres of each other will be minimised.</li> <li>• The number of employees involved will be reduced to a minimum.</li> <li>• Employees will work side by side or face away from each other not face to face.</li> <li>• Where lifts must be used, the capacity will be reduced to reduce congestion.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common touch points, doors, buttons, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, equipment etc., will be regularly cleaned.</li> <li>• The ventilation in enclosed areas will be increased – open doors or windows where possible.</li> <li>• Workers will be reminded to wash their hands regularly during the working day not just on arrival or before break time.</li> </ul>
<b>Isolate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifts and teams will be kept together.</li> <li>• The sizes of shifts and teams will be kept as small as possible.</li> <li>• Shifts and teams will be kept away from other works where possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Control</b>	<p>Where face to face working is <b>ESSENTIAL</b> to undertake a task and social distancing cannot be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work will be kept to 15 minutes or less.</li> <li>• Authorisation processes, such as a permit to work, will be used.</li> <li>• Additional supervision will be provided to monitor compliance.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</b>	<p>Sites should not need to use Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) for COVID-19 where the 2 metre social distancing guidelines are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre distance, each activity will be assessed using the hierarchy of controls and any sector-specific guidance. The use of PPE and RPE is considered a last resort.</li> <li>• Re-usable RPE will be cleaned between uses and <b>NOT</b> shared.</li> <li>• Single use PPE/RPE will be disposed of so it cannot be reused.</li> <li>• If works must take place in areas where persons have symptoms, are shielding or have confirmed cases, e.g. healthcare facilities, additional PPE will be required, and information will be sought before attending site.</li> </ul>



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