

Review of coronavirus (Covid-19) measures for businesses

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 continues to require the closure of particular businesses. Restrictions are also imposed on businesses which are permitted to remain open. We have been pleased to find businesses have worked hard to comply with guidance and we urge you to continue with this effort to ensure that all businesses can reopen as soon as possible.

It is important that we all continue to follow the Government guidelines to limit the spread of coronavirus and to keep the roadmap for reopening on track.

Where workplaces are open precautions need to continue to be taken to reduce risks to both the workers and the public. This checklist will help you to review the measures in place in your workplace to keep everyone safe. Guidance is being updated regularly and is available at <https://www.gov.uk/> Some trade associations have also produced useful guidance.

Where you are unable to introduce measures to control the risk from coronavirus you will need to consider closing your business.

Employee safety	Done?
Businesses who have 10 or more employees are eligible for free home tests and should order home test kits online to distribute to employees. Swift detection of cases means those who test positive can isolate immediately and, in doing so, break chains of transmission. Businesses must register their interest by 12 April at https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests .	
To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues daily to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.	
Identify employees who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). These individuals will need to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.	
Specific individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable are to be 'shielded' and will have received a medical letter informing them to isolate themselves. It is important that these employees stay at home.	
Try to maintain dedicated work teams (cohorting) and keep the number of members as small as possible.	

Provide handwashing stations with soap, water and a hygienic means to dry hands and encourage staff to use them. All staff should wash their hands regularly using soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, before/after using shared equipment and prior to eating. Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser with an alcohol content of at least 60% should be used. Workers should cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then dispose of the tissue in a bin and immediately wash their hands. Anyone with a persistent cough should not be at work.	
Face masks are required in the workplace. Instruct your staff in line with the appropriate guidance for your business type.	
Communicate with staff on a regular basis to remind them to follow social distancing advice and wash their hands regularly.	
Where possible, use digital and remote transfers of material rather than paper format, such as e-forms, emails and e-banking.	
Allocate work spaces to employees who are at least two metres apart - these can be marked out with tape. Equipment and fittings could be re-arranged to accommodate social distancing.	
Where it is not possible to remain two metres apart, staff should work side by side or facing away from each other, rather than face to face. Face masks may also be required.	
Increase the ventilation within the premises by opening doors and windows.	
Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfection. Attention should be given to shared equipment and hand contact surfaces including work surfaces, tables, chairs, switches, door handles, push plates on doors, toilets, hand towel dispensers, taps, etc. Use single use cloths and check you are using sanitisers that comply with the appropriate British Standard.	
Public safety	
If a 'click and collect' service is offered, provide a designated collection time.	
Display a sign/poster at the entrance to remind customers not to enter the premises if they have symptoms.	
Provide sanitiser with an alcohol content of at least 60% for customers/staff to clean the basket/trolley handle and to sanitise hands.	
Where the public access the premises, introduce control measures to implement the two metre social distancing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the number of people in the shop and control entry so that the premises do not become overcrowded • Maintain queue control outside of shops and other essential premises so that the two metre rule is observed by those waiting in the queue • Customers should not be allowed to congregate or loiter on public land outside shops • Use signage and floor markings to direct people around the premises and maintain a two metre distance • Create a 'one way' system by closing off aisles and using signage to direct customers to move in the same continuous direction • Close the premises if it becomes too busy • Staff may need to act as stewards to advise customers on social distancing 	

<p>Customers should not be directly in front of the till operator. Options to control risk include:</p> <p>A 'sneeze screen' barrier to protect both customers and the till operative. Alternatively, create a two metre exclusion zone around the till area with a customer notice, such as 'Please stand behind the line while being served'.</p>	
<p>Contactless payments are encouraged. Place a sign at the till, such as 'Please use contactless payment if you are able to do so'.</p>	
<p>Frequent cleaning and disinfection of shared customer touch points including hand held checkout devices, keypads at check out, fridge/freezer handles, escalator and staircase handrails, on site ATMs, etc. Use single use cloths and a sanitiser that complies with the appropriate British Standard.</p>	
<p>Ensure that sufficient traffic management controls are in place to control cars accessing the business to pick up takeaway items, access 'click and collect' or drive through services so there is no build-up of queuing traffic. Include one way systems and stewarding to the traffic routes.</p>	
<p>Water safety: Legionella risk</p>	
<p>Many businesses and their premises have been temporarily closed. There is a risk of legionella developing in water systems that remain dormant. Business owners, landlords and property managers must be aware of this and put into place procedures to control the risk.</p>	
<p>Legionella is a bacteria which can develop in standing water in pipes and so any taps or shower heads that are not used for any period of time should be flushed through using legionella risk assessment and control measures.</p>	
<p>Ensure a legionella risk assessment has been completed and is being followed.</p>	
<p>In order to manage the risk you must implement a suitable flushing regime which is recommended to take place on a weekly basis or other measures such as draining the system if the building is to remain unused for a long period of time.</p>	
<p>If there are any lapses in flushing regimes, systems may need to be cleaned and disinfected prior to building reoccupation. This could include removal of shower heads and disinfection in sterilising solution.</p>	

Please contact the Covid Secure Team via covid.secure@publicagroup.uk if you need additional advice.