





# **WORKING SAFELY DURING COVID-19 IN THE OFFICE**

## Approvals

The signatures below certify that this procedure has been reviewed and accepted and demonstrates that the signatories are aware of all the requirements contained herein and are committed to ensuring their provision.

	Name	Signature	Position	Date
Prepared by	Lauren Bunyan TECHIOSH		Health and Safety Advisor	13/05/2020
Approved by	Phil Hayward		Kirkman & Jourdain Director	14/05/2020

## Amendment Record

This procedure is reviewed to ensure its continuing relevance to the systems and process that it describes. A record of contextual additions or omissions is given below:

Page No.	Context	Revision	Date
6	Amended information regarding 2m social distancing, stating that 1m plus can also be adopted with risk mitigation in place.	1	09/07/2020
5	'Deep Clean' has been changed to 'Clean.'	2	02/09/2020
6	No Visitors has been changed to 'Minimal Visitors.'	2	02/09/2020
10	Removed France and stated that the Travel Quarantine List needs to be checked regularly.	2	02/09/2020

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## **Introduction**

**These Site Operating Procedures (SOP) are based on Public Health England (PHE) guidance; other restrictions and advice may apply in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.**

During the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, we as an employer need to ensure that we are protecting ourselves and employees within the workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection. This includes considering how personnel travel to and from the work place and how staff move around the office working space.

As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

Currently, the incubation period of COVID-19 is assessed to be between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

Coronavirus can be spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (2 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person. In the instance where a 2m distance cannot be kept, then a minimum of 1m+ should be adhered to at all times.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are the main means of transmission.

There are two main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

- Infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 metres) such that droplets could be inhaled into the lungs.
- It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching door handles and then touching own face)

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors, for example:

- what surface the virus is on
- whether it is exposed to sunlight
- differences in temperature and humidity
- exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to decrease significantly over 72 hours.

We know that similar viruses are transferred to and by people's hands. Therefore, regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection.

## Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. Prevention measures such as those described below should be taken within the office. These control measures are also listed in the COVID-19 Office Risk Assessment.

This includes;

- Additional posters will be placed around the office to promote good hygiene.
- Office workers will be issued with tissues and individual waste bins lined with a plastic bag so that they can be emptied without contacting the contents.
- All office staff will be responsible for disposing of their own rubbish regularly



Hand soap will be readily available in all hand washing areas, including the toilets, kitchen and sink outside in the yard.

Additional hand sanitisation points will be placed around the office, to encourage and remind all staff to ensure they keep sanitising their hands.

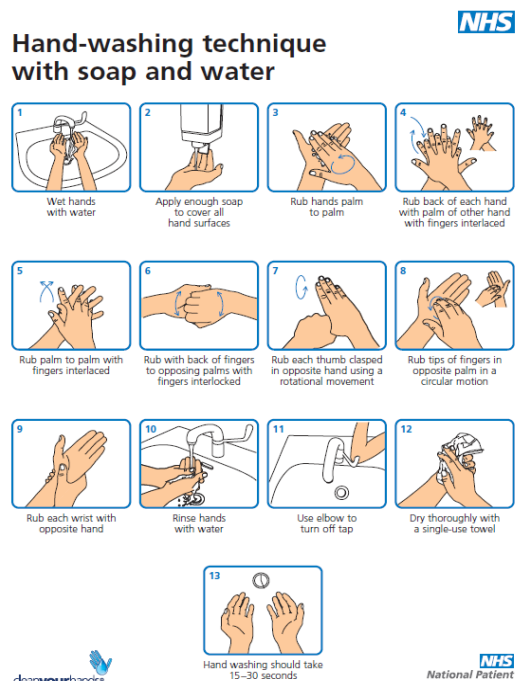
Hands should be washed thoroughly after touching any shared items / surfaces and these should only be touched if necessary.

Hands should also be washed thoroughly before eating or touching any area of your face.

Anti-bacterial wipes will be available near shared spaces and staff should be mindful to regularly wipe shared areas with anti-bacterial wipes.

Routine environmental cleaning will be carried out, twice a week.

Any office member with even a mild cough or fever (37.3 C or more) needs to stay at home. They should also stay home (or work from home where possible.)



Any workers who develops flu-like symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath, fever) should go alert their Manager immediately, pick up their belongings without touching anything else and leave the office immediately. Any areas where they have been or touch should be thoroughly cleaned.

All office workers should work from home where this is possible to do so. The shared office calendar should be utilised to ensure that minimal people are in the office together at any one time.

When office staff begin to return back to the office, no more than 10 members should be in together at any one time. All staff members must ensure they are noting their attendance to the office on the Shared Calendar before they attend, at least 24 hours in advance where possible.

### **Social Distancing**

As per the Government Guidance, all staff should be socially distancing from each other as much as possible. This should be a minimum distance of at least 2m, where possible, or one metre with risk mitigation where two metres is not viable.

Additional measures, as follows have been put in to place and all office staff should adhere to these at all times;

- No unauthorised persons to enter the office. Minimal visitors will be allowed in to the office at any time. Office staff should only enter, if it is safe to do so.
- No gatherings outside the toilets at the front entrance. Each member of staff will be given their own toilet tag to hang on the hook outside the door to indicate that the toilet is occupied and they should remove this when they have finished in the toilet. Ideally, if somebody is in the toilet, staff should go back to their desk and wait a few minutes before trying again, to reduce any congestion outside the toilets and in the reception area.
- The kitchen is to be used by only one person at a time. A rota will be in place for use of the kitchen for staggered lunch breaks. All office staff should ensure that they are using the kitchen at their designated time at lunch and finishing as soon as possible, ready for the next person. This will ease congestion outside the kitchen and ensure that only one person uses the kitchen area at one time. All staff must make their own tea / coffee only, using their own mug. Staff will then need to clean up their cups / mugs themselves at the end of the day or ensure that it is placed in the dishwasher.
- Office staff should not be facing any other member of staff in close proximity. If any member of the office is facing another person in close proximity, their desk will need to be moved to ensure that they are not facing each other.
- Where the 2m/1m+ social distance cannot be adhered to and the work space cannot be moved to accommodate etc, additional screens will be placed up as a barrier between office staff, as a form of extra protection. This will also be the case for any staff members directly facing each other.
- Any communication should be done over the telephone, to avoid face to face interaction. Where communication needs to be done face to face, social distancing guidelines should be adhered to, or outside the office can be used to safely communicate as the area is open and well ventilated.

- Face coverings can also be worn by office members, if they feel safer to do so when in the office.



**What to do if someone with suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in the office, or is in the office when they feel unwell**



If someone becomes unwell within the office and there is reason to suspect they may have come into contact with COVID-19, the person should inform their Manager or a Manager within the office immediately. They must do so at a safe distance, or as far away from them as possible.

They must not touch anything within the office, collect their personal belongings and leave the office immediately. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and should cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag or pocket then throw the tissue in the bin. If they do not have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.

Their area, as well as any shared area, or where they have been should be cleaned safely and as soon as possible.

The management team should identify people who have been in contact with them and to advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. This could include these individuals self-isolating for 14 days in case of symptoms.

If a member of staff is confirmed to have COVID-19, Management will inform fellow staff members of their possible exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace but maintain confidentiality at all times.

Workers exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 will be given instructions on what to do in line with the national authorities' guidance.

## **Office staff travelling to and from the office using their own vehicle or public transport**

Office staff may also face risks getting from their home to work and then home each day. All office staff should follow the guidelines below when travelling to and from work;

1. If you feel unwell travelling in to work and begin to show any symptoms of COVID-19, please do not enter the office, return home and inform your Manager immediately.
2. Avoid the use of public transport as much as possible, considering cycling / walking etc.
3. Staff that need to travel in using public transport should discuss this with their Line Manager, if they are coming in or leaving at busy times of the day. Where possible, staff working hours may be able to be altered temporarily so that staff can travel in when public transport is less busy.
4. All staff travelling in their own vehicle, should only travel by themselves where possible. If this is not possible and staff need to share a vehicle, they should keep the windows open slightly for ventilation and should not be facing each other at any point.
5. Again, face coverings should be worn where staff feel that this is safer to do so.
6. All staff travelling in should still carry out a regular clean of their vehicle, in areas they regularly touch, such as their steering wheel, gear stick, radio, dashboard etc.
7. Staff who have travelled in using public transport should make it a priority to wash their hands and sanitise when they enter in to the office.

## **Deliveries**

No delivery persons should enter the building at any time. Signs have been placed on both the front and side door to inform the drivers that they need to leave the deliveries at the side door. Where delivery drivers enter the premises, they should be asked to exit the building immediately and areas that they have touched should be cleaned.

Drivers should not ask you to sign for any deliveries, they should leave the parcel at the door and take a photo of the delivery if necessary. The office number will be on the door for drivers to inform that they have dropped the delivery at the door.

Any office staff who collects the delivery from outside the side door should ensure that they wash their hands after handling packaging or contents.

All deliveries should be left by the island in the main office and the individual should be informed that the parcel is there by email or telephone. No office staff should be handing parcels to any one else, as this could break social distancing guidelines. Once the individual has opened the delivery, the packaging should be carefully placed in the individuals bin only and they should ensure they wash their hands after handing the packaging.



## **Emergency Situations within the Office**

There are very few situations where staff within the office should not adhere to the guidelines set out on the operational procedure. This is any emergency situation, such as administering First Aid to someone in need or the breakout of a fire within the office.

In the instance that a fire breaks out, the 2m social distancing guidelines **SHOULD** be broken if it means that staff can exit the building quickly and safely. Once staff have all gathered at the assembly point and have all been accounted for, staff should then keep to the social distancing guidelines as much as possible.

Some staff members are qualified First Aiders. As a first aider, in addition to high quality clinical skills, to be effective these staff members need to:

1. Be aware of the risks to themselves and others
2. Keep themselves safe
3. Give early treatment
4. Keep themselves informed and updated
5. Remember their own needs

In the current climate with the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, these skills become even more important and here is how the First Aiders can apply these skills when managing a first aid incident;

### **1. Be aware of the risks to yourself and others**

When approaching a casualty there is always a risk of cross contamination – especially when you may have to get close to the casualty to assess what is wrong or to check their breathing. It is always important to be aware of the risks of how this cross contamination has occurred. According to NHS 111 we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person but similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.

### **2. Keep yourself safe**

In line with government advice, make sure you wash your hands or use an alcohol gel, before and after treating a casualty also ensure that you don't cough or sneeze over a casualty when you are treating them.

The Resuscitation Council (UK) provides some useful advice of how to keep yourself safe when providing CPR.

Don't lose sight of other cross contamination that could occur that isn't related to COVID-19.

- Wear gloves or cover hands when dealing with open wounds
- Cover cuts and grazes on your hands with waterproof dressing
- Dispose of all waste safely
- Do not touch a wound with your bare hand
- Do not touch any part of a dressing that will come in contact with a wound.

### **3. Give early treatment**

The vast majority of incidents do not involve you getting close to a casualty where you would come into contact with cough droplets. Sensible precautions will ensure you are able to treat a casualty effectively.

### **4. Keep yourself informed and updated**

As this is a new disease this is an ever changing situation and the government and NHS are continually updating their advice. Make sure that you regularly review the NHS 111 or Gov.uk website which has a specific section on Coronavirus.

### **5. Remember your own needs**

These are challenging and uncertain times for all. The COVID-19 outbreak has meant a lot of upheaval and worry for people. In order to help others you will also need to look after your own needs. Make sure you take time to talk about your fears and concerns with someone you trust and to take out time to look after yourself.

## **Advice on travel and meetings and returning from travel to affected areas**

People who have returned from areas where COVID-19 countermeasures are in effect in the last 14 days should avoid attending work. They should call the designated public health service for advice and self-isolate.

Advice from your national public health authority is in place for what to do if you have returned in the last 14 days from specified countries or areas, which is updated on an ongoing basis. The list should be checked regularly as it is continuously changing.

All other staff should continue to attend work, unless otherwise advised by the national authorities or their employer.

### **Advice for staff returning from travel anywhere else within the last 14 days;**

These staff can continue to attend work unless they have been informed that they have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If individuals are aware that they have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 they should contact their employer and the designated public health services for further advice.

When booking any holidays on BreaheHR, employees should fill in the notes section to inform their Manager that they are going abroad and provide details such as when they are going and when they will return and which country they are going to.

Dependent on Government Guidelines, the employee may have to self-isolate when they return for 14 days.

## **Organising meetings or events**

Organisers of meetings and events need to think about the potential risk from COVID-19 because:

- There is a risk that people attending your meeting or event might be unwittingly bringing the COVID-19 virus to the meeting.
- Others might be unknowingly exposed to COVID-19.

### **BEFORE the meeting or event**

1. Consider whether the meeting or event is necessary or whether it could be postponed or replaced using electronic methods, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. If this cannot be done, can it be scaled down so that fewer people attend?

2. Check and follow the advice from the authorities in the community where you plan to hold the meeting or event.

3. Develop and agree a preparedness plan to prevent infection at your meeting or event

- Ensure and verify information and communication channels in advance with key partners such as public health and health care authorities
- Pre-order sufficient supplies and materials, including tissues and hand sanitizer for all participants.
- Actively monitor where COVID-19 is circulating. Advise participants in advance that if they have any symptoms or feel unwell, they should not attend.
- Make sure all participants and visitors at the event provide contact details: mobile telephone number, email and address where they are staying. State clearly that their details will be shared with local public health authorities if any participant becomes ill with a suspected infectious disease.

### **DURING the meeting or event**

1. Provide information or a briefing, preferably both orally and in writing, on COVID-19 and the measures that organisers are taking to make this event safe for participants.

- Build trust. For example, as an icebreaker, practice ways to say hello without touching.
- Encourage regular hand-washing or use of an alcohol rub by all participants at the meeting or event
- Encourage participants to cover their face with the crook of their elbow or a tissue if they cough or sneeze. Supply tissues and closed bins to dispose of them in.
- Provide contact details or a health hotline number that participants can call for advice or to give information.

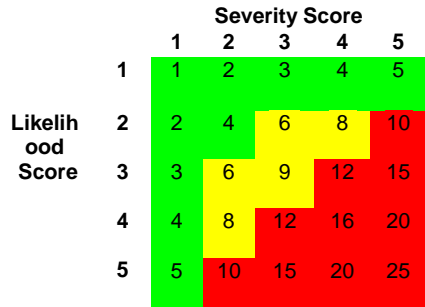
2. Provide dispensers of alcohol-based hand rub prominently around the venue.

3. If there is space, arrange seats so that participants are at least two metres apart, or one metre plus with mitigating factors where this is not possible.
4. Open windows and doors whenever possible to make sure the venue is well ventilated.
5. If anyone starts to feel unwell, they must leave the meeting, without touching anything as soon as possible.

#### AFTER the meeting

1. Retain the names and contact details of all participants for at least one month. This will help public health authorities trace people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 if one or more participants become ill shortly after the event
2. If someone at the meeting or event was isolated as a suspected COVID-19 case, the organiser should let all participants know this. They should be advised to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days. If they start to feel unwell they should stay at home and contact the relevant public health authority.

<b>Site Address:</b>	<b>Working Safely During COVID-19 in Offices</b>	<b>Job No:</b>	
<b>Risk Assessor</b>	<b>Lauren Bunyan</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>12/05/2020</b>
<b>Signature</b>	<i>L Bunyan</i>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Regularly / Upon Significant Change</b>



Severity Score	Likelihood Score	Severity Score	Likelihood Score
1	Remote Possibility	1	1
2	Possible	2	2
3	Probable	3	3
4	Highly Probable	4	4
5	Inevitable	5	5

**PPE Requirements - Please detail below:**

	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Potential Hazard	Who is at risk & how	Risk Rating			Preventative Measures	Risk Rating			Responsibilities
		S	L	R		S	L	R	
Working in office areas where there is potential of contracting COVID-19	All office Staff & Visitors – Areas can become contaminated through the virus living on surfaces or transmitted through airborne coughs and sneezes.	5	3	15	<p>All staff that can work from home should continue to do so, where possible.</p> <p>Minimal amounts of visitors to enter in to the office – Authorised personnel only.</p> <p>Extra measures should be taken to protect Extremely Vulnerable Staff.</p> <p>Where staff cannot work from home and must attend the office, they must keep a minimal of 1m social distance from other staff at all times. Where a 2m distance cannot be maintained, additional measures must be put in place, including the use of screens or moving workstations where possible.</p> <p>There should be no more than 10 members of staff in the office at one time, ensuring that they are not sitting directly facing another member of staff, or sitting within 1m distance of another member of staff. Occupancy levels should be kept to a minimum, where possible at all times.</p> <p>Sneeze screens will be put in to place where staff have to be directly facing each other, if the member of staff cannot be moved on to another desk.</p> <p>Both the back and front door should be used for entry and exit in to and out of the office.</p>	5	1	5	

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					The office calendar should be utilised at all times to ensure that no more than 10 people are present in the office at one time. Staff should also work in the same location where possible & reduce other work locations they visit as much as possible.			
Working in office areas where a 2m social distance cannot be adhered to	All office Staff – Being within 2m distance increases the risk of the virus being spread	5	4	20	Where staff cannot keep a social distance, additional screens / barriers should be installed as a way of protection from the virus. Colleagues should not be directly facing each other, they should either be sat away from each other or side to side, with as much distance as possible. Where staff need to communicate, they should do so via email and telephone where possible to prevent face to face contact. Any face to face contact should be at an acceptable social distance. Additional face coverings can be worn, if the staff member feels more comfortable doing this.	5	1	5
Staff touching areas in the office which may be contaminated with the virus, or staff who are infected, touching and infecting areas, causing the virus to spread.	All office Staff – Touching infected areas then touching their own face, work items etc could mean they contract the virus	5	3	15	All shared areas within the office that are touched regularly should be cleaned regularly, such as handles, doors, toilet flush buttons etc. Additional signage should be displayed to remind staff of good hygiene, including regular hand washing, not touching the face, cleaning work areas regularly etc. A deep clean should be carried out to the office more regularly. Rubbish to be removed from the works area by each member of staff regularly, taking only their own rubbish. Each staff member has a toilet tag which they should themselves hang on the hook on the door when they enter and remove when they leave to prevent congestion by the reception area. Staff should regularly clean their own telephones, computers etc and ensure they only use their own items.	5	1	5
Vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk are more likely to be hospitalised or	Vulnerable Staff Members – More likely to be hospitalised or	5	3	15	All vulnerable staff members should work from home where possible. For vulnerable staff members that cannot just work from home, extra care should be taken for them to observe social distancing guidelines and additional measures of protection will be out in place.	5	1	5

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seriously ill than other members of staff.	seriously ill from the Virus.				Where they cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available option for how / where they work, enabling them to comfortably keep to the 2m social distancing guidelines, use of screens, altered hours if possible.			
Some staff may develop COVID-19 Symptoms, or feel unwell at work.	All Staff – If a member of staff becomes ill at work, with possible COVID-19, they could contaminate parts of the office and increase the likelihood of contamination for other staff.	5	3	15	Any staff member who feels unwell should let their Manager know from a safe distance, collect their belongings without touching anything else and leave the office immediately. Their works area and any area they may have touched will need to be cleaned thoroughly with antibacterial agents. The office should be deep cleaned as soon as possible.	5	2	10
Poor hygiene / cleanliness can increase the risk of the Virus spreading.	All Staff – Staff members could touch areas whilst carrying the infection, or assist with the spread of virus due to poor hygiene.	5	4	20	When staff must work in the office, they should ensure they are regularly washing their hands for at least 20 seconds at any time. Staff should use only their own equipment where possible, including workstations, keyboards, mouse, pens, staplers, hole punches etc. Anti-bacterial wipes will be available in areas where equipment needs to be shared, or will be touched by numerous people, such as toilet flush buttons, door handles, kettle/hot water dispenser etc. Additional sanitisation points will be made available for all staff. Relevant signage will be displayed in the relevant areas to remind staff about good hygiene & how often they should be washing hands etc.	5	1	5
Work areas such as kitchens, toilet areas etc. can get congested, making it difficult to keep a 2m distance.	All Staff – This could cause areas to become over crowded, meaning that staff cannot adhere to social distancing guideline,	5	3	15	Only one member of staff will be allowed in the kitchen at any one time. A tag system has been made for the toilets, where a tag is placed up to indicate that someone is in the toilet, preventing any congestion outside the toilets – This tag shall be removed by the person when they leave the toilet. Staggered Lunch and Tea breaks will be agreed with the staff in the office, so that each member of staff gets the opportunity to make their lunch / tea. Outside areas should also be used for lunch breaks where possible.	5	1	5

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	increasing the risk of spread of infection.							
Emergency situations such as the breakout of a fire, meaning that it is not safe for everyone to socially distance when leaving the building.	All Staff – In an emergency such as a fire, all operatives should leave the building safely.	5	4	20	All staff should break the 2m social distancing guideline, if this means they can all exit the building safely. Once out of the building and everyone is accounted for, staff should then try and distance from each other where possible, ensuring they are still standing in a safe place at the assembly point.	5	2	10
Staff getting in to work using public transport	Staff who must use public transport to get to work	5	3	15	Any staff members who need to travel in to work using public transport, should discuss an appropriate time for them to come in and leave the work place to prevent them travelling at rush hour or busy times. Other staff should only travel to work in their own vehicles where possible.	5	2	10
Office Workplace Deliveries – Delivery drivers entering the premises	Staff within the office – If the delivery driver has the virus he/she could touch and affect surfaces	5	3	15	Signage has been placed on the door to ask delivery drivers not to enter the premises and leave all parcels at the side door. If any delivery driver enters the premises, they will be asked to leave immediately The delivery drivers should take a picture of the delivery and not ask any member of staff to sign for it – In what case, staff should not sign for the delivery and ask that instead they take a photo for proof of delivery. Once the delivery has been made, whoever brings it in should place it by the island in the office and advise the person that their parcel has arrived, either by telephone or email. The person who brought the parcel in should wash their hands immediately after handling the parcel. The staff member who unwraps the parcel should dispose of all packaging in their bin and also wash their hands immediately after handling the packaging.	5	1	5