

## **Reopen your business safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Employers that want to reopen their business have a legal responsibility to protect their employees and other people on site.

Use this guidance to help you carry out a risk assessment and make sensible adjustments to the site and workforce.

**If you do not carry out a risk assessment, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or your local council can issue an enforcement notice.**

Employees can use this guidance to check what their workplace needs to do to keep people safe.

This guidance can help you carry out your risk assessment to make sure you keep employees and other people on site safe when opening during coronavirus (COVID-19).

You should also consider the security implications of any decisions and control measures you intend to put in place, as any revisions could present new or altered security risks that may require mitigation.

- Decide who should be on site
- Only essential employees and people who cannot work from home should be on site, for example because they need specialist equipment or you need them to operate safely and efficiently.
- Clinically extremely vulnerable people or vulnerable people should always work from home.

To keep employees safe you should:

- minimise the number of people on site
- make sure on-site employees can spot symptoms
- tell workers with symptoms to quarantine immediately
- explain new procedure and provide training where necessary
- To support employees working remotely you should:
- provide the right equipment for people to work from home
- keep remote and on-site employees connected
- send updates to employees when the situation changes
- make sure disabled workers and new and expectant mothers can do their work from home (you have a responsibility to prevent discrimination at work)
- look after people's mental health
- How to ensure social distancing on site

You should always:

- stay 2 metres apart from other employees and customers
- put up signs to remind people to social distance
- keep the number of people on site to a minimum
- wash your hands and clothes after helping someone in an emergency
- make sure employees wear face covering safely although there's no legal requirement to wear it

- make sure you have enough appropriately trained staff to keep people safe (for example, having dedicated staff to encourage social distancing or to manage security)

### **Where you cannot stay 2 meters apart, you should:**

- only work together up to 15 minutes at a time
- wash hands and clean surfaces regularly
- use screens and barriers to separate people where possible
- work side by side or back-to-back rather than face-to-face
- have fixed teams to minimise exposure
- Entrances and exits

### **You should:**

- stagger arrival and departure times
- open more entrances and exits to the site
- use screens in reception areas
- mark a one-way flow where possible
- provide hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser
- provide more parking
- provide facilities to help people cycle, run or walk to work, for example bike racks
- make sure people touch things as little as possible, for example deactivate turnstiles and keypads
- make sure it's safe to queue and not in the way of traffic (for example, you can route the queues behind permanent physical structures such as street furniture, bike racks or bollards, or put up barriers)

### **Moving around the site**

#### **You should:**

- close off areas that are not essential
- reduce the number of people using lifts
- put up signs to use stairs instead of lifts whenever possible
- keep workstations 2 meters apart where possible
- avoid sharing workstations, for example by assigning employees to one role
- avoid people passing objects, for example by having drop-off stations
- have a dedicated space for each team (you might have to change the layout of your site)
- ask people to store personal items in lockers if possible
- control the use of corridors, lifts and similar areas, for example with markings on the floor
- make sure transport around the site is not crowded and drivers are protected
- have 2 metre floor markings where people queue, for example toilets, changing rooms and other common areas
- stagger break times and, if possible, have breaks outdoors
- use freed up space from people working remotely to create break areas
- arrange seating in break areas 2 metres apart
- provide packaged meals instead of opening the canteen

## **Retail: social distancing**

You should:

- use 2 metre floor markings outside the shop to organise queues
- have a one-way flow through the shop where possible
- minimise contact when customers are paying, for example by using contactless
- think about how to display promotional materials to allow employees and customers to stay 2 metres apart
- encourage employees to stay on site during the day - if they go out, for example for lunch, they should social distance

## **Cleaning**

If someone has symptoms follow the specific instructions for cleaning after a case of COVID-19.

**To minimise the risk of the virus spreading you should:**

- clean the site before you reopen
- clean work areas, surfaces and equipment frequently between use with your usual cleaning products
- clean busy areas more often and more thoroughly
- restrict the use of items that are touched often
- provide more bins and empty them more often
- clear workspaces and remove waste and belongings from the area at the end of a shift
- Handwashing, toilets, changing rooms and showers

**You should:**

- use signs and posters with instructions for employees to wash their hands for 20 seconds as often as possible, to avoid touching their faces and to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues
- remind employees regularly to wash their hands, especially if they handle goods and merchandise
- provide hand sanitiser throughout the site and in washrooms
- provide handwashing facilities or hand sanitiser where people handle goods and merchandise
- make sure toilets are kept clean at all times
- provide paper towels or electric dryers
- close changing rooms and showers, if you can
- If you cannot close changing rooms and showers, keep them free of all personal items (such as clothes, towels and toiletries). Clean everything, including lockers, more often and thoroughly during and at the end of the day.

## **Handling goods, equipment, merchandise and vehicles**

There may be a risk of the virus coming into the workplace through goods, merchandise or vehicles. To avoid this you should:

- make sure workers handling goods and merchandise know to wash their hands more often
- provide more handwashing facility if possible and hand sanitiser, if not
- have a process for cleaning goods and merchandise coming into the workplace or onsite
- regularly clean any vehicles that workers take home
- clean things like reusable delivery boxes regularly

## **Shops and branches: cleaning the workplace**

Before you reopen you should:

- check if you need to service or adjust ventilation systems, for example they shouldn't automatically reduce ventilation when there are fewer people on site
- get advice from your heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) engineer if your systems serve several buildings and you're not sure if they need adjusting
- Once you're open you should frequently clean objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, such as:
  - self-checkouts
  - trolleys
  - coffee machines
  - employees handheld devices
  - You need to make sure you have adequate disposal arrangements.

## **Customer fitting rooms**

You should:

- consider very carefully if you want to keep fitting rooms open
- clean after each customer has used them
- create procedures to manage clothes that have been tried on, for example delaying their return to the shop floor
- limit contact between customers and employees during fitting, for example by suspending fitting help

## **Handling goods, merchandise and other materials**

You should:

- encourage more handwashing and either provide more handwashing facilities or, if that's impractical, hand sanitiser

- limit how much the customer handles merchandise, for example by using different methods of display, signs, or rotating 'high-touch' stock
- set up picking-up and dropping-off points if possible, rather than passing goods hand-to-hand
- set up 'no-contact' returns where customers can return goods to a designated area
- try to do contactless refunds
- keep returned goods separate from displayed goods and stock
- give workers guidance on how they can safely help customers when selling large items

### **Protecting customers, visitors and contractors on site**

To manage the number of people on site you should:

- explain social distancing when visitors arrive (you can also use signs)
- limit the number of visitors or customers at any one time so people can social distance
- get contractors to work from home unless it's essential for them to be on site
- keep contact with contractors to a minimum
- keep a record of visitors if you can
- put up signs to stay 2 metres apart
- have 2 metre floor markings for queues
- make sure it's safe to queue and not in the way of traffic (for example, you can route the queues behind permanent physical structures such as street furniture, bike racks or bollards, or put up barriers)