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Keeping workers and customers safe during COVID-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services

COVID-19 secure guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed

23 June 2020



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Document updates

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Updated to reflect industry feedback, guidance on test and trace service, guidance on safer travel, provide guidance on managing security risks.

11 May 2020 (Version 1.0)

First published.

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Introduction

What do we mean by 'restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services'?

This guidance applies to any food preparation or service setting where food and drink is sold for consumption at venues or for takeaway or delivery. For example, restaurants, pubs, bars, beer gardens, food to go, cafes, social and similar clubs operating as bars and restaurants, mobile catering and contract catering or similar environments where food and drink is purchased and consumed at a venue in their indoor or outdoor areas or offered for takeaway or delivery.

This guidance also considers entertainment in restaurants, pubs and bars and similar venues where food or drink is served, provided they meet current government criteria for safe reopening.

It does not apply to food preparation or food service in clinical or healthcare settings.

The UK is currently experiencing a public health emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, it is critical that businesses take a range of measures to keep everyone safe. This document is to help you understand how to work safely and keep your customers safe during this pandemic, ensuring as many people as possible comply with social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable). We hope it gives you freedom within a practical framework to think about what you need to do to continue, or restart, operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand how important it is that you can work safely and support your workers' and customers' health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic and not contribute to the spread of the virus. We know that many of these businesses are currently closed, by government regulation, for their usual service - this guidance will be useful for those businesses as they develop new ways of working or to help prepare for the time when they are able to reopen. The government is clear that workers should not be forced into an unsafe workplace and the health and safety of workers and customers, and public health, should not be put at risk.

We know many people are also keen to return to or contribute to volunteering. Organisations have a duty of care to volunteers to ensure as far as reasonably practicable they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This guidance around working safely during COVID-19 should ensure that volunteers are afforded the same level of protection to their health and safety as others, such as workers and customers.

This document has been prepared by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) with input from firms, unions, industry bodies and the devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and in consultation with Public Health England (PHE) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Public health is devolved in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; this guidance should be considered alongside local public health and safety requirements and legislation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. For advice to businesses in other parts of the UK please see guidance set by the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government, and the Welsh Government.

We expect that this document will be updated over time. This version is up to date as of 23 June 2020. You can check for updates at https://www.gov.uk/workingsafely. If you have any feedback for us, please email safer.workplaces@beis.gov.uk.

This document is one of a set of documents about how to work safely in different types of workplace. This one is designed to be relevant for people who work in or run restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services.

Employers also providing accommodation services should refer to guidance on Working Safely during COVID-19 in hotels and other accommodation. Employers also providing entertainment may wish to refer to guidance published by the Department of Media, Culture and Sport.

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How to use this guidance

This document sets out guidance on how to open workplaces safely while minimising the risk of spreading COVID-19. It gives practical considerations of how this can be applied in the workplace.

Each business will need to translate this into the specific actions it needs to take, depending on the nature of their business, including the size and type of business, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated. They will also need to monitor these measures to make sure they continue to protect customers and workers.

This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, entertainment licensing and regulations, employment or equalities and it is important that as a business or an employer you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. It contains non-statutory guidance to take into account when complying with these existing obligations. When considering how to apply this guidance, take into account agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees.

To help you decide which actions to take, you must carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment, just as you would for other health and safety related hazards. This risk assessment must be done in consultation with unions or workers.

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1. Thinking about risk

Objective: That all employers carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment.

COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19, and in particular businesses should consider the risks to their workers and customers. As an employer, you also have a legal responsibility to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them, recognising you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19.

You must make sure that the risk assessment for your business addresses the risks of COVID-19, using this guidance to inform your decisions and control measures. 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. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. If you have fewer than five workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need to. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm.

Employers have a duty to consult their people on health and safety. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the work and how you will manage risks from COVID-19. The people who do the work are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to work safely. Involving them in making decisions shows that you take their health and safety seriously. You must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if there isn't one, a representative chosen by workers. As an employer, you cannot decide who the representative will be.

At its most effective, full involvement of your workers creates a culture where relationships between employers and workers are based on collaboration, trust and joint problem solving. As is normal practice, workers should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer.

Employers and workers should always come together to resolve issues. If concerns still cannot be resolved, see below for further steps you can take.

How to raise a concern:

- Contact your employee representative.
- Contact your trade union if you have one.
- Use the HSE form available at https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm.
- Contact HSE by phone on 0300 790 6787.

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1. Thinking about risk (continued)

Where the enforcing authority, such as the HSE or your local authority, identifies employers who are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation and guidance to control public health risks, they are empowered to take a range of actions to improve control of workplace risks. For example, this would cover employers not taking appropriate action to ensure social distancing, where possible.

Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law. The actions the enforcing authority can take include the provision of specific advice to employers to support them to achieve the required standard, through to issuing enforcement notices to help secure improvements. Serious breaches and failure to comply with enforcement notices can constitute a criminal offence, with serious fines and even imprisonment for up to two years. There is also a wider system of enforcement, which includes specific obligations and conditions for licensed premises.

Employers are expected to respond to any advice or notices issued by enforcing authorities rapidly and are required to do so within any timescales imposed by the enforcing authorities. The vast majority of employers are responsible and will join with the UK's fight against COVID-19 by working with the Government and their sector bodies to protect their workers and the public. However, regulators are carrying out compliance checks nationwide to ensure that employers are taking the necessary steps.

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1.1 Managing risk

Objective: To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected. In the context of COVID-19 this means protecting the health and safety of your workers and customers by working through these steps in order:

- Ensuring both workers and clients who feel unwell stay at home and do not attend the venue.
- In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.
- Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option. Where working from home is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable. You should consider and set out the mitigations you will introduce in your risk assessments).
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.
- Further mitigating actions include:
  - Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
  - Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
  - Using screens or barriers to separate workers from each other and workers from customers at points of service.
  - Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
  - Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using ‘fixed teams or partnering’ (so each person works with only a few others).
- Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.
- In your assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.

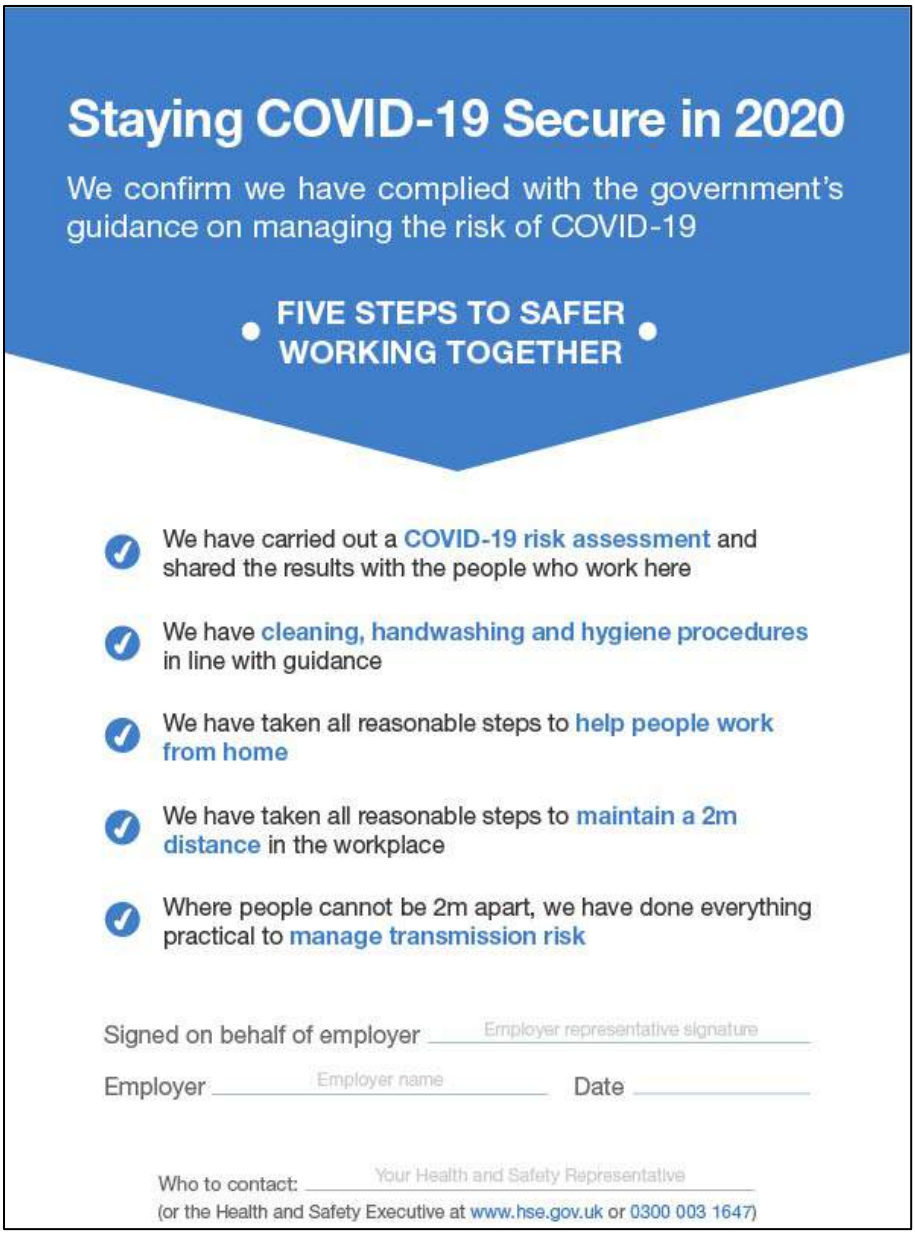
The recommendations in the rest of this document are ones you must consider as you go through this process. You could also consider any advice that has been produced specifically for your sector, for example by trade associations or trades unions.

If you have not already done so, you should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace as soon as possible. If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already. We recommend that you use this document to identify any further improvements you should make. You must review the measures you have put in place to make sure they are working. You should also review them if they may no longer be effective or if there are changes in the workplace that could lead to new risks.

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1.2 Sharing the results of your risk assessment

You must share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (and we would expect all employers with over 50 workers to do so). We would expect all businesses to demonstrate to their workers and customers that they have properly assessed their risk and taken appropriate measures to mitigate this. You should do this by displaying a notification in a prominent place in your business and on your website, if you have one. Below you will find a notice you should display in your workplace to show you have followed this guidance.



Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020

We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19

FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER

- We have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment and shared the results with the people who work here
- We have cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures in line with guidance
- We have taken all reasonable steps to help people work from home
- We have taken all reasonable steps to maintain a 2m distance in the workplace
- Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to manage transmission risk

Signed on behalf of employer _____ Employer representative signature

Employer _____ Employer name Date _____

Who to contact: _____ Your Health and Safety Representative

(or the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk or 0300 003 1647)

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2. Keeping your customers and visitors safe

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2.1 Keeping customers and visitors safe

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission and protect the health of customers and visitors in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway venues.

- The opening up of the economy following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. You should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. Many businesses that take bookings already have systems for recording their customers and visitors – including restaurants, hotels, and hair salons. If you do not already do this, you should do so to help fight the virus. We will work with industry and relevant bodies to design this system in line with data protection legislation, and set out details shortly.
- Indoor gatherings should only be occurring in groups of up to two households (including support bubbles) while outdoor gatherings should only be occurring in groups of up to two households (or support bubbles), or a group of at most six people from any number of households. It is against the law to gather in groups of more than 30 people, except for the limited circumstances as set out in law. In these specific cases, those operating venues should take additional steps to ensure the safety of the public and prevent large gatherings or mass events from taking place. At this time, venues should not permit live performances, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience. Individual businesses or venues should consider the cumulative impact of many venues re-opening in a small area. This means working with local authorities, neighbouring businesses and travel operators to assess this risk and applying additional mitigations. These could include:
  - Further lowering capacity - even if it is possible to safely seat a number of people inside a venue, it may not be safe for them all to travel or enter that venue.
  - Staggering entry times with other venues and taking steps to avoid queues building up in surrounding areas.
  - Arranging one-way travel routes between transport hubs and venues.
  - Advising patrons to avoid particular forms of transport or routes and to avoid crowded areas when in transit to the venue.
- Local authorities should avoid issuing licenses for events that could lead to larger gatherings forming and provide advice to businesses on how to manage events of this type. If appropriate, the Government has powers under schedule 22 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 to close venues hosting large gatherings or prohibit certain events (or types of event) from taking place.

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2.1 Keeping customers and visitors safe (continued)

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Calculating the maximum number of customers that can reasonably follow social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) at the venue. Taking into account total indoor and outdoor space, specific venue characteristics such as furniture as well as likely pinch points and busy areas.

- [ ] Reconfiguring indoor and outdoor seating and tables to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) between customers of different households or support bubbles. For example, increasing the distance between tables.

- [ ] Working with your local authority or landlord to take into account the impact of your processes, including queues, on public spaces such as high streets and public car parks.

- [ ] Working with neighbouring businesses and local authorities to provide additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks, where possible, to help customers avoid using public transport.

- [ ] Reducing the need for customers to queue, but where this is unavoidable, discouraging customers from queueing indoors and using outside spaces for queueing where available and safe. For example, using some car parks and existing outdoor services areas.

- [ ] Managing outside queues to ensure they do not cause a risk to individuals, other businesses or additional security risks, for example by introducing queuing systems, having staff direct customers and protecting queues from traffic by routing them behind permanent physical structures such as street furniture, bike racks, bollards or putting up barriers.

- [ ] Providing clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to people on arrival, for example, signage, visual aids and before arrival, such as by phone, on the website or by email.

- [ ] Managing the entry of customers, and the number of customers at a venue, so that all indoor customers are seated with appropriate distancing, and those outdoors have appropriately spaced seating or standing room. This is to ensure that the venue, including areas of congestion does not become overcrowded. Managing entry numbers can be done, for example, through reservation systems, social distancing markings, having customers queue at a safe distance for toilets or bringing payment machines to customers, where possible.

- [ ] Making customers aware of, and encouraging compliance with, limits on gatherings. For example, on arrival or at booking. Indoor gatherings are limited to members of any two households (or support bubbles), while outdoor gatherings are limited to members of any two households (or support bubbles), or a group of at most six people from any number of households.

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2.1 Keeping customers and visitors safe (continued)

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Encouraging customers to use hand sanitiser or handwashing facilities as they enter the venue.
- [ ] Ensuring any changes to entrances, exits and queue management take into account reasonable adjustments for those who need them, including disabled customers. For example, maintaining pedestrian and parking access for disabled customers.
- [ ] Reminding customers who are accompanied by children that they are responsible for supervising them at all times and should follow social distancing guidelines.
- [ ] Keeping indoor and soft play areas closed. For guidance on opening outdoor playgrounds safely, see guidance for managing playgrounds published by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- [ ] Looking at how people move through the venue and how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between customers, for example, queue management or one-way flow, where possible.
- [ ] Planning for maintaining social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) in the event of adverse weather conditions, being clear that customers cannot seek shelter indoors unless social distancing can be maintained.
- [ ] Working with neighbouring businesses and local authorities to consider how to spread the number of people arriving throughout the day for example by staggering opening hours; this will help reduce demand on public transport at key times and avoid overcrowding.
- [ ] Determining if schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people, for example, carrying out services at night.

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2.2 Managing service of food and drink at a venue

Objective: To manage interactions at the venue resulting from service of food and drink.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Maintaining social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) from customers when taking orders from customers.
- [ ] Using social distance markings to remind customers to maintain social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) between customers of different households or support bubbles.
- [ ] Minimising customer self service of food, cutlery and condiments to reduce risk of transmission. For example, providing cutlery and condiments only when food is served.
- [ ] Providing only disposable condiments or cleaning non-disposable condiment containers after each use.
- [ ] Reducing the number of surfaces touched by both staff and customers. For example, asking customers to remain at a table where possible, or to not lean on counters when collecting takeaways.
- [ ] Encouraging contactless payments where possible and adjusting location of card readers to social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- [ ] Minimising contact between front of house workers and customers at points of service where appropriate. For example, using screens or tables at tills and counters to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- [ ] Ensuring all outdoor areas, with particular regard to covered areas, have sufficient ventilation. For example, increasing the open sides of a covered area.

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2.2 Managing service of food and drink at a venue

2.2.1 Takeaway or delivery

Objective: To manage interactions at the venue resulting from selling food and drinks for takeaway or delivery.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] See government guidance on food safety for food delivery.
- [ ] Encouraging customers to order online, on apps or over the telephone to reduce queues and stagger pick-up times.
- [ ] Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front of house workers, delivery drivers or riders, for example, by having zones from which delivery drivers can collect packaged food items.
- [ ] Limiting access to venues for people waiting for or collecting takeaways. Setting out clear demarcation for social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) for delivery drivers, riders or customers queuing. Asking customers to wait outside or in their cars.
- [ ] Working with your local authority, landlord and neighbours to ensure designated waiting areas do not obstruct public spaces.

2.2 Managing service of food and drink at a venue

2.2.2 Service at the venue

Objective: To manage interactions at the venue resulting from service of food and drink in indoor and outdoor services areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Encouraging use of contactless ordering from tables where available. For example, through an ordering app.
- [ ] Adjusting service approaches to minimise staff contact with customers. Indoor table service must be used where possible, alongside further measures such as assigning a single staff member per table. Outdoor table service should also be encouraged, although customers are permitted to stand outside if distanced appropriately. Where bar or counter service is unavoidable, preventing customers from remaining at the bar or counter after ordering.
- [ ] Adjusting processes to prevent customers from congregating at points of service. For example, having only staff collect and return empty glasses to the bar.
- [ ] Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front of house workers. For example, by having zones from which front of house staff can collect food.
- [ ] Encouraging use of outdoor areas for service where possible. For example, increasing outdoor seating or outdoor points of service such as stalls.

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2.3 Customer toilets

Objective: To ensure that toilets are kept open and to ensure/promote good hygiene, social distancing, and cleanliness in toilet facilities.

- Public toilets, portable toilets and toilets inside premises should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency and to avoid touching your face, and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- [ ] Consider the use of social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
- [ ] To enable good hand hygiene consider making hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable handwashing facilities including running water and liquid soap and suitable options for drying (either paper towels or hand driers) are available.
- [ ] Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage. Use normal cleaning products, paying attention to frequently hand touched surfaces, and consider use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
- [ ] Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.
- [ ] Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.
- [ ] Putting up a visible cleaning schedule can keep it up to date and visible.
- [ ] Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

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2.4 Providing and explaining available guidance

Objective: To make sure people understand what they need to do to maintain safety.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Providing clear guidance on expected customer behaviours, social distancing and hygiene to people on or before arrival, for example on online booking forms and on-site signage and visual aids. Explaining to customers that failure to observe safety measures will result in service not being provided.
- [ ] Providing written or spoken communication of the latest guidelines to both workers and customers inside and outside the venue. You should display posters or information setting out how customers should behave at your venue to keep everyone safe. Consider the particular needs of those with protected characteristics, such as those who are hearing or visually impaired.
- [ ] Where necessary, informing customers that police and the local authorities have the powers to enforce requirements in relation to social distancing and may instruct customers to disperse, leave an area, issue a fixed penalty notice or take further enforcement action.
- [ ] Informing customers that they should be prepared to remove face coverings safely if asked to do so by police officers and staff for the purposes of identification.
- [ ] Encouraging workers to remind customers to follow social distancing advice and clean their hands regularly.
- [ ] Where visits to venues are required, for example, inbound supplier deliveries or safety critical visitors, providing site guidance on social distancing and hygiene on or before arrival.
- [ ] Ensuring information provided to customers and visitors, such as advice on the location or size of queues, does not compromise their safety.



3. Who should go to work

Objective:

That everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home.

It is recognised that for people who work in these types of workplace, it is often not possible to work from home.

Nobody should go to work if your business is closed under current government regulations.

People who can work from home should continue to do so. Employers should decide, in consultation with their workers, whether it is viable for them to continue working from home. Where it is decided that workers should come into their place of work then this will need to be reflected in the risk assessment and actions taken to manage the risks of transmission in line with this guidance.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Considering who is essential to be on site; for example, those not in customer-facing roles such as administrative staff should work from home if at all possible.
- Planning for the minimum number of people needed at the venue to operate safely and effectively.
- Monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and helping them stay connected to the rest of the workforce, especially if the majority of their colleagues are on-site.
- Keeping in touch with off-site workers on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
- Providing administrative staff with equipment to work from home safely and effectively, for example, remote access to work systems.

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3.1 Protecting people who are at higher risk

Objective: To protect clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable individuals.

- Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (see definition in Appendix) have been strongly advised not to work outside the home during the pandemic peak and only return to work when community infection rates are low.
- Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix), have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role.
- If clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable). If they cannot maintain social distancing you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include advice or telephone support.
- [ ] See current guidance for advice on who is in the clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable groups.

3.2 People who need to self-isolate

Objective: To make sure individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance to stop infection spreading do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19, those who live in a household or are in a support bubble with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace service.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.
- [ ] See current guidance for employees and employers relating to statutory sick pay due to COVID-19.
- [ ] See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

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3.3 Equality in the workplace

Objective: To make sure that nobody is discriminated against.

- In applying this guidance, employers should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers or individuals.
- It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic such as age, sex, disability, race or ethnicity.
- Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and those who are new or expectant mothers.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Understanding and taking into account the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics.
- [ ] Involving and communicating appropriately with workers whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk, or might make any steps you are thinking about inappropriate or challenging for them.
- [ ] Considering whether you need to put in place any particular measures or adjustments to take account of your duties under the equalities legislation.
- [ ] Making reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled workers being put at a disadvantage, and assessing the health and safety risks for new or expectant mothers.
- [ ] Making sure that the steps you take do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example, those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments.



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4. Social distancing for workers

Objective:

Ensuring workers maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) wherever possible, including arriving at and departing from work, while in work and when travelling between sites.

- You must maintain social distancing in the venue wherever possible.
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff. Mitigating actions include:
  - Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
  - Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
  - Using screens or barriers to separate workers from each other and workers from customers at points of service.
  - Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
  - Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using ‘fixed teams or partnering’ (so each person works with only a few others).
- Social distancing applies to all parts of a business, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, canteens and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing and workers should be specifically reminded.

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4.1 Coming to work and leaving work

Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible, on arrival and departure and to ensure handwashing upon arrival.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Staggering arrival and departure times at work to reduce crowding into and out of the venue, taking account of the impact on those with protected characteristics.
- [ ] Providing additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks to help people walk, run, or cycle to work where possible.
- [ ] Reducing congestion, for example, by having more entry points to the venue. If you have more than one door, consider having one for entering the building and one for exiting.
- [ ] Using markings to guide staff coming into or leaving the building.
- [ ] Providing handwashing facilities, or hand sanitiser where not possible, at entry and exit points.
- [ ] Providing storage for staff clothes and bags.
- [ ] Requesting staff change into work uniforms on site using appropriate facilities/changing areas, where social distancing and hygiene guidelines can be met.
- [ ] Washing uniforms on site, where appropriate, or requesting workers to regularly wash uniforms at home.
- [ ] See government guidance on travelling to and from work.



Reduced staffing levels to maintain social distancing

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4.2 Moving around venues

Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible, while people travel through the venue.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Reducing movement by discouraging non-essential trips within venues, for example, restricting access to some areas, encouraging use of radios, telephones or other electronic devices when sending orders from service areas to kitchens, where permitted, and cleaning them between use.
- Reducing job and location rotation, for example, assigning workers to specific areas or keeping temporary personnel dedicated to one venue.
- Introducing more one-way flow routes through buildings through signage that clearly indicate the direction of flow.
- Reducing maximum occupancy for lifts, providing hand sanitiser for the operation of lifts and encouraging use of stairs wherever possible.
- Making sure that people with disabilities are able to access lifts.
- Managing use of high traffic areas including, corridors, lifts and staircases to maintain social distancing.

4.3 Working areas

Objective: To maintain social distancing between individuals when they are at their working areas.

- For people who work in one place, for example waiter captains or cashiers, working areas should allow them to maintain social distancing from one another as well as the public.
- Working areas should be assigned to an individual as much as possible. If they need to be shared, they should be shared by the smallest possible number of people.
- If it is not possible to ensure working areas comply with social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) then businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so take all mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Reviewing layouts and processes to allow staff to work further apart from each other.
- Only where it is not possible to move working areas further apart, arranging people to work side-by-side or facing away from each other rather than face-to-face. Where this is not possible, using screens to separate people from each other.
- Using floor tape or paint to mark areas to help people comply with social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).

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4.4 Food preparation areas

Objective: To maintain social distancing and reduce contact where possible in kitchens and other food preparation areas.

- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It is not known to be transmitted by exposure to food.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Following government guidance on managing food preparation and food service areas.
- [ ] Allowing kitchen access to as few people as possible.
- [ ] Minimising interaction between kitchen staff and other workers, including when on breaks.
- [ ] Putting teams into shifts to restrict the number of workers interacting with each other.
- [ ] Spacing working areas to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) as much as possible, recognising the difficulty of moving equipment such as sinks, hobs and ovens. Consider cleanable panels to separate working areas in larger kitchens.
- [ ] Providing floor marking to signal social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- [ ] Using 'one way' traffic flows to minimise contact.
- [ ] Minimising access to walk-in pantries, fridges and freezers, for example, with only one person being able to access these areas at one point in time.
- [ ] Minimising contact at 'handover' points with other staff, such as when presenting food to serving staff and delivery drivers.



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4.5 Entertainment

Objective: To maintain social distancing when providing entertainment within or outside restaurants, pubs, bars and similar venues that serve food or drink.

- For many restaurants, pubs and bars, providing entertainment such as recorded music, live sports broadcasts, quizzes, live musicians or comedians are an important part of their business.
- At this time, venues should not permit live performances, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience. This is important to mitigate the risks of aerosol transmission - from either the performer(s) or their audience. There will be further guidance setting out how performing arts activity can be managed safely in other settings, for instance rehearsing or broadcast without an audience.
- All venues should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission, particularly from aerosol transmission. We will develop further guidance, based on scientific evidence, to enable these activities as soon as possible. You should take similar steps to prevent other close contact activities, such as communal dancing.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Determining the viability of entertainment and maximum audience numbers consistent with social distancing outside and within venues and other safety considerations.
- [ ] Preventing entertainment, such as broadcasts, that is likely to encourage audience behaviours increasing transmission risk. For example, loud background music, communal dancing, group singing or chanting.
- [ ] Reconfiguring indoor entertainment spaces to ensure customers are seated rather than standing. For example, repurposing dance floors for customer seating.
- [ ] Encouraging use of online ticketing and online or contactless payments for entertainment where possible.
- [ ] Communicating clearly to customers the arrangements for entertainment and clearly supervising with additional staff if appropriate.

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4.6 Meetings

Objective: To reduce transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in meetings.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Using remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.
- [ ] Only absolutely necessary participants should physically attend meetings and should maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- [ ] Avoiding transmission during meetings, for example, avoiding sharing pens, documents and other objects.
- [ ] Providing hand sanitiser in meeting rooms.
- [ ] Holding meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.
- [ ] For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.

4.7 Back of house and common areas

Objective: To maintain social distancing while using common areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Staggering break times to reduce pressure on the staff break rooms or places to eat and ensuring social distancing is maintained in staff break rooms.
- [ ] Using safe outside areas for breaks.
- [ ] Creating additional space by using other parts of the venue or building that have been freed up by remote working.
- [ ] Installing screens to protect staff in front of house areas or serving customers at till points.
- [ ] Using social distance marking for other common areas such as toilets, showers, lockers and changing rooms and in any other areas where queues typically form.

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4.8 Accidents, security and other incidents

Objective: To prioritise safety during incidents.

- In an emergency, for example, an accident, provision of first aid, fire or break-in, people do not have to comply with social distancing guidelines if it would be unsafe.
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing hands.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Reviewing your incident and emergency procedures to ensure they reflect the social distancing principles as far as possible.
- [ ] Considering whether you have enough appropriately trained staff to keep people safe. For example, having dedicated staff to encourage social distancing or to manage security.
- [ ] Considering the security implications of any changes you intend to make to your operations and practices in response to COVID-19, as any revisions may present new or altered security risks which may need mitigations.
- [ ] For organisations who conduct physical searches of people, considering how to ensure safety of those conducting searches while maintaining security standards.
- [ ] Following government guidance on managing security risks.



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5. Cleaning the workplace

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5.1 Before reopening

Objective: To make sure that any venue that has been closed or partially operated is clean and ready to restart, including:

- An assessment for all sites, or parts of sites, that have been closed, before restarting work.
- Cleaning procedures and providing hand sanitiser before restarting work.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Checking whether you need to service or adjust ventilation systems, for example, so that they do not automatically reduce ventilation levels due to lower than normal occupancy levels.
- [ ] Most air conditioning systems do not need adjustment, however where systems serve multiple buildings, or you are unsure, advice should be sought from your heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) engineers or advisers.
- [ ] Following guidance on reopening food businesses.
- [ ] Following guidance on managing legionella risks.

Enhanced cleaning measures







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5.2 Keeping the venue clean

Objective: To keep the venue clean and prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Following government guidance on cleaning food preparation and food service areas.
- [ ] Wedging doors open, where appropriate, to reduce touchpoints. This does not apply to fire doors.
- [ ] Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly including counters, tills, and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements for cleaning products.
- [ ] Cleaning surfaces and objects between each customer use. For example, cleaning tables, card machines, chairs, trays and laminated menus in view of customers before customer use.
- [ ] If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then you should refer to the specific guidance.
- [ ] Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, using your usual cleaning products.
- [ ] Maintaining good ventilation in the work environment. For example, opening windows and doors frequently, where possible.

5.3 Keeping the kitchen clean

Objective: To ensure the highest hygiene standards are operated in kitchen areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Recognising that cleaning measures are already stringent in kitchen areas, consider the need for additional cleaning and disinfection measures.
- [ ] Having bins for collection of used towels and staff overalls.
- [ ] Washing hands before handling plates and cutlery.
- [ ] Continuing high frequency of hand washing throughout the day.

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5.4 Hygiene – handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets

Objective: To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Following government guidance on hygiene in food preparation and food service areas.
- [ ] Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- [ ] Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.
- [ ] Providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.
- [ ] Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- [ ] Enhancing cleaning for busy areas.
- [ ] Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets.
- [ ] Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.
- [ ] Providing hand drying facilities – either paper towels or electrical dryers.
- [ ] Washing hands after handling customer items and before moving onto another task. For example, after collecting used plates for cleaning and before serving food to another table.

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5.5 Changing rooms and showers

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission in changing rooms and showers.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Where shower and changing facilities are required, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- [ ] Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.

5.6 Handling goods, merchandise, other materials and onsite vehicles

Objective: To reduce transmission through contact with objects that come into the venue and vehicles at the worksite.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Cleaning procedures for goods and merchandise entering the site.
- [ ] Cleaning procedures for the parts of shared equipment you touch before each use.
- [ ] Encouraging increased handwashing and introducing more handwashing facilities for workers handling goods and merchandise or providing hand sanitiser where this is not practical.
- [ ] Regular cleaning of the inside of shared vehicles that workers may take home.
- [ ] Enhanced handling procedures of laundry to prevent potential contamination of surrounding surfaces, to prevent raising dust or dispersing the virus.

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6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

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6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment, such as face masks.

Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so.

At the start of this document we described the steps you need to take to manage COVID-19 risk in the workplace. This includes working from home and maintaining social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable). When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

The exception is clinical settings, like a hospital, or a small handful of other roles for which Public Health England advises use of PPE. For example, first responders and immigration enforcement officers. If you are in one of these groups you should refer to the advice at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-plan/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-plan

and

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings.

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is extremely limited. However, if your risk assessment does show that PPE is required, then you must provide this PPE free of charge to workers who need it. Any PPE provided must fit properly .

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6.1 Face coverings

There are some circumstances when wearing a face covering may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure. The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not developed symptoms. However, customers and workers who want to wear a face covering should be allowed to do so.

A face covering can be very simple and may be worn in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible. It just needs to cover your mouth and nose. It is not the same as a face mask, such as the surgical masks or respirators used by health and care workers. Similarly, face coverings are not the same as the PPE used to manage risks like dust and spray in an industrial context. Supplies of PPE, including face masks, must continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.

It is important to know that the evidence of the benefit of using a face covering to protect others is weak and the effect is likely to be small, therefore face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including minimising time spent in contact, using fixed teams and partnering for close-up work, and increasing hand and surface washing. These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace and government would therefore not expect to see employers relying on face coverings as risk management for the purpose of their health and safety assessments.

Wearing a face covering is required by law when travelling as a passenger on public transport in England. Some people don't have to wear a face covering including for health, age or equality reasons. Elsewhere in England it is optional and is not required by law, including in the workplace. If you choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and before and after taking them off.

Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one. This means telling workers:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and before and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
- Practise social distancing wherever possible.

You can make face-coverings at home and can find guidance on how to do this and use them safely on GOV.UK.

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7. Workforce management

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7.1 Shift patterns and working groups

Objective: To change the way work is organised to create distinct groups and reduce the number of contacts each worker has.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- As far as possible, where staff are split into teams or shift groups, fixing these teams or shift groups so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people.
- Considering where congestion caused by people flow and pinch points can be improved. Using one-way systems, staggered shifts and assigned staff mealtimes are possible ways to minimise the risk of transmission.
- You should assist the Test and Trace service by keeping a temporary record of your staff shift patterns for 21 days and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks.

7.2 Work-related travel

7.2.1 Cars, deliveries on motorcycles and bicycles, accommodation and visits

Objective: To avoid unnecessary work travel and keep people safe when they do need to travel between locations.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Avoiding using public transport, and aiming to walk, cycle, or drive instead. If using public transport is necessary, wearing a face covering is mandatory.
- Minimising the number of people outside of your household or support bubble travelling together in any one vehicle, using fixed travel partners, increasing ventilation when possible and avoiding sitting face-to-face.
- Cleaning shared vehicles between shifts or on handover.
- Where workers are required to stay away from their home, centrally logging the stay and making sure any overnight accommodation meets social distancing guidelines.
- Ensuring that delivery drivers or riders maintain good hygiene and wash their hands regularly.

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7.2 Work-related travel

7.2.2 Deliveries to other sites

Objective: To help workers delivering to customers to maintain social distancing and hygiene practices.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Putting in place procedures to minimise person-to-person contact during deliveries to other customers.
- [ ] Maintaining consistent pairing where two-person deliveries are required.
- [ ] Minimising contact during payments and exchange of documentation, for example, by using electronic payment methods and electronically signed and exchanged documents.

7.3 Communications and training

7.3.1 Returning to work

Objective: To make sure all workers understand COVID-19 related safety procedures.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working.
- [ ] Engaging with workers and worker representatives through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
- [ ] Developing communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.

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7.3.2 Ongoing communications and signage

Objective: To make sure all workers are kept up to date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- [ ] Ongoing engagement with workers, including through trade unions or employee representative groups, to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments.
- [ ] Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19).
- [ ] Communicating approaches and operational procedures with suppliers, customers or trade bodies to help their adoption and share experience.
- [ ] Using simple, clear messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups for which English may not be their first language and those with protected characteristics such as visual impairments.
- [ ] Using visual communications, for example, whiteboards or signage, to explain changes to rotas or stock shortages without the need for face-to-face communications.

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8. Inbound and outbound goods

Objective:

To maintain social distancing and avoid surface transmission when goods enter and leave the site, especially in high volume situations, for example, distribution centres, despatch areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Revising pick-up and drop-off collection points, procedures, signage and markings.
- Considering methods to reduce frequency of deliveries, for example by ordering larger quantities less often.
- Minimising unnecessary contact at gatehouse security, yard and warehouse. For example, non-contact deliveries where the nature of the product allows for use of electronic pre-booking.
- Where possible and safe, having single workers load or unload vehicles.
- Where possible, using the same pairs of people for loads where more than one is needed.
- Enabling drivers to access welfare facilities when required, consistent with other guidance.
- Encouraging drivers to stay in their vehicles where this does not compromise their safety and existing safe working practice, such as preventing drive-aways.
- Creating one-way flow of traffic in stockrooms.
- Adjusting put-away and replenishment rules to create space for social distancing. Where social distancing cannot be maintained due to venue design, sufficient mitigation strategies should be designed and implemented.

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Where to obtain further guidance

COVID-19: what you need to do

https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Support for businesses and employers during coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support

General guidance for employees during coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-and-support-for-employees-during-coronavirus-covid-19

COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

COVID-19: guidance for food businesses

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19

Appendix

Definitions

Common Areas	The term 'common area' refers to areas and amenities which are provided for the common use of more than one person including canteens, reception areas, meeting rooms, areas of worship, toilets, gardens, fire escapes, kitchens, fitness facilities, store rooms, laundry facilities.
Support Bubbles	The term 'support bubble' refers to single adult households, where adults live alone or with dependent children only, expanding their support network so that it includes one other household of any size. Further guidance on this can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household

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Appendix

Definitions

Clinically extremely vulnerable	Clinically extremely vulnerable people will have received a letter telling them they are in this group, or will have been told by their GP. Guidance on who is in this group can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19
Clinically vulnerable people	Clinically vulnerable people include those aged 70 or over and those with some underlying health conditions, all members of this group are listed in the 'clinically vulnerable' section here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing

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