



Working During the Coronavirus Outbreak

The following Guidance Note is based on the latest government guidance on Working safely during coronavirus (Covid-19)–Construction and other outdoor work and the Site Operating Procedures (SOP) issued by the Construction Industry Council (CLC); other restrictions and advice may apply in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This means any roofing contractors will have to practice social distancing of two-metre, or one-metre with risk mitigation where two-metre is not viable and increase site hygiene to protect themselves and their fellow workers.

Prior to any work or tasks being commenced a comprehensive enhanced risk assessment should be undertaken which also takes into account the information within the Public Health Guidelines during the pandemic. This document is designed to be an aid memoire to assist the contractor when undertaking an enhanced risk assessment.

Self-isolation

If you or your workforce have any one of the following criteria, do not come to site.

- Have been contacted by the NHS Test & Trace service.
- A high temperature or a new persistent cough– follow the guidance¹ on self-isolation.
- Are a vulnerable person² (*by virtue of age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or pregnancy*).
- If you live with a vulnerable person and you continue to work, then your work tasks need to be assessed to ensure that they can be undertaken whilst conforming with the public health guidelines.

Preparing to leave home

Even though retail food and drink outlets are opening up it is still a sensible option to prepare food and drink at home before travelling to work and ensure you have a sufficient supply of hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) and antibacterial wipes or a spray antibacterial cleaner so you can wipe handles and surfaces.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Are you or any other members of your household showing signs of having COVID-19 or have been termed as high risk by the government, if so, **DO NOT GO TO WORK.**
- Wash hands before leaving home and ask any vehicle passengers joining on your journey to do the same.
- If you are not traveling to a construction site which is being operated by a main contractor does the building owner/tenant know that you are going?
NO Inform the building owner that you will be on site and ask if any occupants of the building are showing signs of COVID-19.
YES Ensure that you have an agreed process for the works and that you have put measures in place to comply with Public Health Guidelines.
- Keep your PPE in your own vehicle so that no one else uses it.
- Clean the inside of your vehicle cab including door handles, steering wheel, gear stick and indicator stalk prior to setting off.
- If you are picking up a colleague on the way to the workplace, speak to them before you set off to ensure that they or any other member of their family have not developed signs of COVID-19; if they have symptoms, do not pick them up.
- Have a documented procedure in place if you or one of your colleagues develop symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at your place of work.

Travelling to site

Wherever possible workers should travel to site alone using their own transport. Parking on-site will prove challenging, therefore, speak to your client or principal contractor before travelling to site to understand the parking arrangements for additional vehicles.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- If possible, travel to your place of work on your own.
- If it is not possible to travel to work on your own, then your journeys should be shared with the same individuals. Do not change the occupants that share the vehicle.
- Ensure there are parking arrangements for additional cars and vehicles.
- Ensure that all individuals clean their hands with hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) prior to getting into the vehicle.
- It would be prudent not to fill the vehicle to capacity, leave space in the vehicle so that distance between occupants can be maintained.
- Maintain as much ventilation as possible whilst traveling by opening the windows.
- Have disposable gloves or hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) and a face covering available in the vehicle to protect/clean your hands in case you need to stop and fill up with fuel during your journey.
- Do not make any unnecessary stops during your journey, ensure that you and your occupants travel to work with what they need.
- When arriving at your place of work ensure that you and all the occupants of the vehicle wash their hands for 20 seconds using hand sanitiser before getting out of the vehicle. If you are going inside a building, ensure that you have face coverings within your possession.
- Clean the inside of your vehicle cab including door handles, steering wheel, gear stick and indicator stalk.
- If you need to utilise public transport to get to your place of work, please travel at off peak times. The wearing of face coverings is now mandatory when travelling on public transport.

Accessing the site

Depending on the amount of trades working on the project, stagger the working times for each trade as to not cause a bottleneck at the site gates. All workers should wash and clean their hands before entering or leaving the site. Allow plenty of space for people entering site, maintaining a two-metre distance where possible and take your own pen so you can sign into site or ensure any pen used for multiple sign-ins is cleaned before the next worker signs in. Site inductions, daily briefings and toolbox talks will need to ensure that participants can maintain social distancing; if possible, these inductions and briefings could be done outside, although it's important to check to ensure everyone can hear and that everyone has understood.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Use signage to reinforce the two-metre distancing.
- Temporary floor markings such as warning tape can help operatives maintain the two-metre distance when entering and signing into site, or one metre with risk mitigation such as screens where two metres is not possible.
- Disable site entry systems such as keypads and fingerprint scanners.
- Site access and egress points to be supervised to ensure that social distancing and cleaning is maintained.
- Wash hands when entering and leaving site.
- If you have more than one trade working on a project, stagger start and finish times by 15 minutes per trade.
- If you only have one trade on site, have one individual that locks and unlocks the site and cabins in the morning and locks them at night ensuring that all surfaces and handles are cleaned prior to leaving.
- If you only have one trade on site and you need to notify the building owner/tenant that you are on site, consider other ways of notification like text or email rather than a face to face conversation.
- Regularly clean common contact surfaces such as sign-in points especially during peak times.
- Plan deliveries so that they are not around peak times and where possible, the delivery driver should remain in his vehicle during unloading.

Increasing hygiene on site:

Whilst working on-site there needs to be an increased hygiene regime; additional hand washing facilities to the usual welfare facilities may need to be added. If it's not possible to add extra hand washing facilities, then an alcohol-based hand sanitiser needs to be provided. Enhanced cleaning procedures should be in place across the site, particularly in communal areas and at touch points including:

- Taps and washing facilities.
 - Toilet flush and seats.
 - Door handles and push plates.
 - Handrails on staircases and corridors.
 - Scaffold access and egress points.
 - Lift and hoist controls, can each hoist or lift be operated by only one person per shift?
 - Machinery and equipment controls—can each machine be operated by only one person per shift?
 - Hand tools. Hand tools should not be shared between operatives if possible.
 - Food preparation and eating surfaces.
 - Mobile phones.
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Wearing gloves whilst working should be mandatory and hands should be cleaned before and after use. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands or with your gloves on.

In addition to the increased hygiene regime it also needs to be adequately supervised to ensure compliance with the revised guidelines.

Toilet facilities:

The number of people using toilet facilities at any one time will need to be restricted and you should wash your hands before and after using the facilities. Enhanced cleaning regimes for toilet facilities particularly door handles, locks and the toilet flush needs to be implemented. Portable chemical toilets should be avoided wherever possible, but where their use can't be avoided, these should be cleaned and emptied more frequently.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Restrict the number of people using toilet facilities at any one time.
- Use signage, such as floor markings, to ensure two metre distance is maintained between people when queuing to use the facilities.
- Consider closing off urinals and sinks so that operatives cannot stand next to each other whilst using the facilities.
- Ensure you wash or sanitise hands before and after using the facilities.
- Enhance the cleaning regime for the toilet facilities, especially if using a portable chemical toilet.
- Ensure an adequate supply of hand towels.
- If you are utilising the toilet facilities within an occupied live building have you agreed a suitable safe process with the building owner/tenant?
- Rubbish bins for hand towels should be provided along with an enhanced removal and disposal process.
- If utilising a portaloos provide cleaning wipes within the loo so that the users can wipe them down prior to leaving.

If you restrict the number of operatives inside the toilet facilities at any one time, you need to assess whether further toilet facilities are required to ensure that you comply with CDM regulations.

Eating arrangements:

The workforce should stay on site once they have entered it and not use local shops. Bringing your own food and drink from home is the sensible choice. Dedicated eating areas should be identified on site to reduce food waste and contamination. All operatives utilising the eating area should sit two metres apart from each other whilst eating and avoid all contact, or one metre with risk mitigation such as screens where two metres is not possible. All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including chairs, door handles, vending machines and payment devices.

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Increase the number or size of facilities available on site if possible.
- The capacity of each canteen or rest area should be clearly identified at the entry, and where necessary, supervised to ensure compliance with social distancing measures.
- All workers should be encouraged to clean their hands before and after eating.
- Break times should be staggered to reduce congestion.
- Drinking water should be provided with enhanced cleaning measures of the tap mechanism introduced.
- Where it is not possible to introduce a means of keeping equipment clean between use, for example, kettles, refrigerators, microwaves etc. these must be removed from use.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser should be available at the entrance of any room where people eat.
- A distance of two metres should be maintained between users, or one metre with risk mitigation such as screens where two metres is not possible.
- All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up.
- If you are eating in a vehicle then hands should be cleaned before and after eating including all surfaces and controls that have been touched prior to leaving the vehicle.

In addition to the increased hygiene regime it also needs to be adequately supervised to ensure compliance with the revised guidelines.

Planning close working:

The government guidance defines 'one metre plus' as "maintain social distancing guidelines of two metres or one metre with risk mitigation where two metres is not viable."

Mitigating the risk of Covid-19 could include installing screens, making sure people face away from each other, increased handwashing facilities, minimising the amount of time spent with people outside your household or bubble, and being outdoors.

This means that you will have to review your Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) to implement social distancing requirements. You will need to plan work to minimise interaction between workers which can be achieved by sending smaller teams to work in relation to the size of the project and the work area needed to maintain social distancing.

- Re-usable PPE, for example, hardhats, Hi-Viz vests, eye protection and protective gloves should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers.
- Single use PPE, such as dust masks and vinyl gloves, should be disposed of so that they cannot be reused.
- Stagger the workers ascent and descent from the workplace, ensuring all the team are accounted for before leaving site.

- Good housekeeping of materials and waste should be increased.
- If possible, dedicate a single individual to be the “storeman” to put in and retrieve materials from container units.
- Rubbish collection should be increased and emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.
- If you are using plant on site if possible, dedicate one operative per piece of plant to undertake the daily/weekly checks and to operate the machine ensuring that they clean all touch points at the start of each day, at the end of an operation and at the end of the day.
- When operating a MEWP clean and sanitise what you will have to touch e.g. controls, guardrails, tools and equipment.
- If possible do not put two people in a MEWP platform unless they can always maintain the required safe distances.

If you are not able to work whilst maintaining two metre distance, you should risk assess the activity using the hierarchy of control below:

ELIMINATE:

- Workers who are unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) should not travel to or attend the workplace.
- Does the work need to be done? Can the sequence of works be re-programmed to eliminate the need for groups of operatives to be working closely together or in restricted places like cherry picker baskets?
- Rearrange tasks to enable them to be done by one person, or by operatives working two metres apart.
- Work requiring skin to skin contact should not be carried out.
- If possible, change the size or weight of the materials that are being installed so that they can be handled and installed by one person.
- Stairs should be used in preference to lifts or hoists and consider implementing a one-way system.
- Consider mechanical lifting aids to reduce worker interface such as sack barrows, clad boys etc.
- Suspend any face to face site meetings unless attendees can be two metres apart.
- Where possible, hold meetings in open areas not within site cabins.

REDUCE:

Where the social distancing measures of two metres is not possible:

- Minimise the number of tasks that require workers to be within two metres of each other.
- Minimise the frequency and time workers are within two metres of each other.
- Minimise the number of workers involved in these tasks.
- If working within two metres of each other workers should

work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face.

- Regularly clean common touchpoints such as ladders, doors, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, shared tools and equipment.
- Ensure workers wash or clean their hands before using and after using any equipment.
- If possible, workers should only use their own tools—not tools owned and used by others.

ISOLATE:

Keep teams of workers that have to work within two metres:

- Together (*do not change workers within the teams*).
- As small as possible.
- Away from other workers where possible.

CONTROL:

Where face to face working is essential to carry out a task when working within two metres:

- Keep this to an absolute minimum.
- Provide additional supervision to monitor and manage compliance.
- Ensure operatives have the correct PPE and are trained to use it.

PPE:

- There is not a need to use respiratory protection equipment (RPE) for COVID-19 where the two metre social distancing guidelines are met.
- Where it is not possible to maintain two metre distance each activity should be risk assessed using the hierarchy of control and against any sector specific guidance mindful that masks (RPE) are the last resort in the hierarchy.
- Re-usable PPE should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers.
- Single-use PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused.
- The government has provided information on Face Coverings in section 6.1 of its guidance Working safely during coronavirus (Covid-19)—Construction and other outdoor work.
- The coronavirus pandemic has put extreme pressures on the supply chain and getting some items of PPE including respiratory protective equipment (RPE) has become difficult, however, workers must still be protected from work hazards.
- In extreme circumstances, when supplies of disposable respirators (FFP) are not available, respirators can be reused over the course of a working day or shift, as long as they remain adequate and suitably protect the operative.

- This means the respirator (FFP) must be able to maintain a face-seal and must not be torn or damaged, not wet or heavily contaminated with any hazardous substance, and is not hard to breathe through.
- Respirators must only be reused by the same worker.

BEHAVIOURS:

- These measures are necessary to minimise the risk of spread of the infection and rely on everyone in the industry taking responsibility for their actions and behaviours.
- Encourage an open and collaborative approach between workers and employers on site where any issues can be openly discussed and addressed.
- Encourage workers to suspend works if they believe that the correct safety procedures are not in place/being adhered to by others and report the non-compliance to the supervisor/site manager.

First aid requirements

If first aid cover for your business is reduced because of coronavirus or you can't get the first aid training you need, there are some things you can do so that you still comply with the law. You should review your first aid needs assessment and decide if you can still provide the cover needed for the workers that are present and the activities that they are doing:

- Ensure you keep enough first aid cover.
- Share first aid cover with other trades working on the same site.
- Stop or reduce higher risk activities.

The primary responsibility is to preserve life and first aid should be administered if required and until the emergency services attend.

- When planning site activities, the provision of adequate first aid resources must be agreed between the relevant parties on site.
- Emergency plans including contact details should be kept up to date.
- Consideration must also be given to potential delays in emergency services response, due to the current pressure on resources.

For more information download the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) [Site Operating Procedures](#)³.



Further information

¹ UK Government stay at home guidance:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection

² Government definition of vulnerable person:

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

³ Construction Leadership Council (CLC)

Site Operating Procedures:

www.nfrc.co.uk/docs/default-source/coronavirus-assets/site-operating-procedures-v4.pdf

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