

Introduction

The first issue of this policy was developed in preparation for the risk of a large-scale epidemic and the impact this would have on our staff, customers, business and continuity of services. The focus was on arrangements to support the prevention of infection, planning of our emergency preparedness and response, the instruction of requirements to our staff, and external communication to our key stakeholders.

Following the development of the virus into a worldwide pandemic, and a period of lockdown in the UK to slow the spread and protect the NHS from being overwhelmed, this updated policy now focuses on our arrangements for the safe to work, and the ongoing adjustments that will be necessary for the foreseeable future in line with government guidance.

During this phased return, it is still the first and safest option to work from home where this is practicable, and management will continue to review suitable roles/individuals to which this will apply. Where this cannot be operationally implemented, strict measures are required to eliminate or significantly reduce the residual risk level.

The next update is expected to be later in the year when the relaxation of restrictions and return to 'normal' operations will hopefully be possible. Any suggestions or feedback on our arrangements in the meantime is encouraged and should be directed to the Managing Director for review.

Training & Awareness

It is expected that everyone will now have a good understanding of the virus with the large amount of media coverage and bulletins over the past months.

The following e-learning title remains available as a refresher for all staff to access:

<https://www.ihasco.co.uk/free-coronavirus-awareness-video>

Additional 'toolbox talks' will be undertaken on an ongoing basis.

For reference, links to official sources of information utilised in the preparation of this document are listed below:

- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>
- <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/emp-law/employees/workplace-guide-returning-after-coronavirus>

Posters are to remain displayed in the workplace for ongoing communication and reminder of precautionary requirements (e.g. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51914645>).

The following Government issued poster is to be displayed in all workplaces...

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**

For further information please contact your Health & Safety Representative:

Jacqui Roberts – HR Manager

01322 550167 | jacqui.roberts@batesoffice.co.uk



Health & Safety Advisors
support@admac.co.uk
0800 389 5363



Health & Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
0300 003 1647

Self-Isolation

If you have symptoms of Coronavirus, which include:

- **A high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

...**you must stay at home!** Contact the NHS 111 Online Coronavirus Service for further information and testing where available/necessary.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/what-to-do-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/staying-at-home-if-you-or-someone-you-live-with-has-coronavirus-symptoms/>

The office should be notified without delay by telephone if you have commenced a period of self-isolation.

You must self-isolate for at least 7 days. If you still have a high temperature after 7 days, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. Once feeling well contact your manager again to discuss return to work.

If you live with someone who has symptoms, you must self-isolate for 14 days from the day their symptoms started.

Do not ask colleagues to come to your home and discuss work matters – this should be done remotely.

Pay

Should you be feeling well during self-isolation, and it is feasible/agreed for you to work from home, remote access will be established for you to continue working and remain on full contractual pay.

Should you be unwell, or unable to work from home, absence will be in line with your contractual sick pay arrangements. Statutory Sick Pay will be available from day one as a minimum.

Vulnerable Workers

Workers who are over 70 years old or have pre-existing conditions which may place them at higher risk are requested to notify management. This may include individuals who have received a government communication due to historical/current medical conditions including: Weakened Immune System, Organ Transplants, Cancer Treatment, COPD/Severe Asthma, Pregnancy etc.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

Any worker who is considered to be at higher risk will be considered for extended exclusion from office/site working, client meetings, event attendance and travel where practicable.

Time Off for Dependants

Please refer to the Employee Handbook for existing arrangements.

If you are assisting a dependant with a known/suspected case of Coronavirus, then you must also commit to a period of self-isolation to protect your colleagues.

Furlough

Where necessary and it is agreed to utilise the government's 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme' to avoid redundancy and protect employment during the business downturn, arrangements will be individually communicated with each employee.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-could-be-covered-by-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

During this time, you are not permitted to undertake work activity on behalf of the company but are encouraged to undertake continuing personal development and training should you desire.

Prevention & Hygiene

As general guidance, to protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

Specific arrangements to support this in the office and on site are outlined later in this document.

Returning Travellers

Following the worldwide spread of the virus, the return from infected areas is now less relevant. Should you be planning to travel abroad in the near future please ensure that official advice is reviewed, and you are not placing yourself at increased risk. Travel plans should be discussed with your manager for assessment of the risk on your planned return to work. If you are returning from an at-risk country, you may be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

Business Continuity

Before and during the lockdown our continuity and remote working capability was reviewed and enhanced. To ensure preparedness for ongoing, and any future requirements, the following arrangements are to remain in place:

- Staff contact details to be regularly reviewed and verified as current
- Remote access/VPN capacity to be monitored, to support additional workers at home
- Laptop computers to be ready to support working at home (in line with existing Information Security policy requirements)
- Telephone diversion capability to be maintained/tested

Post may need to be diverted/delayed, and the Director's will be responsible for reviewing and managing this requirement during this time. All contacts are to be advised to use email as the preferred option.

Home Working

While working from home it is important to maintain an appropriate work environment. Our professional standards should not drop during this time.

The HSE have published updated guidance for employers which is useful to reference:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm>

When establishing your workstation a DSE checklist should be utilised to verify suitability, and any remedial actions required: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf>

Should you require additional equipment to enable a safe workstation please contact your manager.

Web Meetings - Code of Conduct

Core Principles:

- Be seen and heard – Ensure other attendees can see and hear you clearly
- Be considerate - You are mindful of not speaking over other people, you champion the experience for remote attendees, and you arrive on time
- Be present - You are not distracted by your devices, other work, or your surroundings. You are giving the attendees, and meeting, your full attention

Prep before the call:

- Attend 2 minutes early so you're ready to start the call promptly
- If you're in a room with other people, use a conference microphone instead of relying on a laptop microphone (and ensure this is set up in advance of the meeting start)
- Snooze/mute system notifications before you join a call
- Remove the temptation to do other work by minimising your other screens
- Make sure you are sat somewhere that is quiet enough for you to hear and contribute to the meeting
- Test all technology (including camera/video, Wi-Fi, and screen sharing) before the meeting

On the call:

- Wherever possible share your video
- If you use multiple monitors, put your open call on the monitor with your camera so you can give eye contact
- Mute when you're not speaking
- Ensure you are on a suitable view so that you can see the face of everyone in the meeting
- Do not use your phone during a meeting and make sure it's on silent
- Do not do work while on a meeting. You think it's not obvious, but it is! Feel free to call people out if you think this is happening in a meeting you're in
- If someone is doing a screen share presentation and you wish to speak, use the available system features such as 'raise hand' so the speaker knows to pause
- Don't interrupt people whilst they're speaking

Office Reoccupation Arrangements

To enable the safe re-occupation of our offices following reduced/suspended operations during lockdown there are a number of preparatory and ongoing precautionary measures to assess and implement.

Our key priority is the health and wellbeing of our staff, and the best practice guidance from the government, public health agencies and industry bodies has been referenced to plan our return.

Key areas that need to be assessed have been identified as:

- Ensuring staff awareness of policy and arrangements
- Maintaining 2m social distancing, so far as is reasonably practicable
- Controlling access and shared/public areas
- Controlling deliveries and collections to minimising contact
- Reviewing desk layout and eliminating hot-desking arrangements
(Ideally workers would not directly face each other across an open desk. Side-by-side or diagonal placement is better)
- Staggering and limiting the use of kitchen/rest facilities
- Providing suitable welfare facilities
- Installing hand sanitiser at strategic locations
- Reviewing/enhancing site cleaning arrangements
- Ensuring maintenance/serviceability of site equipment
- Ensuring emergency arrangements remain effective

A checklist assessment is to be utilised to record and communicate considerations/actions taken at each site. This is to be subject to regular review to ensure ongoing suitability.

Business Meetings

External visitors and company meetings are to remain restricted to what is strictly necessary. Where possible these meetings are to be undertaken remotely or postponed until restrictions are fully lifted.

Meeting rooms are to be modified to promote social distancing.

The attendance at conferences and larger public gatherings is to be avoided until further notice.

All international business travel is to be subject to an individual risk assessment to justify and reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable. Travel to high risk areas is suspended until further notice.

Kitchen Access

Rules have been established for use of the onsite facilities:

- Strictly one-person access at a time / Staggered break times
- Prepare only your own refreshments that you will consume.
- Clean everything you/contact use before leaving the room
- Use your own cup and cutlery throughout the day
- Prepare food at home to avoid extended use of the kitchen or leaving the office to visit food outlets

Office Etiquette

When working in the office maintain 2 metres distance throughout the day and avoid contact further with these simple practices:

- Avoid sharing stationery and equipment
- Try to work electronically where possible, rather than circulating hard copy paperwork.
- Do not offer to make rounds of drinks
- Use your own telephone
- Wipe devices after use e.g. handsets, keypads, printers, franking machine
- Observe good hygiene practices

Deliveries & Collections

A secure area for contactless drop-off and collection is to be defined

Gloves and masks are available in the office and recommended for use where distancing is unavoidable.

Request that a courier signs on your behalf (most have implemented this practice by default).

Wash/Sanitise hands after any contact with parcels/post.

Visiting Contractors

Any contractors wishing to work in our facility must present a Social Distancing Risk Assessment in advance for review and approval. This must include the actions intended to ensure hygiene and cleanliness during and after the work.

Client Meetings

Where employees are required to visit customer's premises this is to be undertaken via web/telephone conference as the first choice where possible. If it is necessary to visit site (e.g. for physical surveying) then the following precautions are to be observed:

- Verify site rules and arrangements are suitable in advance (e.g. the client's risk assessment)
- Maintain social distance of 2m when working on site.
- Masks are to be carried to each site and used as deemed appropriate for the task.
- Driving alone is to be the first choice of travel. Use public transport in line with government guidance if unavoidable.
- Politely avoid shaking hands with clients.
- All company site documents are to move to email e-signature as the first choice, or be signed on behalf of a client if required.

Wellbeing

During this challenging time in which we find ourselves, the mental health of our team remains a top priority. If you are struggling to cope with isolation, illness, bereavement, anxiety, stress or any other condition/situation you are not alone, and the management team and our external advisors are available to support impartially and confidentiality. Please make contact without delay to start the conversation and we will make an action plan together.

Coronavirus Policy

Updated: 19/05/2020

Risk Assessment

ID	Significant Hazards and Risk Description	Likelihood (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Risk Rating	Controls to Eliminate or Reduce the Risk	Likelihood (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Residual Risk
1	<p>Working in Occupied Premises Exposure to potentially contagious persons/surfaces leading to life-threatening infection</p>	4	5	20 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Company policy has been prepared and awareness briefings are to be undertaken for all ▪ Remote working is to remain the first choice where this is reasonably practicable – technology is in place to support this ▪ Site-Specific Office/Facility Assessments are to be completed prior to re-occupation ▪ Non-essential site visitors are to be minimised ▪ Social distancing arrangements are defined and practical measures to be introduced at all locations/sites ▪ Hand sanitiser has been provided to employees and sites ▪ Existing hygiene facilities are available on all sites for hand washing – enhanced arrangements in place ▪ Site Supervisor is to monitor daily for any local concerns/requirements/arrangements/restrictions, and is authorised to suspend works/escalate as necessary ▪ Remove/Wash your uniform daily as soon as you get home – 60° recommended and iron ▪ Minimise the use of public transport (especially at peak times) where possible. Use hand sanitiser after holding handrails/poles, pressing buttons etc. 	2	5	10 Med

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3	High Risk Individuals Increased risk to life from infection with COVID-19	5	5	25 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any individuals who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 70 ○ Pregnant ○ Weakened Immune System ○ Have received a communication from the Government regarding their high-risk status ○ And/or would typically be offered the flu jab ▪ Should notify management for individual assessment and may be required to work from home or be placed on leave. 	1	5	5 Low
4	Travelling to Work Sharing of vehicles and use of public transport increasing the likelihood of exposure	4	5	20 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eliminate the risk by continuing to work from home where this is possible and agreed ▪ Policy on travel to site has been issued ▪ Face masks to be provided for use on public transport ▪ Hand washing/sanitising is mandatory on arrival 	2	5	10 Med
5	Clients / Other Contractors Site contacts not working to the same standards increasing the likelihood of exposure	4	5	20 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy has been defined ▪ Project/Contract Managers are to liaise with all parties to review arrangements prior to authorising works ▪ Sub-Contractors are to have their Policy/RAMS formally reviewed prior to authorising works ▪ Ongoing Monitoring/Supervision and Escalation process in place 	2	5	10 Med

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6	<p>Infected Persons Symptomatic / Asymptomatic individuals transferring virus to client / site contacts</p>	4	5	20 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing reminders are to be communicated on the self-isolation requirements, and symptoms Social distancing and other arrangements in place to assist in prevention of transmission Segregate activities from clients and other contractors on site so far as is reasonably practicable Emergency preparedness response arrangements are in place – contact details are up to date 	2	5	10 Med
7	<p>Deliveries Virus transmission from drivers and packaging</p>	4	5	20 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social distancing to be maintained with drivers/couriers Secure drop-off/collection area to be established Wash hands after handling any packaging – leave for 72 hours prior to collection if this is an option 	1	5	5 Low

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8	<p>Hand Sanitiser (Alcohol Based) Hazardous substance that is classified as Flammable and Irritant</p> <p>Risk of burns from ignition</p> <p>Low risk from Skin Contact (by Design) and accidental Eye Splashes/Inhalation/Ingestion</p>	2	4	8 Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor your skin on an ongoing basis and report any symptoms of dermatitis including redness, itching or flaking: https://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/posters/skindermatitis.pdf Cover any cuts or grazes with a plaster/dressing Do not smoke while using hand sanitiser, avoid heat/sparks/flames, and allow to fully dry before touching any surfaces or work equipment (static discharge risk) In case of eye contact, immediately flush eyes with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes. If worn and easy to do, remove contact lens - seek medical attention If inhaled or swallowed, move to fresh air, rinse mouth with water, do not induce vomiting, seek medical attention if any symptoms persist Store in original container For bulk storage on site a metal cabinet is to be used for flammable segregation with suitable extinguishers nearby and warning signage displayed 	1	4	4 Low

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9	<p>Ventilation Systems</p> <p>Airborne virus may be circulated and captured in filters, leading to exposure during maintenance operations</p>	3	5	15 High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural ventilation is to be used where available and the deactivation of some systems considered, whilst maintaining compliance to general welfare and building requirements Prior to servicing, if practicable, systems are to be isolated for at least 72 hours prior to handling Hygiene and PPE requirements must be observed: Engineer to wear disposable FFP3 respirator, unventilated goggles, disposable gloves and overalls Isolate the work area, work out of hours where this is an option. Securely bag removed filters, seal and dispose securely. 	1	5	5 Low

