# returning to work

### INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE



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### returning to work

Now that the majority of the country has been in lockdown for a number of weeks, we are starting to see the number of new cases of COVID-19 fall. While the government has indicated that some form of social distancing is likely to remain in place until a vaccine is developed, we may see an easing of lockdown measures for certain sectors over the coming weeks to enable businesses to begin trading again.

As your broker, we appreciate that alongside the risk management and insurance advice you usually require from us, we can also offer guidance on the practical side of mobilising your workforce once again. To enable you to create a plan that prioritises the health and wellbeing of your people, customers, and suppliers, we have compiled a range of useful links and helpful pointers in the following document.

As always, should you require any further assistance please get in touch with a member of our team.

### as your first port of call, please refer to the latest guidance from the authorities

- The UK government
- Health & Safety England
- **B** The Scottish government
- The Welsh government B
- Northern Ireland Direct

### Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy

This document describes the progress the UK has made to date in tackling the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, and sets out the plans for moving to the next phase of its response to the virus. Click here to read the recovery strategy.

#### Staying alert and safe (social distancing)

**Click here** to read more on which businesses are required by law to remain closed to the public.

#### Staying safe outside your home

The following guidance may be updated following the Government's consultation with relevant sectors, industry bodies, local authorities, trades unions, the Health and Safety Executive and Public Health England. Click here to find out more.

## five key questions to consider first

The following pointers should help you to form an initial plan for your particular business needs. Carefully consider each step and fully document your plan by completing a risk assessment.

- 1. How do you anticipate your business will operate in the short, medium and longer term?
- 2. What are the key operations needed in the initial opening, and then operating phase?
- **3.** How will you manage social distancing?
- 4. How will cleaning initial and ongoing be managed?
- 5. How will you manage general and respiratory hygiene in the workplace?

### reassuring employees' concerns and meeting their new needs

The lockdown period will have created a number of challenges for your people, which need to be considered as part of your re-opening process. Potential issues include:

- Mental health issues such as anxiety or depression
- Fear or apprehension about catching the virus, particularly where there are underlying conditions such as Asthma or other vulnerabilities
- Where an employee has to be shielded or where someone else in their household is being shielded for 12 weeks
- Childcare or other care issues

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You should consider how to put appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure any needs such as these are catered for, and anticipate that certain members of staff may be unable to return to work as a result of these challenges.

One option to reassure your people might be to implement a Code of Conduct which sets out what the business will do to protect employees (such as cleaning, hygiene and distancing) and what employees can do in return to help their employer.

### implementing a phased return

#### Limiting the number of employees on site will help you to adhere to social distancing rules.

- Can employees work a shift system or staggered working? This can help to avoid rush hour and staff overlaps
- As far as possible, arrange staff into cohorts so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same individuals
- Can certain employees work from home?
- Can certain processes be modified to avoid contact between staff?

### clear communication is key

#### Your People

Be clear in your communication to employees and remain in regular contact to update them on next steps and answer any concerns. Keep promoting the message that people need to stay at home even if they have only mild symptoms of COVID-19. Display posters with this message in your workplaces. Combine this with other communication channels commonly used in your organisation or business.

#### Your suppliers and contractors

Speak to your suppliers, including materials, maintenance, inspection, cleaning, etc. to ensure materials and services are available before opening to ascertain their position. Discussions on procedures and risk should provide a consensus. Any measures will need to be flexible in the short, medium and long term.

#### Your customers

Signage may need to be considered, such as floor markings to facilitate compliance with the two-metre rule. This includes entry points to buildings, toilets and communal break areas where queues may form.

# hygiene and cleaning checklist

- Deep cleans of all areas and facilities, including heating, air conditioning, etc. should be undertaken
- Following the initial deep clean, a regular cleaning regime will need to be developed. Cleaning desks, workstations and surfaces before and after work should be a minimum and this may need to be extended to include cleaning throughout the working day, between shifts etc
- In areas such as kitchens, staff canteens, etc. special considerations may be needed in terms of hygiene and cleaning
- need to be considered

## practical measures checklist

#### Remember to test:

- Ensure that legionella testing etc has been completed and that investigations have been completed for the presence of pests (rats for example)
- Ensure the fire safety and security equipment has been tested (sprinklers, alarms, emergency lighting,

#### Remember to review:

- Your site and facilities layout, this may need to change due to social distancing rules
- Your risk assessments to ensure they reflect the new way of operating, this should include your Fire Risk Assessment, General Assessments, Manual Handling, DSE, PPE, COSHH, RIDDOR, etc.
- Business travel and site visit policies and procedures
- Emergency planning procedures fire, first aid, etc. to ensure there is appropriate cover in line with your assessments
- Any insurance warranties or conditions to ensure you comply

• Ensure that waste management has been reviewed. Measures for managing potentially contaminated waste will

extinguishers, access control systems, etc) and are in working order. In addition, you should ensure that the service providers have been given notice of any changes to procedures put in place during the lockdown phase

### what if a member of staff becomes sick with the virus after we return to site?

Consider measures needed in case of a re-occurrence of the virus amongst staff, and preparations made for the closure and deep clean of the premises in this instance. This plan should include:

- Identification of a room or area where someone who is feeling unwell or has symptoms can be safely isolated
- How they can be safely transferred from there to a health facility/home
- Agree the plan in advance with your partner health care provider or health department where possible.

Consider the need for health declarations or taking the temperature of employees when returning to work.

### useful resources

The following links may prove useful to certain business sectors. Please feel free to share these with any suppliers, contractors or business contacts you feel might find this helpful.

#### Tradespeople

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#working-in-peoples-homes-as-a-tradesperson-cleaner-or-nanny

Key point: No work should be carried out in people's homes if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, no matter how mild. Notify clients in advance of your arrival and regularly wash your hands. Carry hand sanitiser at all times.

#### Construction

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#construction

https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/work-equipment-coronavirus.htm

Key point: Ensure that all plant and machinery is in correct working order, has been inspected, tested and maintained and that any statutory inspections (of lifts, LEV, Pressure Systems, etc) have been completed.

#### Fleet

-%20UK&utm content=LA174A

make sure everyone sanitises their hands.

#### Property

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-landlord-right-to-rent-checks

tenants-and-local-authorities

and-insurer-stance-available-to-download-now/

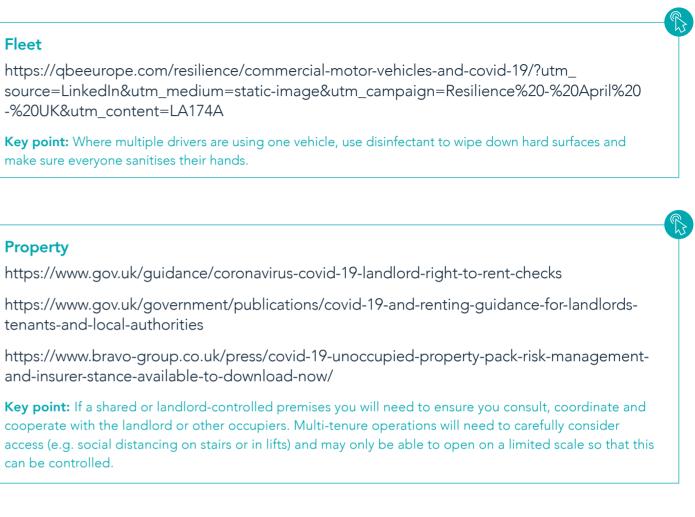
cooperate with the landlord or other occupiers. Multi-tenure operations will need to carefully consider can be controlled.

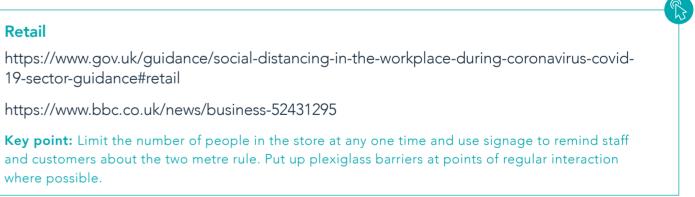
#### Retail

19-sector-guidance#retail

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52431295

and customers about the two metre rule. Put up plexiglass barriers at points of regular interaction where possible.









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