

Met Consultancy Group

COVID-19 Safety Procedure

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Protecting MET Employees During Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Office & Site Operating Procedures

OBJECTIVE

- To ensure the safety of our workforce, subcontractors, clients and members of the public.
- To minimise the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus.

1. Travelling to Work / Site

a) When to Travel to Work / Site

Current UK Government Guidance, published on 11 May 2020 states:

[“That everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home”](#)

As providers of survey, geophysical and engineering consultancy services, this is not always possible. It is important to understand the following guidelines by which workers should or should not travel as outlined below.

Social distancing	Workers should follow the guidance on Staying at Home and away from others (social distancing). Where they cannot work from home, they must follow the same principles of social distancing while travelling to and from work and whilst at work.
Self-isolation	Anyone who either has a high temperature or a new persistent cough or is within 14 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) should not go to site but must, instead, follow the guidance on self-isolation.
Person at increased risk	Anyone who is at increased risk of severe illness from Coronavirus (Covid-19) is strongly advised to work at home and should be particularly stringent about following social distancing measures.
Persons defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable	Anyone identified as extremely vulnerable will be advised by their local health authority and must follow the guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable people.
Living with a person in one of the above groups	Anyone living with a person who is at increased risk of severe illness, or an extremely vulnerable person who is shielding from Coronavirus (Covid-19), should stringently follow the guidance on social distancing and minimise contact outside the home.
If someone falls ill	<p>If a worker develops a high temperature or a persistent cough while at work, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure their manager or supervisor is informed. • Then return home immediately whilst avoiding contact with others. • Avoid touching anything. • Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow. Wash hands and sanitise. <p>They must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.</p>

b) Travel to Work / Site

Wherever possible workers should travel alone using their own transport. If workers have no option but to share transport:

- Journeys should be shared with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time.
- Good ventilation, i.e. keeping the windows open, and facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission.
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces.

Managers and staff should consider:

- Parking arrangements for additional vehicles and bicycles.
- Other means of transport to avoid public transport e.g. cycling.
- Providing hand cleaning facilities at entrances and exits. This should be soap and water wherever possible or hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available. Follow the current guidelines on washing.
- How someone taken ill would get home.
- Where public transport is the only option for workers, you should consider:
 - Changing and staggering site hours to reduce congestion on public transport.
 - Avoid using public transport during peak times (05:45 - 7:30 and 16:00 - 17:30).

2. Driving at Work

When travelling to work or between site locations, workers should travel alone. If workers have no option but to share a vehicle, then they should:

- Share with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time.
- Wherever possible maintain a distance of two metres and avoid touching their faces.
- Maintain good ventilation (i.e. keeping the windows open) and face away from each other during the journey
- Wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available before entering and after getting out of vehicles.
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces.

3. Office Access and Egress

- All non-essential visitors will be turned away. Do not arrange meetings in the office.
- Consider introducing staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact at all times.
- Signage – Pay attention to signs in kitchens and around the office, e.g. 2m distancing rules, Hand washing rules, cleaning desks, keyboards, computer mice, phones, etc.

- Entry systems – use your own access fob at all times. If you have to use a colleague's fob, clean it thoroughly before returning it to them.
- All staff to wash their hands for 20 seconds using soap and water when entering and leaving the office.
- Regularly clean common contact surfaces in reception, office, access control and delivery areas e.g. scanners, screens, telephone handsets and desks, particularly during peak flow times.
- Reduce the number of people in attendance at safety/team briefings and consider holding them outdoors wherever possible.
- Delivery drivers to leave parcels in front office vestibule. When collected, gloves should be worn, packaging discarded as appropriate and hands and item sanitised.

4. Hand Washing

- Take regular breaks to wash hands.
- Provide additional hand washing facilities (e.g. pop ups) to the usual welfare facilities, particularly on a large spread out site or where there are significant numbers of personnel on site, including plant operators.
- Adequate supplies of soap and fresh water are readily available and kept topped up at all times.
- Hand sanitiser (minimum 70% alcohol based) will be provided where hand washing facilities are unavailable (subject to availability from supply chain).
- Hand washing facilities will be regularly monitored. This includes condition of hand washing facilities and rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.

5. Toilet Facilities

- Wash or sanitise hands before and after using the facilities.
- A maximum of 2 people to use office toilets at any particular time, with hand washing limited to one user at any particular time.
- Toilet facilities shall be regularly monitored. Enhanced cleaning regimes may be necessary, particularly door handles, locks and the toilet flush. Rubbish bins for hand towels will also require regular removal and disposal.
- Portable toilets should be avoided wherever possible, but where unavoidable (site operations) these should be cleaned and emptied more frequently.

6. Canteens and Rest Areas

Where possible, staff should bring their own food. Staff should also stay at the office or on site once they have entered it and avoid using local shops.

The office kitchens are available for hot drinks but are unsuitable for hot food preparation. The warehouse canteen should be used for preparation of hot food but the following must be observed to prevent the risk of infection spread:

- 2m rule applies at all times.
- Only one member of staff to use food preparation facilities (microwave, toaster, grill, etc.) at any one time.

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- A maximum of 3 people to use canteen at any particular time.
- Clean surfaces that are touched before use, using standard cleaning products e.g. kettles, refrigerators, microwaves.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser will be available at the entrance to the canteen and should be used by workers when entering and leaving the area.
- All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up.
- Tables should be cleaned between each use.
- Crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. should not be used unless they are disposable or are washed and dried between use.

7. Changing Facilities, Showers and Drying Rooms

- 2m rule applies at all times.
- Only one member of staff to use shower room at any one time.
- Shower should be cleaned after use on every occasion.
- A maximum of 2 people to use drying room at any particular time.

8. First Aid and Emergency Service Response

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

9. Office Cleaning

Office cleaning is carried out twice weekly by an external service provider. In addition to this, it is good practice to ensure daily monitoring of the following in order to mitigate risk of spreading COVID-19:

- Taps and washing facilities.
- Kettles and fridge handles.
- Door handles and push plates.
- Toilet flush and seats.
- Hand rails on staircases and corridors.
- Telephone equipment.
- Key boards, photocopiers and other office equipment.
- Rubbish collection and storage points should be increased and emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.

10. Site Operations

- Each member of staff will travel to site in separate vehicles. No car sharing will be permitted.
- Staff should use their assigned vehicle to travel to and from site.

- If vehicles have to be swapped then a full clean of the vehicle should take place.
- Staff will be assigned equipment for sole use and should not swap between surveyors.
- If it is necessary to swap kits then the equipment must be cleaned thoroughly.
- Surveyors should have their own tape measures, hammers and supply of nails and should not be shared on site.

11. Working Away

- Jobs when working away should be kept to a minimum and local travel should be considered wherever possible.
- When working away staff should be accommodated in a property with private use of bathroom and kitchen facilities. Staff may share kitchen facilities as long as they follow the procedures laid out in 6. Canteens and Rest Areas.
- Staff will be encouraged to undertake a shop for the duration to minimise contact in supermarkets.

12. Work Planning to Avoid Close Working

In line with Public Health England (PHE) guidelines, where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission.

Office and site work needs to be planned and organised to avoid crowding and minimise the risk of spread of infection by following PHE and HSE guidance and the advice within this procedure.

Managers should remind staff (e.g. at daily briefings) of the specific control measures necessary to protect them, their colleagues, families, the NHS and the UK population.

Hierarchy of Controls

If you are not able to work whilst maintaining a two metre distance, you should consider whether the activity should continue and, if so, risk assess it using the hierarchy of controls below and against any sector-specific guidance.

Eliminate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers who are unwell with symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) should not travel to or attend the workplace. • Rearrange tasks to enable them to be done by one person, or by maintaining social distancing measures (2 metres). • Avoid skin to skin and face to face contact. • Stairs should be used in preference to lifts and consider one way systems. • Consider alternative or additional mechanical aids to reduce worker interface. <p>Meetings</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meetings with 3rd parties (clients, sales, etc.) in the office. • Consider virtual meetings as first option. • Consider holding meetings in open areas where possible. • Staff meetings only when absolutely necessary. Attendees should be at least two metres apart from each other. •
Reduce	<p>Where the social distancing measures (2 metres) cannot be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the frequency and time workers are within 2 metres of each other. • Minimise the number of workers involved in these tasks. • Workers should work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face. • Regularly clean common touchpoints, doors, buttons, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, equipment etc. • Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces. • Workers should wash their hands before and after using any equipment.
Isolate	<p>Keep groups of workers that have to work within 2 metres of each other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Together in teams e.g. (do not change workers within teams). • In teams that are as small as possible. • Away from other workers where possible.
Control	<p>Where groups of workers have to work within 2 metres of each other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to time limit of 15 mins or less where possible. • Provide additional supervision to monitor and manage compliance.
PPE	<p>Staff should not use Respiratory Protective Equipment for Coronavirus (Covid-19) where the two metre social distancing guidelines are met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where it is not possible to maintain a two metre distance, each activity should be risk assessed using the hierarchy of controls 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. • Where personnel are required to work in specific environments (e.g. where persons are shielding, with symptoms, or confirmed Coronavirus (Covid-19) cases may be present e.g. healthcare or in a home environment) additional PPE should be considered specific to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) risk.
Behaviours	<p>The measures necessary to minimise the risk of spread of infection rely on everyone taking responsibility for their actions and behaviours.</p> <p>We encourage an open and collaborative approach between staff and managers at all times to ensure any issues can be openly discussed and addressed.</p>