Environmental Health Northamptonshire

COVID-19 Social Distancing – Factories, Plants & Warehousing (including Distribution)

Business Details	
Trading Name:	Company Name:
Address:	Head office address:
Tel No:	E-mail:
Main activity:	No. of employees:

COVID-19 Policy	
Local manager contact details:	Union/Employee Rep contact details:
Have you developed a COVID-19 Policy?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Documented? ☐ Communicated? ☐
Does the policy document COVID-19 arrangements? How has the COVID-19 policy been communicated? How have workers or their representatives been consulted? How are you meeting the needs of vulnerable workers? (temps; agency; language barriers) How can employees report any ongoing concerns they have?	
Have you written COVID-19 Risk Assessments?	Yes ☐ No ☐ Documented? ☐ Communicated? ☐
What sources of information have you used? What are the main findings of your Risk Assessment?	

COVID-19 Illness

What arrangements do you have in place for managing illness and self-isolation notifications?

What is your staff absence rate due to COVID-19? (%)

Are all absences being recorded and analysed according to category?
(COVID-19 symptoms/household self-isolation/12 week isolation due to existing conditions etc.)

Do you have a return to work policy?	Yes ☐ No ☐
	Documented? ☐

Do you stay in contact with your employees?

Is their return to work monitored?

Is dedicated medical advice accessible?

Deciding on who should be at work

What action have you taken to ensure that only essential staff are on site?

Have you minimised staff numbers on site while continuing to operate safely and effectively?

What measures have you put in place to monitor the wellbeing of people working from home?

What equipment have you been able to provide staff to facilitate working from home?

Notes:

Workplace social distancing

Arrival & Departure

Have you staggered arrival & departure times at work to reduce overcrowding?

Have you considered providing additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks to help people walk or cycle to work, where possible?

Have you limited passengers in corporate vehicles, for example, work minibuses?

Have you reduced congestion by having more entry points to the workplace?

Have you used markings and introduced a one-way flow at entry and exit points?

Can you provide handwashing facilities or hand sanitiser at entry and exit points?

Are you able to provide alternatives to touch-based security devices such as keypads?

Notes:

Moving around your Workplace

Are you discouraging non-essential movement around your buildings?

Have you considered minimising job & equipment rotation?

Have you introduced one way flows throughout your building to avoid crossing in corridors?

Have you reduced maximum occupancy for lifts and encouraged the use of stairs?

Have you put in controls in high traffic areas including corridors, turnstiles & walkways to maintain social distancing?

Notes:

Workstations

Have you reviewed layouts and line set-ups to allow people to work further apart from each other?

Are you using floor tape or paint to mark areas to help workers keep to a 2m distance?

Where you cannot re-arrange, can staff work side by side or facing away from each other?

Are you able to install screens to separate people from one another?

If people have to work in close proximity, for example, during two-person working, lifting or maintenance activities that cannot be redesigned, are you using the same pair of workers?

Notes:

Meetings

Are you using remote working tools (Zoom/Microsoft Teams) to avoid in-person meetings?

If remote meetings are not possible, are all attendees' absolutely necessary & maintaining 2m separation throughout?

Are you avoiding sharing pens and other objects?

Are you providing hand sanitiser in meeting rooms?

Can meetings be held outdoors?

Notes:

Factories, Plants & Warehousing   Version 1.1

Common Areas

Are you staggering break times to reduce pressure on canteen facilities?

Have you considered social distancing measures while staff use outside areas for breaks?

Are you creating additional space for staff to circulate in common areas?

Are you using protective screening for staff in receptions or goods in?

Can you provide packaged meals or similar to avoid opening staff canteens, where possible?

Have you reconfigured seating & tables to maintain spacing & reduce face-to-face positions?

Have you encouraged staff to stay on-site during working hours?

Are you 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?

Are you using distance markers in any staff kitchens?

Notes:

Good practice note:

- *If a 2 metre distance cannot be maintained, staff should work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face if possible. Consider one way system, one door in; one out for shift change overs so staff do not cross paths.*
- *Extra attention needs to be paid to equipment cleaning and hygiene to reduce risk when it is impossible to have workstation 2m apart*
- *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.*
- *Mitigation includes:*
  - *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 people from each other.*
  - *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).*
- *Workstations should be assigned to one individual wherever possible and should allow them to maintain social distancing*
- *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 and canteens and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.*
- *In an emergency, for example and accident or fire alarm people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe to do so*
- *People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing hands*

Managing customers, visitors and contractors

Are you encouraging visits via remote connection or remote working for visitors where this is an option?

Have you determined if schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people e.g. carrying out services at night?

Do you maintain records of all visitors?

Are you providing clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to inbound delivery drivers or safety critical visitors **on arrival**, including signage, visual aids, and **before arrival**, by phone, on the website, by email?

Have you established host responsibilities relating to COVID-19, providing any necessary training for people who act as hosts for visitors?

Have you reviewed entry and exit routes for visitors and contractors to minimise contact with other people?

Are you coordinating and cooperating with other occupiers for those working in facilities shared with other businesses including with landlords and other tenants?

Notes:

Cleaning

Are you frequently cleaning work areas and equipment between uses, using your usual cleaning products?

Are you frequently cleaning hand contact surfaces that are touched regularly, such as door handles, pump handles & printers and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements?

Are you clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift?

Notes:

Good practice note

The objective with cleaning is to make sure that any site or location that has been closed or partially operated is clean in order to prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces
You should increase the frequency of cleaning procedures for cleaning staff to wipe down hand contact surfaces with disinfectant
You should keep appropriate records
If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then you refer to the specific guidance.

Hygiene – Handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets

Are you using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and the need to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely or into your arm if a tissue is not available?

Are you providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards?

Are you providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms?

Are you setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible?

Are you enhancing cleaning protocols in busy areas?

If you are using portable toilets are you taking particular care of cleaning?

Do you providing paper towels as an alternative to hand dryers in handwashing facilities?

Where changing rooms are provided are you setting clear use and cleaning guidance to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved?

Do you have cleaning procedures for shared equipment after each use including tools and vehicles, like pallet & forklift trucks?

How are you encouraging increased handwashing & have you added more handwashing facilities for workers handling goods and merchandise or provided hand sanitiser where this is not practical?

Are you regularly cleaning vehicles that workers may take home?

Notes:

Good practice note

You should consider adding additional pop-up hand washing stations or facilities, providing soap, water and hand sanitiser. Ensure there is an understanding for the need for increasing hand washing at all levels.

Work related travel

Are you minimising the number of people travelling together in any one vehicle, using fixed travel partners, increasing ventilation when possible and avoiding sitting face-to-face?

Have you increased the frequency of cleaning shared vehicles between shifts or on handover?

Have you put in place minimum person to person contact during deliveries to other sites?

Are you minimising contact during payments and exchange of documentation, for example, by using electronic payment methods and electronically signed and exchanged documents?

Notes:

Communications and Training

Are you providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and ways of working?

Have you engaged with workers and worker representative's through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements?

Have you ensured ongoing engagement with workers, through trades unions or employee representative groups to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes?

Are you 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?

Are you focussing on visual communications such as whiteboards or signage, to explain changes to production schedules, breakdowns or materials shortages to reduce the need for face-to-face communications?

How are you communicating your approach & operational procedures to suppliers, customers or trade bodies to help their adoption and share experience?

Notes:

Good practice note:

- *To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues daily to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.*
- *You should assign staff to the same shift teams to limit social interaction.*
- *You should still advise staff to keep 2 metres apart as much as possible*
- *You should also put up signage and floor markings in the warehouse, encouraging a 2 meters distance from colleagues where it is at all feasible / or use the bays as a distance marker.*
- *In addition, you should regularly encourage staff to wash their hands with soap and water as often as possible and for a minimum of 20 seconds every time.*
- *You should be aware and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the mental health & wellbeing aspects of coronavirus.*

Delivery/Dispatch areas

Have you reviewed pick-up & drop-off collection points, procedures, signage and markings?

Have you minimised unnecessary contact at gatehouse security, yard and warehouse using electronic pre-booking?

Are you considering methods to reduce frequency of deliveries?

Are you using single workers to load or unload vehicles?

Are you using the same pairs of people for loads where more than one is needed?

Notes:

Good practice note:

- *Only allowing a limited number of drivers into your goods-in area at any given time. Controls at the gate house restricting vehicle entry / adherence to time slots / phone call entry.*
- *You should put up signage to ask drivers with symptoms not to enter the goods-in area, and to remind both staff and drivers to always keep 2 metres from each other, wherever possible.*
- *You should also put up signage and floor markings in the goods-in area, encouraging a 2 metre distance from colleagues where it is at all feasible*
- *If feasible, you should also put up plexi-glass barriers at all points of regular interaction to further reduce the risk of infection for all parties involved, cleaning the barriers regularly. You should still advise staff to keep 2 metres apart as much as possible*
- *Drivers can sign-in using their own pens, thus reducing contact with goods-in staff. Removing of vehicle keys while loading / unloading can be under taken by placing them in plastic bags*
- *Although it is not normally encouraged drivers could then return back to their cabs and await instruction after loading / unloading. (Increased supervision to ensure key controls are not abused and drive off potential increased)*

Access to welfare facilities for drivers

Can you confirm that drivers still have access to welfare facilities?

Good practice note:

- *All drivers must have access to welfare facilities in the premises they visit as part of their work.*
- *Preventing access is against the law, equally it's not the sensible thing to do.*
- *Those who already provide reasonable access to toilets and hand washing facilities should continue to do so.*
- *Failure to allow access to welfare facilities may increase the risk of the infection spreading.*

Warehouse/order picking areas

What measures do you have in place to manage social distancing guidance?

Good practice note:

- *Consider current work flows and floor plans in order to allow employees to keep 2 metres apart*
- *Only allowing a minimum number of employees into your warehouse at any given time.*
- *Regular reminders should be provided to staff to keep 2 metres from each other, wherever possible.*
- *You should also put up signage and floor markings encouraging a 2 metre distance from colleagues*
- *Only if minimum safe distancing cannot be achieved should appropriate PPE be considered*

Additional areas of good practice

Are there any further areas of good practice that you would like to highlight?

Additional sources of up to date information:

- https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/factories-plants-and-warehouses
- www.cieh.org/policy/coronavirus-covid-19/
- www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm
- www.instituteoflicensing.org/covid-19/

Factories, Plants & Warehousing   Version 1.1