Balfour Beatty

Balfour Beatty Site Operating Procedures – Working safely during COVID-19

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Introduction

This document has been prepared by Balfour Beatty in response to the publication of the guidance from H.M. Government “Working Safely During COVID-19 in construction and other outdoor work” and supersedes the Site Operating Procedures V3.

This document is to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, keeping as many people as possible 2m apart from those they do not live with. It is important to work safely and support your workers’ health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The government is clear that workers should not be forced into an unsafe workplace.

Public health is devolved in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; this guidance should be considered alongside local public health and safety requirements and legislation in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. For advice to sites in other parts of the UK please see guidance set by the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government, and the Welsh Government.

Additional Guidance

Note: for work in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, please refer to the following for additional information:

- **Wales:** Welsh Government social distancing
- **Scotland:** Scottish Government social distancing
- **Northern Ireland:** NI Government social distancing

The health and safety requirements of any construction activity must not be compromised at this time. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely, it should not take place.
The HSE is the relevant enforcing authority for occupational health and safety legislation and guidance to control public health risks in the construction sector. If a site is not consistently implementing the measures set out by Government, it may be subject to enforcement action. Where workers enter people’s homes, they should follow the Government guidance on working in other people's homes.
Emergency services are also under great pressure and may not be able to respond as quickly as usual. This should be taken into consideration in the planning of work activities, first aid, fire and emergency responses.

How to use this guidance

This document sets out guidance on how to work safely. It gives practical considerations of how this can be applied in the workplace.

Each site will need to translate this into the specific actions it needs to take, depending on the nature of their site, including the size and type of site, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated.

This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, employment or equalities and it is important that as a site or an employer you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. It contains non-statutory guidance to consider when complying with these existing obligations. When considering how to apply this guidance, consider agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees.

An appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment must be carried out, and the outcome shared with the workforce.

Additional Guidance
Organisations must have in place effective arrangements for monitoring and reviewing their compliance with Government and industry guidance. Employers should also remind the workforce at every opportunity of the Site Operating Procedures which are aimed at protecting them, their colleagues, families and the UK population.

1. Thinking about risk

Objective: That all employers carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment.

The risk assessment for your site must address the risks of COVID-19, using this guidance to inform your decisions and control measures. The risk assessment must identify sensible measures to control the risks in the workplace. If you have fewer than five workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need to. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at https://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm.

Employers have a duty to consult their people on health and safety. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the work and how you will manage risks from COVID-19. The people who do the work are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to work safely. Involving them in making decisions shows that you take their health and safety seriously. You must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if there isn't one, a representative chosen by workers. As an employer, you cannot decide who the representative will be.

At its most effective, full involvement of your workers creates a culture where relationships between employers and workers are based on collaboration, trust and joint problem solving. As is normal practice, workers should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer.

Additional Guidance
Employers should remind the workforce (e.g. at daily briefings) of the specific control measures necessary to protect them, their colleagues, families and the UK population.

1.1 Managing risk

Objective: To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected. In the context of COVID-19 this means working through these steps in order:

- In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning
- Sites and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option. Where working from home is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (keeping people 2m apart wherever possible)
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, sites should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff
- Further mitigating actions include:
    - 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).
- Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment
- In your assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19

The recommendations in the rest of this document are ones you should consider as you go through this process. You could also consider any advice that has been produced specifically for your sector, for example by trade associations or trades unions.

If you have not already done so, you should carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace as soon as possible. If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already. We recommend that you use this document to identify any further improvements you should make.

Additional Guidance

Existing risk assessments and method statements should also be reviewed.

Hierarchy of controls
If you are not able to work whilst maintaining a 2m distance, you should risk assess the activity using the hierarchy of control below and against any sector specific guidance:

Eliminate
- Stop all non-essential visitors
- Workers who are unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) should not travel to or attend the workplace
- Work requiring skin to skin / face to face contact should not be carried out
- Rearrange tasks to enable them to be done by one person, or by maintaining social distancing measures (2m)
- Stairs should be used in preference to lifts or hoists and consider one-way systems
- Consider alternative / additional mechanical aids to reduce worker interface

Reduce
Where the social distancing measures (2m) cannot be applied:
- Minimise the frequency and time workers are within 2m 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
- Lower the worker capacity of lifts and hoists to reduce congestion and contact at all times
- Regularly clean common touchpoints, doors, buttons, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, equipment etc.
- Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces
- Workers should wash or clean their hands before using and after using any equipment

Isolate
Keep teams of workers that have to work within 2m:
- Together (do not change workers within 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 2m:
- Consider introducing an enhanced authorisation process for these activities
- Provide additional supervision to monitor and manage compliance

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Refer to **Section 6**

Behaviours
The measures necessary to minimise the risk of spread of the infection rely on everyone in the industry taking responsibility for their actions and behaviours.
Please encourage an open and collaborative approach between workers and employers on site where any issues can be openly discussed and addressed.

1.2 Sharing the results of your risk assessment

You should share the results of your COVID-19 risk assessment with your workforce. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (and the Government expects employers with over 50 workers to do so). You should display the Staying COVID-19 secure in 2020 poster in your workplace to show you have followed this guidance.

Additional Guidance
You should publish your business level COVID-19 risk assessment on your website not task-based risk assessments.

2. Who should go to work?

Objective: That everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Consider who is needed on site, for example, support staff should work from home if at all possible.
- Planning for the minimum number of people needed to be onsite to operate safely and effectively, for example, workers deemed necessary to carry out physical works, supervise work, or conduct work in order to operate safely.
- Monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and helping them stay connected to those operating in an outdoor environment, especially if the majority of their colleagues are on-site.
- Keeping in touch with off-site workers on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
- Providing equipment for people to work from home safely and effectively, for example, remote access to work systems.

2.1 Protecting people who are at higher risk

Objective: To protect clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

- Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (see definition in Appendix) have been strongly advised not to work outside the home
- Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix), have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role
- If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to stay 2m away from others. If they have to spend time within 2m of others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include advice or telephone support
- See current guidance for advice on who is in the clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable groups.

2.2 People who need to self-isolate

Objective: To make sure individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate
- See current guidance for employees and employers relating to statutory sick pay due to COVID-19
- See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

Additional Guidance

Procedure if someone falls ill

If a worker develops any recognised symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, they should:

- Ensure their manager or supervisor is informed
- Return home immediately
- 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.

They must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.

2.3 Equality in the workplace

Objective: To treat everyone in your workplace equally.

- In applying this guidance, employers should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers or individuals
- It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic such as age, sex or disability
- Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and those who are new or expectant mothers.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Understanding and taking into account the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics
- Involving and communicating appropriately with workers whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk or might make any steps you are thinking about inappropriate or challenging for them

- Considering whether you need to put in place any particular measures or adjustments to take account of your duties under the equality's legislation
- Making reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled workers being put at a disadvantage, and assessing the health and safety risks for new or expectant mothers
- Making sure that the steps you take do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments.

3. Social distancing at work

Objective: To maintain 2m social distancing wherever possible, including while arriving at and departing from work, while in work and when travelling between sites.

- You must maintain social distancing in the workplace wherever possible
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, sites should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff. Mitigating actions include:
    - 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)
- Social distancing applies to all parts of a site, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, canteens and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.

3.1 Coming to work and leaving work

Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible, on arrival and departure and to ensure handwashing upon arrival.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Staggering arrival and departure times at work to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace, taking account of the impact on those with protected characteristics
- Providing additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks to help people walk, run, or cycle to work where possible
- Limiting passengers in corporate vehicles, for example, work minibuses. This could include leaving
- seats empty
- Reducing congestion, for example, by having more entry points to the workplace
- Using markings and introducing one-way flow at entry and exit points
- Providing handwashing facilities, or hand sanitiser where not possible, at entry and exit points
- Providing alternatives to touch-based security devices such as keypads
- Defining process alternatives for entry/exit points where appropriate, for example, deactivating pass readers at turnstiles in favour of showing a pass to security personnel at a distance.

Additional Guidance

Travel to work

Wherever possible workers should travel to site alone using their own transport.

If workers have no option but to share transport:

- Good ventilation (i.e. keeping the windows open) and facing away from each other may help reduce the risk of transmission
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and areas where passengers touch surfaces.

Sites should consider:

- Other means of transport to avoid public transport e.g. cycling etc.
- 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 – 07:30 and 16:00 – 17:30).

Site Access and Egress Points

- Stop all non-essential visitors
- Plan site access and egress points to enable social distancing – you may need to change the number of access points, either increase to reduce congestion or decrease to enable monitoring, including in the case of emergencies
- Require all workers to wash their hands for 20 seconds using soap and water when entering and leaving the site
- Regularly clean common contact surfaces in reception, office, access control and delivery areas e.g. scanners, turnstiles, screens, telephone handsets and desks, particularly during peak flow times
- Reduce the number of people in attendance at site inductions and consider holding them outdoors wherever possible
- Remind workers not to attend site if they have symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and to follow guidelines.

3.2 Moving around buildings and worksites

Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible, while people travel through the workplace.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Reducing movement by discouraging non-essential trips within buildings and sites. For example,
- restricting access to some areas, encouraging use of telephones where permitted, and cleaning them between use
- Reducing job rotation and equipment rotation, for example, single tasks for the day
- Implementing one-way systems where possible on walkways around the workplace
- Using signage such as ground markings or being creative with other objects to mark out 2m to allow controlled flows of people moving throughout the site
- Reducing occupancy of vehicles used for onsite travel, for example, shuttle buses, and when needed, social distancing measures should be followed within the vehicles
- Separating sites into working zones to keep different groups of workers physically separated as much as practical
- Planning site access and ‘area of safety’ points to enable social distancing

- Reducing the number of people in attendance at site inductions and consider holding them outdoors wherever possible with social distancing
- Regulating use of high traffic areas including corridors, lifts, turnstiles and walkways to maintain social distancing

3.3 Making the main workplace safe for people who work statically

Objective: To maintain social distancing between people who work in one place.

- It is recognised that in outdoor workplaces it might be rare to have a fixed or static place of work, however, there may be some situations where this is the case
- For people who work in one place, workstations should allow them to maintain social distancing wherever possible
- Workstations should be assigned to an individual as much as possible. If they need to be shared, they should be shared by the smallest possible number of people
- If it is not possible to keep workstations 2m apart then sites should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to operate, and if so take all mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Changing layouts to allow people to work further apart from each other
- Only where it is not possible to move workstations further apart, arranging people to work side by side or facing away from each other rather than face-to-face
- Only where it is not possible to move workstations further apart, using screens to separate people from each other
- Using a consistent pairing system if people have to work in close proximity, for example, during two-person working, lifting or maintenance activities that cannot be redesigned.

3.4 Meetings

Objective: To reduce or eliminate transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in meetings.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Using remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings
- Only absolutely necessary participants should attend meetings and should maintain 2m separation throughout
- Avoiding transmission during meetings, for example, avoid sharing pens and or other objects
- Providing hand sanitiser in meeting rooms.
- Holding meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible
- For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing

3.5 Common areas

Objective: To maintain social distancing while using common areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Staggering break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or places to eat.
- Using safe outdoor areas for breaks
- Creating additional space by using other parts of the workplace freed up by remote working
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face interactions.
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Additional Guidance

Canteens and rest areas

Where possible, workers should be encouraged to bring their own food. They should also be encouraged to stay on site once they have entered it and avoid local shops.

Where there are no practical alternatives, workplace canteens may remain open to provide food to staff with appropriate adjustments for social distancing. These should provide a takeaway service providing pre-prepared and wrapped food only.

- Consider increasing the number or size / number of canteens and rest areas.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser should be available at the entrance of any room where people eat and should be used by workers when entering and leaving the area
- Payments should be taken by contactless card wherever possible
- Drinking water should be provided, with enhanced cleaning measures for the tap mechanism
- Tables should be cleaned between each use
- All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up
- Canteen staff should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food
- Canteen staff and workers may use rest areas if they apply the same social distancing measures

3.6 Accidents, security and other incidents

Objective: To prioritise safety during incidents.

- In an emergency, for example, an accident, fire or break-in, people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

Additional Guidance
First Aid and emergency service response The primary responsibility is to preserve life. 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 service responses, due to the current pressure on resources ▪ Consider preventing or re-scheduling high risk work or the provision of additional competent first aid / trauma resources.

4. Managing your customers, visitors and contractors

4.1 Manage contacts

Objective: To minimise the number of unnecessary visits to the worksite.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Where site visits are required, site guidance on social distancing and hygiene should be explained to visitors on or before arrival
- Encouraging visits via remote connection / working where this is an option
- Limiting the number of visitors at any one time
- Determining if schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people
- Maintaining a record of all visitors, if this is practical.

Additional Guidance
Stop all non-essential visitors.

4.2 Providing and explaining available guidance

Objective: To make sure people understand what they need to do to maintain safety.

- Ensuring public notices are visible and help inform workers, customers, visitors, contractors and the public to maintain social distancing whilst near the workplace
- There is a high likelihood in some areas that working outdoors will draw the attention of the public. Visible signage may be used to inform the public of the type of work that is being performed.

5. Cleaning the workplace

5.1 Before reopening

Objective: To make sure that any site or location that has been closed or partially operated is clean and ready to restart, including:

- Conducting a risk assessment for all sites, or part of sites, that have been closed, before restarting work
- Carrying out cleaning procedures and providing hand sanitiser, before restarting work.

5.2 Keeping your workplace clean

Objective: To keep the workplace clean and prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, using your usual cleaning products.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, such as buckets, site equipment and control panels, and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements
- Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift
- Sanitisation of all hand tools, controls, machinery and equipment after use
- If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then you should refer to the specific guidance.

Additional Guidance

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
- Turnstiles, door handles and push plates
- Hand rails on staircases and corridors
- Lift and hoist controls
- Machinery and equipment controls
- All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including chairs, vending machines and payment devices
- Telephone equipment
- Keyboards, photocopiers and other office equipment.
- Rubbish collection and storage points should be increased and emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.

5.3 Hygiene – handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets

Objective: To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Providing additional handwashing facilities, for example, pop-ups, particularly on a large site or where there are significant numbers of personnel on site
- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase hand washing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available
- Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards
- Providing hand sanitisers in multiple locations in addition to washrooms
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible
- Enhancing cleaning for busy areas
- Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection
- Where possible, providing paper towels as an alternative to hand dryers in handwashing facilities.

Additional Guidance

- Allow regular breaks to wash hands
- Provide hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) where hand washing facilities are unavailable
- Restrict the number of people using toilet facilities at any one time (e.g. use a welfare attendant), and use signage such as floor markings to ensure 2m distance is maintained between people queueing
- Wash or sanitise hands before and after using the facilities
- Enhance the cleaning regimes for toilet facilities particularly door handles, locks and the toilet flush
- Portable toilets should be avoided wherever possible, but where in use these should be cleaned and emptied more frequently
- Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.

5.4 Changing rooms and showers

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission in changing rooms and showers.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Where shower and changing facilities are required, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible
- Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.

Additional Guidance
▪ Consider increasing the number or size of facilities available on site if possible ▪ Based on the size of each facility, determine how many people can use it at any one time to maintain a distance of 2m ▪ Restrict the number of people using these facilities at any time e.g. use a welfare attendant ▪ Introduce staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact ▪ Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins in these areas with regular removal and disposal

5.5 Handling equipment, materials, waste, and onsite vehicles

Objective: To reduce transmission through contact with objects that come into the workplace and vehicles at the worksite.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Cleaning procedures for the parts of shared equipment you touch after each use, thinking about equipment, tools and vehicles, for example, pallet trucks and forklift trucks
- Encouraging increased handwashing and introducing more handwashing facilities for workers handling goods and merchandise or providing hand sanitiser where this is not practical.
- Regular cleaning of vehicles that workers may take home
- Regular cleaning of reusable delivery boxes.

6. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment, such as face masks.

Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so.

When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not using PPE.

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside of clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is extremely limited. However, if your risk assessment does show that PPE is required, then you must provide this PPE free of charge to workers who need it. Any PPE provided must be fitted properly.

Additional Guidance
Sites should not use RPE for protection from coronavirus (COVID-19). 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 ▪ 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 COVID-19 risk.

6.1 Face coverings

There are some circumstances when wearing a face covering may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure. The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not developed symptoms.

A face covering can be very simple and may be worn in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible. It just needs to cover your mouth and nose. It is not the same as a face mask, such as the surgical masks or respirators used by health and care workers. Similarly, face coverings are not the same as the PPE used to manage risks like dust and spray in an industrial context. Supplies of PPE, including face masks, must continue to be reserved for those who need them to

protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.

It is important to know that the evidence of the benefit of using a face covering to protect others is weak and the effect is likely to be small, therefore face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including minimising time spent in contact, using fixed teams and partnering for close-up work, and increasing hand and surface washing. These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace and government would therefore not expect to see employers relying on face coverings as risk management for the purpose of their health and safety assessments.

Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by law, including in the workplace. If you choose to wear one, itis important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off.

Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one.

This means telling workers:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- Continue to wash your hands regularly
- Change and wash your face covering daily
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste
- Practise social distancing wherever possible
- You can make face-coverings at home and can find guidance on how to do this and use them safely on how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering.

7. Managing your workforce

7.1 Shift patterns and working groups

Objective: To change the way work is organised to create distinct groups and reduce the number of contacts each worker has.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- As far as possible, where people are split into teams or shift groups, fixing these teams or shift groups so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people
- Identifying areas where people have to directly pass things to each other, such as shared tools, materials or job instructions, and finding ways to remove direct contact, for example, by using drop-off points or transfer zones
- For those workers who are required to travel and stay away from home in onsite accommodation, creating fixed groups of workers so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people
- Minimising worker congregation at bottlenecks such as timeclocks, entrances and exits and maintaining social distancing during shift handovers.

7.2 Work-related travel

Additional Guidance

When travelling at 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 a time.
- Wherever possible maintain 2m and avoid touching their faces
- Wash their hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available before entering and after getting out of the vehicle
- Regularly clean the vehicle using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and other surfaces which may be touched during the journey.

7.2.1 Cars, accommodation and visits

Objective: To avoid unnecessary work travel and keep people safe when they do need to travel between locations.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Minimising non-essential travel – consider remote options first
- 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
- Cleaning shared vehicles between shifts or on handover
- Where workers are required to stay away from their home, centrally logging the stay and making sure any overnight accommodation meets social distancing guidelines.

7.2.2 Deliveries to other sites

Objective: To help workers delivering to other sites such as customers' premises to maintain social distancing and hygiene practices.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Putting in place procedures to minimise person-to-person contact during deliveries to other sites.
- Maintaining consistent pairing where two-person deliveries are required
- Minimising contact during payments and exchange of documentation, for example, by using electronic payment methods and electronically signed and exchanged documents.

7.3 Communications and training

7.3.1 Returning to work

Objective: To make sure all workers understand COVID-19 related safety procedures.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working
- Engaging with workers and worker representatives through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements
- Developing communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.

7.3.2 Ongoing communications and signage

Objective: To make sure all workers on site are kept up to date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Ongoing engagement with workers (including through trades unions or employee representative groups) to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments
- Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- 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
- Using visual communications, for example, whiteboards or signage, to explain safe working practices around the working site to reduce the need for face-to-face communications
- Communicating approaches and operational procedures to suppliers, customers or trade bodies to help their adoption and to share experience.

Additional Guidance
▪ Employers should remind the workforce (e.g. at daily briefings) of the specific control measures necessary to protect them, their colleagues, families and the UK population

8. Inbound and outbound goods

Objective: To maintain social distancing and avoid surface transmission when goods enter and leave the site especially in high volume situations, for example, builders' yards or despatch areas.

Steps that will usually be needed:

- Revising pick-up and drop-off collection points, procedures, signage and markings
- Minimising unnecessary contact at gatehouse security, yard and warehouse, for example, non-contact deliveries where the nature of the product allows for use of electronic pre-booking
- Considering methods to reduce frequency of deliveries, for example by ordering larger quantities less often
- Where possible and safe, having single workers load or unload vehicles
- Where possible, using the same pairs of people for loads where more than one is needed
- Enabling drivers to access welfare facilities when required, consistent with other guidance
- Encouraging drivers to stay in their vehicles where this does not compromise their safety and existing safe working practice, such as preventing drive-aways.

Where to obtain further guidance

COVID-19: what you need to do

https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Support for sites and employers during coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/site-support

General guidance for employees during coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-and-support-for-employees-during-coronavirus-COVID-19

COVID-19: HSE guidance on gloves

https://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/employ/gloves.htm

COVID-19: HSE guidance on mask fittings

https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-coronavirus.htm

COVID-19: Department of Health & Social Care guidance on masks

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879221/Coronavirus__COVID-19__-_personal_protective_equipment__PPE__plan.pdf

Guidance for 'Working safely during the Coronavirus outbreak

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has published guidance to help employers keep their workplaces operating safely during this time. The latest guidance covers eight workplace settings:

- Construction and other outdoor work
- Factories, plants and warehouses
- Other people's homes
- Labs and research facilities
- Offices and contact centres
- Restaurants offering takeaway or delivery
- Shops and branches
- Vehicles

Click on the link here to view.

Appendix Definitions

Common areas:

The term 'common area' refers to areas and amenities which are provided for the common use of more than one person including canteens, reception areas, meeting rooms, areas of worship, toilets, gardens, fire escapes, kitchens, fitness facilities, storerooms, laundry facilities.

Clinically extremely vulnerable:

Clinically extremely vulnerable people will have received a letter telling them they are in this group or will have been told by their GP. Guidance on who is in this group can be found here:

https://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

Clinically vulnerable people:

Clinically vulnerable people include those aged 70 or over and those with some underlying health conditions, all members of this group are listed in the 'clinically vulnerable' section here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others