

Risk Assessment and Information on Coronavirus

Introduction

This document is intended to ensure that staff understand how to work safely in our offices during the COVID 19 pandemic.

It follows the UK Government guidelines (the Guidelines) and best practice advice as at the date of this document. We are mindful that guidance will change over time and we will endeavour to maintain this document as the UK Government provides further updates to their guidance on controlling the spread of COVID 19.

The UK Government guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

To date, staff have in the main worked from home and unless the guidance changes or necessity requires, this arrangement is anticipated to continue. The company has a small number of staff working from our offices providing essential services which can't be provided via home working. We are committed to ensuring the safety of all our staff by following measures advised by the Government, this includes carrying out a risk assessment, along with a survey of each office to ensure we continue to provide an environment that is, as far as reasonably practicable, safe and free from harm.

As lockdown restrictions begin to ease, the Company may look at increasing the number of staff working from offices, on the provision that it is safe to do so and it will also be subject to changing Government guidance. As this occurs staff members will be updated regularly in terms of requirements.

Our primary controls to achieve a safe workplace are:

- Make arrangements to work no less than 2m from anyone else.
- Promote high levels of cleanliness, encourage good hygiene practices
- Communicate regularly with staff to ensure that arrangements are clearly understood and being implemented.

This document contains, amongst other things, details of our safe working practices our requirements and expectations of our staff to enable us to maintain a safe workplace.

General Rules

Throughout this document there is repeated reference to particular measures that we have introduced to prevent the spread of COVID 19 and to maintain a safe working environment for our staff. The following are basic, general rules that we expect all our staff to follow;

- You must maintain 2m social distance from other staff and clients and other visitors at all times in any part of the offices
- You must wipe down your work station and any other office surfaces/items that you touch with anti-bacterial wipes or with a disposable cloth and anti-bacterial spray, (provided) at least once during each working day.
- If you use anti-bacterial wipes or disposable cloths, they must be discarded in the bins provided.
- Wash your hands regularly and maintain good hygiene
- Hand sanitiser is available in the reception and all meeting rooms, you have also been provided with your own hand sanitiser for use at your desk.
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze and wash your hands immediately afterwards (or use hand sanitiser). You should, cough into the crook of your elbow
- Do not hold conversations in locations around the offices unnecessarily

- Upon entering the office for the first time each day, and at any point if a member of staff feels unwell, you are required to undertake temperature testing using the temperature testing equipment provided in the reception close to the entrance door. You will be required to clean the equipment after use with the disinfectant wipes provided.

Face Coverings

We have set out measures to allow 2m separation to be achieved throughout our offices and we have taken steps to promote good hygiene. Our advice is taken directly from the UK Government on the matter of face coverings:

If you follow the measures set out in this document, you will not save as is provided herein need to use a face covering. We do request that you use a face covering when seeing clients. However, if you feel the need to wear a face covering, that is your decision. If you do choose to wear a face covering you must:

- Provide your own
- Not leave it on any surface in the office after use
- Take it home at the end of each day and dispose of it if applicable
- Regularly clean the reusable face covering or have more than one so that you can alternate
- Do not share your face coverings with other staff members

Health At Work

You must take personal responsibility for notifying us about any new health issues that you develop, particularly:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If you show any of these symptoms while at home you must:

- Not travel to work
- Notify your Head of Department and Practice Manager

If you show any of these symptoms while at work you must;

- Stop work immediately and wipe down your work area with anti-bacterial wipes
- Return home immediately
- Notify your Head of Department and Practice Manager

In both instances we recommend that you self-isolate for seven days, providing there are no further symptoms etc. You must follow the government guidance on self-isolation and particularly the guidance on households and vulnerable people. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-forhouseholds-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Ongoing Office Cleaning

Ongoing cleaning has taken place all the time, with the aim of reducing the risk of and controlling the spread of COVID 19. Cleaning will continue to be undertaken.

To allow the cleaners to have the greatest opportunity to provide a thorough clean every member of staff must:

- Clear their desk as much as possible at the end of a working day.
- Not leave crockery and cutlery on their desks, put it in the dishwasher by 4.30pm each day.

- Anti-bacterial wipes or anti-bacterial spray and cloths are available for you to use.
- Anti-bacterial wipes will also be provided at:
 - Meeting rooms
 - Printer / photocopiers
 - Kitchen areas

Office Opening And Closing Arrangements

On arrival at the offices you must not gather at the entrance or reception, if staff are waiting to access you must maintain 2m social distancing.

You must sign in and take your temperature on entering the building and use the anti-bacterial wipes. You must use the hand sanitiser in the reception area when entering and before exiting the building.

Client And Visitor Appointments

Before attending our offices, clients and visitors will be emailed our Policy and Procedures and asked to complete and return the information requested to confirm they are in good health and have not in the last 14 days suffered with any symptoms which may be related to Covid 19 or been in contact with any other person who has shown such symptoms or been diagnosed as suffering from Covid 19. They will also receive specific guidance on how the appointment will be conducted and the requirements in place upon their entering our offices.

In all cases the requirements will include maintaining 2 m of separation with BRM staff, the requirement for hand-sanitisation and temperature taking prior to the meeting. The client will be expected to wear a face covering and provide their own writing equipment for use if required at the appointment.

Following each appointment the door handles, chairs and tables used will be cleansed using anti-bacterial wipes or with anti-bacterial spray and cloths provided as above.

Use Of Hand Sanitising Gel

Staff and visitors should be aware of the dangers associated with using and/or storing hand sanitising gel due to the substance being a highly flammable liquid and vapour. Use of hand sanitising gel may cause eye irritation. Repeated exposure may also cause skin dryness or crackling. If staff or visitors have any allergies to the solution, please notify Receptionist/Secretary prior to use.

Staff and visitors should avoid breathing in the vapours, if swallowed immediate medical attention should be sought.

In the event of eye irritation, eyes should be rinsed cautiously with water for several minutes. Remove contact lenses if present and easy to do so. Continue rinsing if eye irritation persists and get medical attention/advice. Hand sanitising gels should not be inhaled, If inhaled, remove person to fresh air and keep comfortable for breathing, in the event of ingestion or unwell feelings, read the manufacturers advisory labels on bottles provided regarding action to take and/or contact 111 for further medical advice. An adult should supervise children at all times.

Storage: Hand sanitising gels should be kept away from hot surfaces, sparks, open flames and other ignition sources, no smoking and used in ventilated areas/stored in a well-ventilated place and should be kept cool. In case of fire, use of foam, carbon dioxide or dry powder to extinguish.

Fire Arrangements

Our fire risk is particularly low within the offices due to a low source of ignition points. All staff must be mindful of keeping a tidy office space and not let items, particularly paper, boxes and other easily ignitable materials build up.

They must also:

- Place rubbish in the bins provided
- Put confidential paper waste in Shredding cabinets provided
- Put large cardboard boxes into the external bins (and make sure that the bin is closed afterwards)
- Do not allow delivered goods to mount up in the office

First Aid

First aiders will be provided with disposable face masks and gloves to wear whilst administering any treatment to a casualty. Remember your own needs, ensure you wash your hands prior to and after any treatment is given. In the current climate with the prevalence of the COVID 19, these skills become even more important and here is how you can apply these skills when managing a first aid incident. Our first aiders should acquaint themselves with any Government guidance relating to COVID 19 when administering first aid. For further information please visit <https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/>

Ventilation

Where possible we encourage staff to open windows to allow a flow of fresh air. As the internal doors in the offices will be open, this will allow an effective flow of air and reduce a build of heat during hot, sunny days. If you open or close a window, you **MUST** wipe down the window handle with anti-bacterial wipes or with anti-bacterial spray and cloth immediately afterwards. Please ensure all windows are closed before you leave the offices.

Fans

To minimise greater spread of any moisture droplets pedestal or desk top fans are only permitted to be used in single occupancy offices, the user should be responsible for such whilst ensuring safe usage in terms of air flow direction. Do not aim the fan towards room access/exit points, they should be switched off if two or more people are present within the room, regardless of whether social distancing is being observed.

Desks

Desk users are expected to wipe down surfaces in their work area regularly throughout the day.

To provide 2m separation between individuals.

Wherever possible, staff have a responsibility to ensure their safety and the safety of others within the workplace, they must try not to pass behind others to leave or access their workstation. Where this is not possible staff should give appropriate warning to others who will be affected, thus ensuring social distancing measures are adhered to.

Meeting rooms

The areas must also be cleaned/wiped down using antibacterial wipes or similar before and after use by staff and clients. The sneeze guards/acrylic screens should be used and the position of seats within the rooms must be established to ensure 2m social distancing at all times.

Photocopying and printing

You should only print documents when absolutely necessary. If you have to use a printer, you must ensure that there is no-one else at the printer before you go to collect your items. You must also:

- With the exception of the General office team, only collect items that are yours; do not collect items for other staff members

- If you touch any of the machine controls, you must wipe down immediately after use with anti-bacterial wipes
- You must not wait in a queue for the machine – this will limit the amount of space within the office and severely inhibit the ability of staff to maintain 2m separation

Kitchens

Only 1 person is allowed in each kitchen area at any one time. You must observe social distancing measures at all times. If you get to the kitchen and it is occupied, you must wait away from the area ensuring that the 2m social distancing requirement is complied with. After using the kitchen area you must wipe down with anti-bacterial wipes the areas with which you have come into contact including;

- Kettle / Coffee Machine
- Fridge door / Dishwasher door
- Milk carton handle
- Anything that you have touched that does not get washed and put away

Toilets

If you get to a toilet and it is occupied, you must wait at a safe distance until the toilet is free. After using the toilets, you must wipe down anything which has been touched including door handles and light switches with anti-bacterial wipes/spray and cloth.

Stairs

The stairs in the majority of our offices are not sufficiently wide to allow 2m separation whilst passing on them. The following measures must be adopted when using the stairs:

- Stand at the top / bottom of the stairs and if possible, check that they are not being used
- When the stairs are clear begin and complete your ascent / descent
- DO NOT stop on the stairs for any reason
- Avoid holding the hand rail if it is safe to do so.

Office deliveries

Deliveries must be accepted in the following method:

- Delivery personnel must observe 2m social distancing
- Do not sign for items
- Staff **MUST NOT** arrange for personal deliveries to the workplace.
- Goods may be brought inside and placed in reception for intended recipient to collect, only designated staff, i.e. Receptionist/General office team, must deliver to recipients' desks

If you have any concerns regarding Wellbeing, speak to the Practice Manager in the first instance. If you have any health & safety problems at work including issues with arrangements for COVID 19 please raise this in the first instance with the Practice Manager.