

GUIDANCE ON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, FIRST AID AND RIDDOR REPORTING

We understand that the Government restrictions relating to Coronavirus mean potential new ways of working and new employees to manage. To help during these challenging times, we've summarised the points you may wish to consider to continue working safely. As we have not been able to visit your premises we are unable to make explicit recommendations.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

During the Coronavirus pandemic you may find it harder to source the PPE that you usually provide to your workers, as many manufacturers and suppliers are prioritising the health and social care sectors. However, you still need to ensure that your staff are kept safe from the hazards they are exposed to at work – you cannot allow your staff to work without the correct PPE. This means you may need to adjust the way some activities are carried out.

Here are some considerations that may enable you to continue your operations:

- Can the job or equipment be modified so that the exposure to the hazardous material or process is eliminated or sufficiently reduced to no longer need the PPE?
- As the health and care sectors are using mainly disposable PPE, non-disposable respirators may still be available to purchase and may suit your needs.
- If you still have a limited stock available, can you limit the amount of people needed to do the job? It might make your stock of PPE last longer.

RESPIRATOR FACE FIT TESTING

As at any other time, to correctly provide the required protection, respirators must fit the wearer properly. To find out if a respirator fits the wearer, you need to carry out face fit testing when a specific respirator is worn for the first time or whenever there is a change of respirator type or model. Additionally, all workers who wear respirators should be trained on how to wear it properly.

Those who conduct face fit testing must follow Government advice on social distancing.

WEARING PPE TO PREVENT INFECTION

Physical distancing, hand washing and respiratory hygiene, are the most important and effective measures we can all adopt to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Therefore the wearing of facial coverings must not be used as an alternative to any of these other precautions.

The evidence on the use of face coverings is limited, but there may be some benefit in wearing a facial covering when you leave the house and enter enclosed spaces, especially where physical distancing is more difficult and where there is a risk of close contact with multiple people you do not usually meet. Examples include, traveling on public transport or entering a food shop where it is not always possible to maintain a 2 metre distance from another customer. There is no evidence to suggest there might be a benefit outdoors, unless in an unavoidable crowded situation, where there may be some benefit.



As some people can have the virus but experience no symptoms (asymptomatic infection), wearing a face covering in the situations outlined above may provide some level of protection against transmission to other people in close proximity.

FIRST AID

With the potential changes in staffing levels (self-isolation, holidays, sickness) because of Coronavirus, it's important to review the business first aid requirements and decide if you can still provide the cover needed for the workers that are present and the activities that they are doing.

The HSE specify that if you are carrying on trading at your work premises, then it's vital that you can provide adequate first aid cover for those on site and comply with the law.

If you hold a first aid certificate that expired on or after 16 March 2020 and cannot access requalification training because of Coronavirus you may qualify for a three month extension. This applies to: Offshore Medic (OM), Offshore First Aid (OFA), First Aid at Work (FAW) and Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW).

Contact your first aid provider to obtain further details and/or to see if you would qualify for an extension.

FIRST AID NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To identify adequate first aid cover you should review your first aid needs assessment and decide if you have enough cover for the number of workers that are present and the activities that they are doing.

It may be that fewer people are coming into the workplace and it may still be safe to operate with reduced first aid cover, or you are no longer undertaking high risk activities.

If the cover you have is inadequate, you may be able to share first aider provision between you and another business. However, you must ensure they have the knowledge, experience and availability to cover the needs of your business.

Shared first aiders must:

- have the training and skills to address the type of injuries and or illnesses identified in your risk assessment
- know enough about your work environment and your first aid facilities
- be able to get to your workplace in good time if needed.

If you share your first aid cover with another business, you must make sure that it does not adversely affect your own first aid cover.

FIRST AIDER SAFETY

Be aware of the risks to yourself and others

When approaching a casualty there is always a risk of cross-contamination – especially when you may have to get close to the casualty to assess what is wrong or to check their breathing.

Keep yourself safe

In line with Government advice, make sure you wash your hands or use 70% alcohol sanitiser, before and after treating a casualty. Also ensure that you don't cough or sneeze over a casualty when you are treating them.

Don't lose sight of other cross-contamination that could occur that isn't related to Coronavirus.

Give early treatment

The vast majority of incidents do not involve you getting close to a casualty where you would come into contact with cough droplets.

Keep yourself informed and updated

This is an ever-changing situation due to learning about the new disease and the Government and NHS are continually updating their advice. Make sure that you regularly review the NHS 111 or Gov.uk websites.

Remember your own needs

In order to help others, you will also need to look after your own needs. Make sure you take time to talk about your fears and concerns about Coronavirus with someone you trust and to take time out to look after yourself.

PROVIDING CPR AND PREVENTING CORONAVIRUS INFECTION

Trained persons can provide CPR in the normal manner, but in the current climate should avoid giving rescue breaths.

After contact with the individual, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or 70% alcohol sanitiser at the earliest opportunity.

REPORTING A SUSPECTED CORONAVIRUS ABSENCE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE (RIDDOR)

The Health and Safety Executive have issued a statement relating to reporting cases of Coronavirus. HSE's statement says:

“You must only make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to Coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence
- a worker has been diagnosed as having Coronavirus and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease
- a worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to Coronavirus”.

The HSE have provided examples for each of the following reporting categories:

DANGEROUS OCCURRENCE

“If something happens at work which results in (or could result in) the release or escape of Coronavirus you must report this as a dangerous occurrence.

An example of a dangerous occurrence would be a lab worker accidentally smashing a glass vial containing Coronavirus, leading to people being exposed.”

EXPOSURE TO BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

“An example of a work-related exposure to Coronavirus would be a health care professional who is diagnosed with Coronavirus after treating patients with it.”

If there is reasonable evidence that someone diagnosed with Coronavirus was likely exposed because of their work, you must report this as an exposure to a biological agent using the case of disease report.

WORK RELATED FATALITIES

“If someone dies as a result of a work-related exposure to Coronavirus and this is confirmed as the likely cause of death by a registered medical practitioner then you must report this without delay and send a report of that fatality within 10 days of the incident.”

USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

[General Government advice](#)

[Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

[First aid](#)

[RIDDOR reporting \(hse.gov\)](#)

[RIDDOR reporting \(hse.gov\)](#)

In addition to this, we also have guidance on a range of risk management matters on the NFU Mutual website. For further information visit [nfumutual.co.uk/RMS](https://www.nfumutual.co.uk/RMS)

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Governmental guidance relating to the Coronavirus pandemic is updated frequently and different approaches may be taken in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland which may impact on the accuracy and validity of this guidance. We therefore do not give any warranty, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy and validity of this guidance. You are solely responsible for keeping up to date with developments relating to the Coronavirus pandemic. To keep up to date, please read the information that your Government is sharing with the public which can be found at www.gov.uk, www.gov.wales (for Wales), www.gov.scot (for Scotland) and www.nidirect.gov.uk (for Northern Ireland) and consult the NHS website for health advice.

This guidance is provided on the strict understanding that you accept, without limitation, that you retain sole responsibility for compliance with health and safety legislation and regulations, all other legislation and any warranties/conditions attached to your insurance policies. We have not conducted any site visits as part of producing this guidance and we have not, and are not, providing any guidance in relation to your specific set up.

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