

Cobwebs

Social Distancing Advice and Guidance for Sites

This document contains all the current advice published regarding the practical steps Cobwebs can use to 'socially distance' and keep our Operatives safe once activities 'on site' recommence. It also looks at how we can protect customers and the general public on the sites we are working on.

With information and advice around the COVID-19 outbreak changing and being updated regularly, this document is under constant review.

The aim of this document is to provide an itemised outline of what to consider when working a site and also list the practical steps we can put in place to reduce the spread of the virus whilst undertaking our day to day activities.

What is social distancing?

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are to:

- avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature, loss or change in sense of taste or smell and/or new and continuous cough.
- avoid non-essential use of public transport when possible
- work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to employer guidance for more information
- avoid large and small gatherings in public spaces, noting that pubs, restaurants, leisure centres and similar venues are currently shut as infections spread easily in enclosed spaces where people gather
- avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media
- use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.
- everyone should be trying to follow these measures as much as is practicable

It is strongly advised that you follow the above measures as much as you can.

Signs of COVID-19 infection

The signs of coronavirus are:

- high temperature (your back and chest feel hot to touch) or
- a new cough where you keep on coughing – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour or coughing a lot, where you keep on coughing, 3 or more times in a day or
- a loss or change in sense of taste and or smell

Our Strategy

The Government's latest advice indicates that no additional PPE should be required to carry out your work unless you are working in high risk areas like hospitals or care homes.

This puts the onus on employers to design a COVID-19 secure working environment observing Government advice on:

- strict adherence to social distancing practices
- ensuring that additional facilities and materials are available and work practices are amended to ensure higher standards of cleanliness

Availability for work

General

Any Operative that believes they have any symptoms of the virus should self-isolate at home for 7 days, and report to HR that they are doing so as a result. They will be paid sick pay for this period.

If someone in the Operatives household become ill, they should self-isolate for 14 days. This is whether they have signs of coronavirus or not. If they then start to have signs of coronavirus themselves, they should stay at home and not meet up with other people for 7 days from when their signs started. They will be paid sick pay for this period.

Anyone who cannot work from home who has developed symptoms of coronavirus can now be tested for the virus by the NHS and they should contact the HR team for a referral as soon as they develop symptoms. Testing is thought to be most effective in the first 3 days of symptoms. Family members can also be tested. Alternatively, testing can be arranged directly by browsing www.gov.uk.

If you test negative, you may return to work as soon as you feel well enough.

Meetings

Inductions, briefings, meetings, Toolbox Talks (TBT) etc. must be carried out in a well-ventilated location, ideally outdoors. Attendance must be limited at any point in time in order to maintain the 2m distancing. Car parks and outdoor spaces are therefore ideal for meetings depending on the weather.

Travel & Transport

Company vehicle users should wherever possible travel to site alone. Where Operatives do not have use of a company vehicle, they should use their own transport (for example, a car or bicycle). The company will reimburse them in line with the Working Rule Agreements (WRA) travel and fare guidance.

- Vehicles should be shared with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time
- The van should have good ventilation (i.e. keeping the windows open) and occupants facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission
- Current Government advice is that there may be a marginal benefit to the use of cloth face coverings in circumstances where social distancing is not possible. For this reason we would recommend the use of proprietary re-usable cloth face masks when sharing vehicles. These will be provided by Cobwebs
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with emphasis on handles, controls and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces. It is the drivers'/registered keeper's responsibility to do this

Access to site

All non-essential visitors are to be stopped from attending site.

- If there are a large number of Operatives on site, we should consider:
- introducing staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact
- amending the number of access points, either increasing to reduce congestion or decreasing to enable monitoring, including in the case of emergencies

Working on site

Upon arrival on site, operatives must make sure they wash or sanitise their hands:

- when they come to site
- when they have visited other places

- after using the toilet
- before they touch their food
- and when they leave site

Consideration must be given to the number of Operatives and other contractors on site at any time and the available space to work. Operatives are required to maintain a social distance between them of 2m (6 feet) to ensure that the chance of the spread of infection is minimised.

If 2m distancing cannot be maintained works need to be:

- Staggered over the course of the day so that they can (Operatives may be required to work shifts to ensure that this the case
- Re-programmed so that this strict rule is observed. This could involve explaining to clients that project durations must be extended and even issuing EOT notices
- Delayed until Government advice changes

Operatives should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth, and always cough and sneeze into a tissue and bin it immediately. If this is not possible, they should cough/sneeze into the crook of their elbow.

In addition to the normal PPE provided to carry out work safely, each Operative should be issued with the following additional COVID-19 cleaning/sanitising products:

- hand sanitiser
- detergent wipes
- disposable gloves
- clear waste bag for disposal of gloves and wipes

Loading/Offloading

Where loading and offloading arrangements on site will allow it, drivers should remain in their vehicles.

Where drivers are required to exit their vehicle, they should wash or sanitise their hands before handling any materials

Parking

With more vehicles potentially on site, consideration must be given to parking and where our employees can safely leave their vehicles.

In line with the above, close working should be avoided and non-essential physical work that requires close contact between workers should not be carried out.

Site Practices

Keeping a social distance

Operatives need to maintain 2m distance from all colleagues, avoid touching their face and wash their hands immediately having touched surfaces with bare hands.

Posters and signs reminding everyone of the rules around social distancing will be clearly displayed at prominent locations around the site where practical.

Cohorting

In order to minimise the possibility of transmission, consideration should be given to 'cohorting' wherever possible. In simple terms this just means trying, as far as is practicable, to keep the same groups or teams of people working together and/or travelling together. This way, the spread of any infection is limited to the smaller group rather than the whole workforce.

Ventilation

The areas where Operatives are working should be kept well ventilated by opening doors and windows where practical to allow the air to circulate.

Two-handed tasks

Where two handed tasks are unavoidable Operatives must:

- wear appropriate PPE
- undertake activities in short duration (<15 mins)
- face away from each other if possible
- work in consistent pairings to reduce transmission risk

PPE

Respirators or masks are not required to be worn as standard on our sites, however Operatives should always have adequate PPE for the tasks that they are undertaking. Re-usable PPE should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers. This applies specifically to cut proof gloves that operatives are expected to wear. Single use PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused.

Tools and equipment

Operatives should use their own tools. All plant and equipment that is not allocated to one person must be cleaned before and after use.

If it is necessary to hand equipment over to another employee, it must be cleaned before handover using disposable gloves and detergent spray or wipes.

PPE, RPE, phones, etc. must not be shared at any point in time and must be cleaned before and after use daily by users.

Breaks

Operatives are advised to take their breaks in their vehicles where possible or stay on site for their breaks.

They should also bring their own meals and refillable drinking bottles. They should not share items (for example, cups).

Breaks should be staggered so that the distance of 2m can be observed between each operative.

Cleaning welfare

Extra cleaning should be carried out on site, particularly in the following areas.

1. Taps and washing facilities.
2. Toilet flush and seats.
3. Door handles and push plates.
4. Handrails on staircases and corridors.
5. Lift and hoist controls.
6. Machinery and equipment controls.
7. Food preparation and eating surfaces.
8. Telephone equipment.
9. Keyboards, photocopiers and other office equipment.

Cleaning materials will be made available (provided by Cobwebs) and we expect each Operative to take responsibility for cleaning the items that they use before and after using them so that they are ready for the next person.

Distancing from the public

When working in communal areas, barriers should be used to ensure that the general public cannot get within 2m of the area where our Operatives are working.

If this is impractical arrangements shall be made for Operatives to vacate an area when a member of the public wishes to pass through.

Operatives Responsibility

Daily checks

All Operatives must do a personal COVID-19 check for symptoms prior to attending work if they feel unwell and/or display symptoms they should follow government instructions and self-isolate. They should also inform their line manager.

If they show signs of COVID-19 symptoms whilst on site, they should stop work immediately, inform their line manager, and go immediately home.

Testing for those with symptoms who must travel for work is now available www.gov.uk. If an Operative tests negative, they may return to work as soon as they feel well enough.

Cleanliness on site

Operatives must take personal responsibility for ensuring that PPE is worn and that general rules for enhanced cleanliness are observed.

They must clean down areas and equipment prior to and after they have used them and ensure they are clean ready for the next user.

Returning home

On returning from work Operatives should immediately place their uniform in the wash and proceed to bathe, washing their hair and body to reduce the possibility of bringing the virus into their home.

If additional workwear is required, please contact Kim Bass, Operations Supervisor.

Customers Responsibility

Approval for any works to commence on site need to be agree in writing with the client prior to starting back. We must understand the challenges their sites pose us physically in terms of the environment and work content, as well as having consideration for the residents and building users we may come into contact with.

As mentioned earlier, we also need to be aware of the general public and their access to our sites.

Customer Communication

Residents/building users

There may be a significant amount of people within the UK that have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak or have underlying conditions that mean they are very concerned regarding the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19.

We need to respect these people's point of view and defuse any challenging situations. If a resident refuses access, come away from site. Likewise, if you receive any abuse from neighbours or the general public please report this to your line manager.

Illness

In the event of one of the team becoming ill

If a member of the team becomes ill on your site, the social distancing measure should ensure that other people are not infected but it is important to be extra vigilant with the remaining staff.

They should stop work immediately, inform their line manager, and go straight home. Anybody that believes they have any symptoms of the virus should self-isolate at home for 7 days, and report to HR that they are doing so as a result. They will be paid sick pay for this period.

In the event of an outbreak at your site

In the unlikely event that multiple members of the team become ill on your site, the site must be closed and the people that have worked on that site must go home and self-isolate for 14 days.

The site should remain closed for 3 days before operatives can return.

Policy dated 26th May 2020