

COVID-19 Secure Workplace Risk Assessment

This risk assessment should be completed in conjunction with the H&S guidance for Building Managers document and any site-specific requirements from landlords/managing agents.

The guidance document contains a checklist of hazards you should include and others to consider. These lists are not exhaustive, and the risk assessment should also include anything that is specific to your building or way of working. The risk assessment should be thorough but succinct and identify all the hazards.

“A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace.”
(HSE)

Once completed, risk assessments should be emailed to health&safety@ipswich.gov.uk.

If you would like to discuss completion of the risk assessment, please contact the **Corporate Health & Safety Team**.

Managing risk

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

We have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Building Managers must work with any other employers, tenants 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:

1. In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.
2. Operational areas and building managers should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option. Where working from home is not possible, building managers should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government and IBC guidance notes (keeping people 2m apart wherever possible).
3. Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, operational areas should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the service to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.
4. 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



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- 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)

5. 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.

6. In your assessment you should have regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.

Risk Level - It is recognised that levels of risk will vary over the course of the pandemic period with levels of community infection/ possible localised outbreaks and with observance of recommended public health measures by the public. The COVID-19-Secure approach to this risk assessment aims to adopt universal hygiene and distancing precautions wherever these are reasonably practicable and to identify specific additional mitigation where social distancing cannot be maintained. HSE confirm that, where possible, people should be kept 2m apart and if this is not viable, keeping 1m apart with risk mitigation is acceptable.

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.

Service delivery in outbreak period.

Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus (not bacteria). The incubation period of COVID-19 is 10 days.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 10 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, lost sense of smell/taste.

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer, and chronic lung disease.

How COVID-19 is spread

The risk of infection with COVID-19 is understood to be determined by several factors including:

- Routes of transmission (exposure to droplets/contact/airborne),
- Work with symptomatic and asymptomatic persons,
- All secretions (except sweat) and excretions are regarded as infectious,
- Virus survival in environment is believed to be variable with material/temperature/chemicals/sunlight – guidance advises reduced infectivity is achieved in 72 hours,

- Air borne aerosols are cleared by ventilation proportionate to the number of air changes per hour,
- Availability of hand washing facilities/materials,
- Degree of personal separation achievable,
- Disinfection regime,
- Availability of PPE

There are 2 routes people could become infected:

1. Secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2m) or possibly could be inhaled into the lungs.
2. It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching door handles or shaking hands then touching own face). There is currently little evidence that people who are without symptoms are infectious to others.

How long the virus can survive

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on several factors, for example:

- what surface the virus is on
- whether it is exposed to sunlight
- differences in temperature and humidity
- exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

Regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection

What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in the workplace they should be sent home and advised to follow the [stay at home guidance](#).

If they need clinical advice, they should go online to [NHS 111](#) or call 111 if they don't have internet access. In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell with symptoms consistent with coronavirus infection. It is not necessary to close the workplace or send any staff home, unless specifically advised to by the Contact Track and Trace service. Keep monitoring the [government response page](#) for the latest details.

Guidance on face coverings

The need for face coverings should be determined by risk assessment in accordance with up to date Public Health England guidance (broadly this will be for close personal contact with symptomatic persons, contact with body fluids or work in a contaminated environment).

Universal Precautions

Everyone can help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by reminding everyone of the public health advice. [Posters, leaflets and other materials](#) are available.

Employees and customers should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently than normal and maintain 2m distance from other people where practicable. Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products.

Where working from home is possible this has been enabled. Other work has been adapted to comply with the social distancing or PPE guidelines set out by the government.

A communication strategy has been adopted to ensure staff are fully briefed and appropriately supported. Stay at home guidance has been communicated to managers to ensure isolation procedures are followed.

Summary: Area Housing Panels

The three Area Housing Panels meet quarterly, and membership is for both Ward Councillors and Tenant Representatives. This risk assessment is for those face to face meetings.

COVID-19 Secure Risk Assessment: Area Housing Panels	Site: Sheltered Housing Schemes	Date of Assessment: First version - 23/09/2021 Revised & approved – 22/10/2021	Author: Emma Cook	Date of review: 01/01/2022
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Risk ID#	Risk Location & the hazard	Who might be at Risk?	Control Measures in Place act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk	What Further Action is Necessary?	Action by Who?	Action by When?
	Exposure to COVID-19 virus or risk arising from building use or change in working practice at a specific location)	Staff, Visitor, Cllr., Contractor, Customer	Things you are already doing to reduce the risk (see checklist for guidance)	Any additional control measures or equipment that you need	Who is responsible for the further action?	When the action will be done by
1	Access to communal lounges, doors, handrails, furniture and frequent touch points, (inc. toilets) provide transmission point of virus.	Tenants, Staff, Councillors and Visitors	<p>“hold open” or wedge open doors which are not fire doors, this will also increase ventilation.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser provided at entrance to building for visitors to use.</p> <p>Hand washing facilities available</p> <p>Hygiene signs displayed</p> <p>Communal areas are cleaned daily using infection protocol measures</p>	Review each location to determine which doors can be kept open. Fire doors will not be held open.	Neighbourhood Manager	1 October 2021

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2	Area Housing Panel members congregate in proximity for extended periods of time – exposure to COVID-19.	Area Housing Panel members	Set out tables and chairs with a minimum 1.0m separation Encourage the use of face coverings within indoor spaces for Area Housing Panel members Notices encouraging the use of face coverings to be displayed. Officers to wear face coverings unless presenting information. Communal areas are cleaned daily using infection protocol measures	Set out each site prior to meeting	Neighbourhood Manager, Housing Officer, Tenant Engagement Officer	On date of the meeting in advance of meeting start time
3	Lack of ventilation within communal lounges increases transmission	Tenants, Staff and Councillors and Visitors	Ensure windows and doors are kept open to allow ventilation through the space.	Due to increased ventilation, reduced ambient temperatures will be	Neighbourhood Manager, Housing	In advance of meeting

	levels (if occupants not wearing face coverings) – Exposure to COVID-19		Any upper windows should be opened first to allow fresh air to heat as it enters a space. Open windows and doors at least 30 mins before meeting commence to allow purge ventilation.	experienced by users. Area Housing Panel members should be advised of this.	Officer, Tenant Engagement Officer	
	Risk Location & the hazard Exposure to COVID-19 virus or risk arising from building use or change in working practice at a specific location)	Who might be at Risk? Staff, Visitor, Cllr., Contractor, Customer	Control Measures in Place act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk Things you are already doing to reduce the risk (see checklist for guidance)	What Further Action is Necessary? Any additional control measures or equipment that you need	Action by Who? Who is responsible for the further action?	Action by When? When the action will be done by
4	Persons entering the committee room who are knowingly COVID-19 positive, spreading virus to others – Exposure and transmission of COVID-19.	Tenants, Staff, Councillors and Visitors	Encourage the use of LFT prior to meeting. Meeting in progress signage on doors	Neighbourhood Manager to carry spare masks box / face coverings to each meeting.	Neighbourhood Manager	At the meeting
5	Area Housing Panel Members attending meeting when feeling unwell – Exposure and transmission of COVID-19.	Area Housing Panel members		Area Housing Panel members to be advised not to attend the meeting if they are feeling unwell Staff encouraged to take LFT on day of the meeting	Neighbourhood Manager Neighbourhood Manager	In advance of the meeting Day of meeting

6	Sharing objects – papers, pens and providing refreshments – transmission of COVID-19.	Area Housing Panel members	Papers circulated via email in advance of meeting	Area Housing Panel members to be advised to bring own papers, pen and that no refreshments will be provided	Neighbourhood Manager	In advance of meeting
7	Business continuity – reduction in service/employee levels as a result of exposure to COVID-19	Tenancy Services team	Only two Officers attend Area Housing Panel meetings Each Neighbourhood Manager attends their own Area Housing Panel meeting One Housing Officer attends each meeting and this is on rotation. A different Housing Officer will be in attendance for each meeting. Service Plan in place	Review/Update of Service Plan Risk assessment to be communicated once approved	Operations Manager Operations Manager	31 October 2021 Once approved
Site specific Risk Assessments						
1	East AHP Dundee House	Communal Lounge – open windows around the room, keep door to lounge open Hobbies Room – open windows around the room, entrance door to hobbies room to be kept open				
2	South West AHP Goldcrest Court	Communal Lounge – open windows around the room, foyer door and main entrance door to the communal lounge building to be kept open				

3	North West AHP Wingate House	Communal Lounge – open windows around the room, door into the communal lounge to be kept open, doors to garden to be opened
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