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Briefing on Returning to the Work Place & Risk

Assessment

Updated: May 2021

Introduction

This is a 'brief' briefing as we have other information that sits alongside this topic. Please read this briefing alongside our other information:

- Briefing on Covid Safe Work Places (Post restrictions)
- Template on Checklists for Social Distancing (this is the risk assessment template you will need)
- Homeworking documents

Managing risk within the workplace

In order to protect your staff from coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace, you should carry out a risk assessment and manage the risk of coronavirus in your workplace. This includes taking measures to work at home where possible, maintaining social distancing, cleaning and hygiene.

Be clear to your staff to advise on the steps you are taking to manage the risk of COVID-19 in your workplace by:

- explain the changes you are planning to work safely
- make sure changes will work and hear their ideas
- continue to operate your organisation safely during the outbreak

Areas to be addressed are:

1. Increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning, provide hand sanitisers around the workplace, frequently cleaning/disinfecting touchpoints such as, setting clear guidance for toilets and providing hand drying facilities such as paper towels or electric dryers.

2. Every effort must be made to implement social distancing by keeping 2m apart or 1m plus when 2m is not attainable with additional precautions such as face masks, installing screens,

making sure people face away from each other and providing extra hand washing facilities.. Avoid sharing workstations, arrange one-way traffic, use floor markers and see visitors by appointment only.

3. Where the 2m or 1m plus rule cannot be followed in full, then question if that activity should continue? If the activity is deemed as essential, then you must:

- Increasing hand washing and surface cleaning
- Reduce activity times with substantial breaks
- Use of screens or barriers to separate people where possible, using back-to-back or side-to-side working whenever possible
- Reduce the number of people each person has contact with.

4. Try to establish whether people working are vulnerable to COVID-19 and include them in your risk assessment.

5. Always remember to share the findings of your risk assessment with your staff.

6. Once you have carried out your risk assessment – you should display the following poster in your office for all to see

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97021d3bf7f5d43765cbf/staying-covid-19-secure.pdf>

Returning to the Workplace

Many organisations recognise that homeworking will need to be maintained. You should take all reasonable steps to help people work from home by:

- discussing home working arrangements
- ensuring they have the right equipment, for example remote access to work systems, printers, mobile phones etc
- including them in all necessary communications
- looking after their physical and mental wellbeing

Home can be the main place of work, but others may wish to have flexible homeworking with time divided between the home and office. Others may use the office as the main place of work, with working from occasionally.

Issues to consider are:

- Which employees need to be shielded?
- Self Isolating - those with symptoms or those that are living with someone who has symptoms must remain at home
- Equality – all employees are to be treated equally, with individual needs taken into consideration.

Social Distancing

The 2m where possible or 1m plus with other measures social distancing rule must be followed wherever possible.

This includes:

- When arriving and departing at work
- Whilst in work – entrances, exits, break rooms, kitchens
- Travelling between sites.

Where the 2m rule or 1m plus with other measures cannot be followed in relation to a particular activity, then questions need to be asked if that activity should continue? Please see our **Template on Checklists for Social Distancing**.

Accidents, Security and other Incidents

In an emergency i.e. an accident, or fire, people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe to do so.

People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitisation measures immediately afterwards including the washing of hands

Remind staff of emergency procedures, practice drills may need postponing for a while but this needs to be thought through and alternatives found.

Other documents in this series

Briefing on Covid Safe Work Places (Post restrictions)

(Homeworking)

Template on Checklists for Social Distancing

Briefing on returning to the Work Place Risk Assessment

This is the end of the document:

We hope this has been helpful to you. Please get in touch if something isn't covered here you want to ask about. We will be very pleased to hear from you. If you would like more information, further details around membership or to upgrade your membership, visit: www.trustadvice.org.uk. Please also see our website for details of ways we can help you and services we offer.