COVID-19
Ventilation advice for employers

Last updated: August 2021

Please remember, COVID-19 is still with us while we are at work, on a break, or travelling for work. An infected person releases particles into the air when breathing, coughing or speaking and the risk of infection is greater indoors. Employers should have a Health and Safety policy in place, have conducted a COVID-19 Risk assessment, and make employees aware of these.

Let in as much fresh air as possible – Open windows, doors (excluding fire doors), and vents in all areas of your workplace, including the canteen, toilets and changing rooms. This will dilute any infected particles and reduce the risk of infection.

Understand your building's ventilation system – Do not adjust mechanical settings without expert advice. It is important to make sure that ventilation systems and/or extractor fans are used correctly.

Avoid recirculating air – Avoid using ventilation systems which only recycle used air, unless they have clear abatement either directly fitted or freestanding in the same areas where air is being circulated. Make sure that fresh air is introduced to all spaces.

Ensure adequate ventilation – It is important to avoid colleagues gathering in poorly ventilated rooms. Opening the windows a little is the easiest way to keep the fresh air flowing. If rooms cannot be adequately ventilated, you should avoid them being used.

Be aware of the relevant space capacity level – More people together means more particles, and needs more ventilation.

Air rooms, between users or regularly throughout the day – If your employees share a space with others, the windows should be opened regularly, especially between users, to help reduce the risk.

If ventilation results in a reduction in thermal comfort – Consider relaxing uniform requirements, so employees can continue to work comfortably in a cooler environment.

And remember to continue following all other measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission indoors – wearing face coverings, taking a COVID-19 test and self-isolating when required.

If you suspect you have symptoms of COVID-19 book a test at
https://www.nhsinform.scot/testandprotect

See the Scottish Government's full Ventilation guidance at: Coronavirus (COVID-19): ventilation guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Reduce the risk and keep Scotland on track