COVID-19 SECTOR ADVICE CARD

Designed for managers and employees to guide action to prevent the spread of COVID-19; to support workplace communications and training; and take action in the event of an outbreak

Last updated: 04 September *2020*

SECTOR

The business sector covered in this card is: CONSTRUCTION

The key guidance document for this sector is **Coronavirus (COVID-19): construction sector guidance.**

This guidance should be followed **at all times** to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. It should be used to support, not replace, discussion with your local authority or NHS Board Health Protection Team.

For additional support and advice on compliance with COVID-19 controls please contact the Health & Safety Executive. HSE have also provided the following advice on how to raise a concern: HSE COVID-19 enquiries Telephone 0300 790 6787 (Mon-Fri 8.30am to 8.00pm)

Additional information (Click on the link below to go to the relevant guidance) –

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:

- Construction Scotland Construction Re-Start Plan
- Construction Scotland Working on site during the COVID-19 pandemic: Construction Guidance
- Scottish Government route map- information about easing the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.
- Public Health Scotland COVID-19 guidance for non-healthcare settings.
- Health and Safety: Health and Safety Executive – Working Safely
- Coronavirus support for businesses in Scotland: Find Business Support
- The fair work statement and compliance agreement
- Scottish COVID-19 Workbook
- Guidance on returning to work safely

Prevent the spread of COVID-19 - Construction

General guidance to prevent spread of COVID-19:

Everyone who:

- **has the symptoms** of coronavirus (COVID-19) - a new persistent cough, fever, or a loss of sense of smell and /or taste – should stay at home and arrange for coronavirus testing;

- **is living with someone who has coronavirus symptoms** should stay at home and follow the relevant advice;

- **has travelled to Scotland** from a country which is not exempt from the UK quarantine rules, should stay at home following the relevant guidance.

- Carry out a full COVID-19 **risk assessment,** in consultation with employees, employee representatives or trade unions (refer to HSE and other relevant guidance).

- **Only use personal protective equipment** (PPE) where a risk assessment has shown that a task essential to a project cannot be carried out in a socially distanced manner, a barrier is not a practical solution and reliance is placed solely on administrative controls.

- Provision for maintaining hand and respiratory hygiene – signage on good practice, provision of hand sanitiser.

- Enhanced environmental hygiene cleaning – regular cleaning schedule and training of cleaning staff.

- Ensure **staff do not congregate** in communal areas such as canteens, arrival and entry areas, staff rooms, wash areas/hygiene stations and corridors

- Transport (including to and from work and whilst at work) – support home working where possible, provide advice on safe means of travel.

- Personal Protective Equipment and face coverings – where required, ensure staff are trained in the correct use and safe disposal of PPE.

- Procedures are in place to **isolate and remove symptomatic individuals** from the workplace, ensuring employers and managers understand their obligations with respect to **Scotland's Test and Protect Strategy.**

Workplace Communications - Construction

All managers and staff should be aware that the following should be addressed to produce a COVID-safe working environment.

- Consult with **staff**, including trades unions where relevant, to ensure **policies and procedures** include COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigations

- Ensure COVID-19 policies and procedures enable managers to engage appropriately with employees on their health status, circumstances and support needs. The COVID-19 occupational risk assessment guidance allows staff and their managers to consider both individual and occupational risk factors from COVID-19 (e.g. as in shielding categories or other health issues)

- Continue work from home policies and provide necessary support to those who can

- Ensure all **staff are aware of their responsibility** to control the spread of COVID-19 in their workplace.

- Ensure **staff have access to suitable learning opportunities** in effective hand washing technique, cough etiquette and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

- Ensure **managers and staff understand their obligations** with respect to Scotland's Test and Protect Strategy. That staff are clear how to access testing.

- Put in place **training** which will ensure that all employees understand the requirements for maintaining physical distancing and measures to monitor adherence by all staff.

- Ensure **all staff are clear** that those who have symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 and their household/other contacts do not attend work and follow advice on self/household isolation

- Ensure **all staff are clear** that if they become unwell whilst at work they should return home and seek testing

- Ensure **that staff are clear** on what is expected of them should a work colleague become unwell on site

Action in the Event of an Outbreak – Construction

Immediate action

If there is *any* suspicion that there may be an outbreak of cases in your workplace or setting, the most important thing you can do is to contact your local NHS Board Health Protection Team (HPT) early.

Do not spend time trying to work out what you should do yourself. Your HPT will be happy to advise you on what to do.

It is very important that the expert HPT be advised as early as possible of a possible problem so they can assess the situation and offer you advice.

When should I suspect an outbreak?

An outbreak should be SUSPECTED if there are:

- **Two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the setting within 14 days**
  or
- **Increase in background rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19**

A suspected outbreak should be reported to the local HPT who will undertake a public health risk assessment to determine whether there is an outbreak.

Note that settings with increased rates of respiratory illness should also be alert to the possibility that this could be due to COVID-19 and contact their local HPT for further advice.

How do I contact the local HPT if I suspect an outbreak?

- **Immediately** inform your local NHS board HPT, using the local contact details found here (click on link for relevant no.): _____
- Ensure the workplace has a nominated point of contact to liaise with the Health Protection Team

What else should I do if I suspect an outbreak?

- Continue to follow the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Implement your COVID Business Continuity Plan (if available).

- Your local Health Protection Team will conduct a rapid investigation and undertake a risk assessment. You will need to work with them to do this. The HPT will advise on the most appropriate actions to take.

- Cooperate with your local Health Protection Team who will undertake a risk assessment and conduct a rapid investigation. They will advise on the most appropriate action to take.

- Depending on the risk assessment outcome, the Health Protection Team may establish an Incident Management Team (IMT) to help manage the situation.

- The IMT will lead the Public Health response and investigations, and will work with you to put appropriate interventions in place and advise/support communication processes.

What interventions might be put in place to control the outbreak?

Your Health Protection Team and Incident Management Team will work with you to identify the appropriate measures. The first step is to review implementation of core standard preventive measures and to ensure that they are in place and effective.

What else may I need to do?

The Health Protection Team or Incident Management Team will declare when the outbreak is over.