

Coronavirus (COVID-19): manufacturing sector guidance

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Overview

This guidance is for manufacturing sites in Scotland. It came into effect on 26 May 2020, extending until further notice and applies to companies manufacturing in Scotland.

Details of the most recent changes to the guidance are as follows:

Date	Section updated	Reason for update
08/03/21	Overview, Where We Are Now, Shielding	Strategic Framework update
08/02/21	Car and Vehicle Sharing	Transport Scotland update
8 & 19/1/21	Where We Are Now, Assessing the Risk, Working from Home, Information for People Who Previously Had to Shield , Supporting Employees Mental Health, Childcare, Shared Worker Accommodation	Mainland Scotland entering temporary lockdown 5 January 2021

The guidance sets out the Scottish Government's expectations on the steps manufacturing businesses will take to ensure the safe operation of workplaces during the pandemic. This is provided as guidance only and does not amount to legal advice. Businesses may wish to seek their own advice to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.

We have worked with employers and trade unions from the manufacturing sector to ensure that this guidance is evidence-based, fair and ethical, clear and realistic. As each workplace is different it is for individual businesses to work with trade union or workforce representatives to determine how best to apply this guidance in their circumstances.

This guide is underpinned by a spirit of collaborative working between companies and their workforce. Throughout the term companies and trade union or workforce representatives is used in that context, recognising that companies have a legal responsibility to maintain workplace health and safety and must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if there is not one, a representative chosen by workers. Companies cannot decide who the workforce representative will be.

This guidance is one of a set of documents about how to work safely in different types of manufacturing workplaces and establishes a framework for ongoing action to ensure those workplaces continue to change and operate safely. The guidance emphasises in particular the importance of undertaking a robust and ongoing risk based assessment with full input from trade union or workforce representatives, and to keep all risk mitigation measures under regular review so that workplaces continue to feel, and be, safe.

Publication of this version of the guidance reflects the publication of the updated [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Strategic Framework on 23 February 2021..](#)

All manufacturing businesses can continue to operate, subject to adhering to physical distancing measures that apply and having robust risk assessments and enhanced hygiene measures in place. It is important we continue to collectively mitigate against any potential further surge in infection, to minimise the further harm to our health, society and economy. To judge what restrictions can be changed, we have considered a range of evidence on the progress of the pandemic in Scotland, using the principles set out in the Strategic Framework and our long-established commitment to fair work, which was set in the context of the current crisis in a [joint statement with the STUC](#) (which we have taken into account when developing this guidance).

Ongoing manufacturing has provided an invaluable source of good practice on adaptations made to working arrangements due to COVID-19 to ensure a safe place of work. This experience is taken into account in the remainder of this guidance, which sets out our minimum expectations across five key areas companies should have considered as part of their planning for a restart and ongoing production while minimising the transmission of the virus:

- assessing risk: involving the workforce in a risk based approach to a safer workplace
- workforce planning: supporting those who should come to work, and those who should not
- operational guide and checklist: changing the workplace environment to protect your workforce
- deliveries, distribution and visitors: protecting your workforce and those who come on-site
- training and compliance

The regulator for health and safety at work is the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who will utilise the powers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure people at work are protected.

If you can suggest ways we can improve the guidance please contact the Advanced Manufacturing Policy Team at MIDAMP@gov.scot.

Where we are now

In a statement to Parliament on 23 February, the First Minister gave details of the updated Strategic Framework. The Framework sets out the initial priorities and an indicative timeframe for cautiously easing the restrictions that came into force on 5 January 2021. This is when mainland Scotland entered into a temporary lockdown, with some islands remaining at [Level 3](#), as a result of a sharp increase in the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 in Scotland, and the significant risk which the increased transmissibility of the new virus variant poses. Under law, the Scottish Government must review that lockdown at least every three weeks.

All manufacturers can remain open and operational during this lockdown. This decision was made based on a balanced consideration of the four harms, and evidence around the effectiveness of the measures in place to allow safe operation of manufacturing sites.

However, due to the serious risk posed by the new variation of the virus, the decision to keep all manufacturers open and operational is under constant review. The decision to keep all manufacturers open relies on the continued excellent employer and employee compliance that has allowed manufacturing to operate during this pandemic. It is vital that employers review existing Risk Assessments and that employers and employees comply with all guidance, both within and outwith the workplace, to avoid business closures.

The lockdown introduced new measures, and tightened existing measures, including:

- a legal requirement to stay at home unless someone has a reasonable excuse to leave
- a legal requirement to work from home where possible
- schools moving to remote learning model for most children
- that people can meet no more than one person over the age of 12 from outwith their (extended) household outdoors or in the few indoor public places that remain open
- that no-one is allowed in or out of Scotland unless it is for an essential purpose

Read [the Health and Safety Executive advice on home working](#) and [the Scottish Government guidance to support the continuation of homeworking](#).

Working from home as a public health measure has been a crucial factor in mitigating the transmission of the virus in the general public and is an effort we must continue. Our current position is that anyone who is able to work from home, must do so. It will only be a reasonable excuse to leave your home to go to work, if that work cannot be done from home. We now need every business to work with their workforce to look again at their operations, and to make sure that every single function that can be done by people working at home, is being done in that way.

Additional advice on shielding has been published, and information for people on the shielding list can be found in the [Assessing Risk](#) section.

The manufacturing sector has continued to operate under the 2 metre physical distancing rule throughout the pandemic. Businesses must ensure that at least 2 metre physical distancing is applied to all parts of a workplace, including staff canteens, and all communal areas including entrances, exits, break rooms, smoking areas.

Physical distancing duties are set out in Schedules 1 – 5 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions and Requirements) (Local Levels) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. A person who is responsible for carrying on a business or providing a service must take all reasonable measures:

- to ensure that a distance of 2 metres is maintained between any persons on the premises (except between members of the same household or a carer and the person assisted by the carer)
- to ensure that they only admit people to its premises in sufficiently small numbers to make it possible to maintain that distance
- to ensure that a distance of 2 metres is maintained between any person waiting to enter the premises (except between members of the same household or a carer and the person assisted by the carer)

On 16 October 2020, regulations were introduced requiring anybody in a workplace canteen to wear a face covering when they are not seated at a table - for example if they are queueing, or are entering or leaving the canteen or going to the bathroom. These regulations were extended on Monday 19 October, requiring face coverings to be worn in communal areas (in general terms, any area where a person is not at their workspace and may mix with others), such as corridors.

Manufacturing is vital to the Scottish economy, accounting for almost 170,000 jobs and contributing over half of Scottish exports and business expenditure on research and development. The work of Scotland's manufacturers and their workforces that are, and have been, involved in supporting essential sectors throughout this COVID-19 crisis demonstrates the sector's innovation, skills and expertise. Manufacturing's commitment to keeping the country running is hugely appreciated, with particular praise due to companies who have scaled-up or repurposed to manufacture vital supplies for the health sector.

We want a strong manufacturing sector to help drive Scotland's economic recovery and future prosperity. Companies should therefore use this guidance to continue to inform engagement with trade union or workforce representatives to further develop and maintain workplace specific plans as the sector moves into restarting, allowing sufficient time for that joint work. Plans should be fully developed, with measures put in place and tested where possible. They should have been implemented upon restart. Decisions on the phasing of a sector wide return for manufacturing have been made in line with the Route Map.

The Scottish Government has initiated a broad collaborative process to develop sectoral guidance which will underpin that managed transition and provide clarity and confidence to industry, employees and local communities, protect public health and concurrently optimise economic recovery. Aligned with that we continue to review and enhance testing and enforcement arrangements, and ensuring that the guidance is coherent and connected, recognising for example transport and other inter-dependencies.

We are working with the UK Government to align our approach and guidance, where possible and on the basis of scientific evidence on the levels of infection in Scotland. This guidance is intended to work alongside UK Government guidance and aims to assist employers, businesses and their workforce ensure a safe working environment and readers will recognise consistent themes within this guidance with the UK Government's [Working Safely during Covid-19](#) publications.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Scottish Government's [business and physical distancing guidance](#), which still applies.

Vaccination

The vaccine represents an important step in our progress towards a safer return to workplaces. Evidence to date shows it will reduce both mortality and morbidity, however we do not know the extent to which the vaccine reduces transmission of the virus from an infected person to others. That is why it is important for businesses and employees to act responsibly, follow [FACTS](#) and continue to align their approach with published guidance.

[Further information and guidance available at Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination.](#)

Business support

There has been an unprecedented package of support announced from both the Scottish and UK Governments to support businesses which includes retailers. This support should help many employers preserve their business, maintain jobs and pay their workers throughout this crisis. Information on this support is available on the [Find Business Support website](#). We urge all businesses to make use of this. In the event of closures for manufacturing premises all available support measures must be utilised to protect the jobs and incomes of workers.

Grants are available for businesses that are required by law to close or to significantly change operations as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. Find out who is eligible and how to apply [here](#).

Assessing risk

As a result of the significant risk posed by the new variant of the virus and the new restrictions imposed as a result of mainland Scotland entering Lockdown on 5 January, all employers should revise existing Risk Assessments to ensure that any new or increased risks are identified, recorded and mitigated.

Information about involving the workforce in a risk based approach.

- [joint working](#)
- [implementation phases](#)
- [dynamic assessment](#)
- [implementing physical distancing measures across all areas of the business](#)
- [utilising expertise](#)
- [understanding the risks, building confidence, supporting wellbeing](#)

As a minimum we expect:

- a risk based approach to be followed to protect health and safety of employees and ensure the longer-term economic viability of the business
- employees to be fully engaged in that process, through trade union or workforce representatives

Joint working

This guidance has been developed in collaboration with industry and trade unions on the basis that both have essential roles to play in planning safe operations for restart. Companies that have successfully been able to maintain or increase production of essential goods during the COVID-19 crisis have highlighted the importance of joint working. Protecting the health of employees has been at the heart of this joint approach, which is fundamental to establishing shared confidence around the safety of returning to places of work and supporting a recovery in productivity. Use of the accompanying [operational checklist](#) should aid this process, though the specific circumstances of individual businesses needs to be considered.

Implementation phases

Manufacturing businesses and employees are familiar with a risk based approach to managing work and onsite activity. Carrying out a robust risk assessment with full workforce involvement (of recognised trade union safety representatives or relevant employee safety representatives) will identify the practical measures that can be put in place to minimise the spread of the virus at a workplace level. The assessment should include a phased implementation timetable, structured broadly as follows:

Planning

Plans to operate a workplace should be developed in consultation with the workforce and updated on an ongoing basis. That planning must be based around risk assessments and safe systems of work - [physical distancing, hand washing](#), and fair

work principles and be designed to enable safe operation that allows the business to trade while protecting employee health and well-being.

Preparation

Physical distancing and hygiene measures require work to be carried out before any restart of business– for example screens, one-way systems, 2- metre zones, canteen re-arrangement, PPE provision, hand sanitisers etc. Then briefings and inductions into the new ways of working. These all take time and require resourcing and commitment.

Pilots

Experience confirms the value of trialling the new way of working before a fuller restart or scale-up of activity is attempted, so a limited-scale pilot to test systems, find weaknesses and make improvements is essential.

Dynamic assessment

A risk assessment or adoption of mitigation measures should not be a one-off exercise, rather part of a regular and ongoing dialogue and feedback loop between employers and trade union or workforce representatives to identify what measures are working, where refinements are possible and any gaps remaining. Reviews of measures and risks should be frequent, with daily assessments of progress initially not unusual. The open and ongoing engagement between trade union or workforce representatives should enable adjustments to be made quickly and smoothly at the relevant stage, including potentially tightening workplace restrictions or reducing numbers onsite if the dynamic risk assessments indicate this is necessary.

Implementing physical distancing measures across all areas of the business

COVID-19 is a new risk that must be incorporated into workplace risk assessments, and employers must therefore carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment if they have not already done so. It is critical that risk assessments cover all parts of the business where there may be a risk of COVID-19 transmission between staff and/or customers.

It is therefore important for all staff to understand that these risks do not apply only to production areas. Careful consideration must also be given to other parts of the workplace where there is scope for people to congregate in groups and physical distancing and hygiene measures will be needed to prevent the virus from spreading.

Employers will need to assess the high risk areas that apply to their own circumstances, taking account of arrangements for transporting staff to the workplace, and communal spaces on site such as toilet facilities, staff and changing rooms, canteens, smoking areas and hygiene stations. These are all areas where there are opportunities for staff to congregate and it is therefore essential for employers to ensure these are considered in the development of plans for controlling the spread of COVID-19.

Staff should also be reminded of the mandatory requirement to wear face coverings in indoor communal areas, including staff canteens and corridors. Where there are existing mitigation measures in place, such as 2 metre physical distancing and/or (partitions) staff are supported to wear face coverings as an additional mitigating measure should they choose.

Utilising expertise

Companies should ensure their health and safety professionals and representatives have the skills, training and knowledge to understand the risks associated with COVID-19. Where companies and their workforce do not have access to these skills in-house they should together explore external support options to put in place appropriate mitigation measures, for example through their trade association, health and safety consultancies or trade union health and safety representatives. All can help companies understand the risks associated with different activities and situations within individual companies and offer the support managers and workers may require.

Understanding the risks, building confidence, supporting wellbeing

Returning workers may have some level of apprehension about how safe they may be and they may require reassurance and demonstration that measures recommended in workplace risk assessments have been put in place to ensure safety. Employers should ensure that communication with staff on COVID-19 risks and measures for preventing transmission are refreshed to take account of any updates to guidance and ensure levels of knowledge and understanding are maintained and that messages are not becoming stale. Updates should be provided at team meetings (weekly is suggested), and reinforced through all available channels for staff communications (e.g. TV screens/digital signage, intranet and newsletters).

Language is a critical factor when communicating with employees the importance of COVID-19 controls. It is important to ensure language is not a barrier. Simple, clear messaging should be used to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups for which English may not be their first language and those with protected characteristics such as visual impairments. [Posters, leaflets and other materials](#) are available online which can be used to reinforce these messages throughout the workplace. [NHS Inform](#) also provides general advice on COVID-19 in a range of translated formats which will help to support employees for whom English is not their first language.

A clear message from employers and trade unions is that building and maintaining employee confidence is vitally important and a challenge that should not be underestimated.

Information for people on the shielding list

We are providing this information, advice and tools to help you make choices about your day to day activities and interactions including work.

Specific guidance for those on the shielding list can be found at [support for shielding on mygov.scot](#). This includes information on:

- working in current restrictions
- financial assistance
- Chief Medical Officer letters

If you are not attending your workplace due to the advice from the Chief Medical Officer, your employer, at their discretion, may be able to furlough you through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which has now been extended until April 2021. If you are furloughed, HMRC will give a grant to your employer to cover 80% of your normal salary, and your employer will need to pay National Insurance and pension contributions. I would encourage you to discuss this directly with your employer.

More information on starting and ending furlough can be read [here on ACAS website](#).

Otherwise you may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay, Universal Credit, or other benefits, during this period. To find out further information about what benefits you may be entitled to, speak to your employer, [visit gov.uk for information on benefits](#) or contact Citizens Advice Scotland. Some employers may offer additional financial support for employees who are off work for coronavirus-related reasons which may be set out in your terms and conditions of employment. To find out what financial support you will get, you should contact your employer.

The Job Retention Scheme does not apply if you are self-employed or to any income from self-employment. However, you may qualify for support under [the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme](#).

Workforce planning

Information about supporting those who should come to work, and those who should not.

- [working from home](#)
- [pilot measures](#)
- [employee health and wellbeing](#)
- [childcare](#)
- [information for people who previously had to shield](#)
- [Test and Protect](#)
- [outbreak management](#)

As a minimum we expect:

- working from home to continue, where possible
- health factors to be considered in any phasing of who returns to work, with employees living in vulnerable or shielded households only expected to return when new safe working environment measures have been implemented and a return to onsite work is consistent with individual medical advice
- new manufacturing arrangements to be tested and modified through collaboration between employers and employees
- companies to take travel to work and childcare considerations into account in decisions around a phased restart

Working from home

Anyone who is able to work from home must do so.

Working from home as a public health measure has been a crucial factor in mitigating the transmission of the virus in the general public, and we must continue to work from home where at all possible.

Our current position is that anyone who is able to work from home, must do so. Under the new lockdown laws, it will only be a reasonable excuse to leave your home to go to work, if that work cannot be done from home.

We are asking that every business works with their workforce to look again at their operations, and to make sure that every single function that can be done by people working at home, is being done in that way. Only the minimum number of people needed should be on site to operate safely and effectively.

For information on working from home, read the [Coronavirus Guidance on Working from Home](#).

Pilot measures

As implementing new enhanced safety measures may take time to embed, it is good practice to pilot measures, either within part of a facility and / or with a proportion of

the workforce at lower risk from the virus, before rolling out across the workplace as a whole. Travel to work and childcare considerations for individual employees should be taken into account by companies, in discussion with trade unions or employee representatives, before deciding which individuals to involve in pilots and/or a phased restart.

Employee health and wellbeing

Employers should ensure the organisation culture is inclusive, with the aim that every employee should feel that they have returned to a supportive, caring and safe environment. The pandemic has had an unequal impact across the workforce, as different employee groups, and individuals, will have been affected in diverse ways according to factors such as their job role, and demographic/personal circumstances. Therefore, it is important organisations foster a fair and inclusive working environment that does not tolerate discrimination. There is also a risk of victimisation of those infected, suspected, or more vulnerable to COVID-19, which should be addressed. The following guides from the Health and Safety Executive provide useful sources of information:

- [working safely during the coronavirus outbreak - a short guide](#)
- [talking with your workers about working safely during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

There are other issues that employers need to consider to ensure workplaces are inclusive. The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) have updated their guidance for employers to make it more relevant to decisions about return to work. They can also provide advice on a range of issues such as non-discrimination, communication with employees on equality issues, adjustments for disabled people, support for pregnant employees, flexible working for those with caring responsibilities, support for employees affected by domestic abuse, how to deal with harassment at work, and mental health issues. Close the Gap, through their Think Business Think Equality toolkit, have produced guidance on [employers supporting employees affected by domestic abuse](#) during the pandemic and a more [general online self-assessment resource for employers on domestic abuse](#). The RNIB also provide [information on employing partially sighted and blind workers during COVID](#), and a [COVID risk assessment tool](#).

Individual health circumstances and [protected characteristics](#) should be an on-going consideration and discussion with employees after a return to work. This should recognise the protective measures required to minimise health risks to vulnerable or shielded workers or those living in vulnerable or shielded households, exploring whenever possible how these staff can work from home. Consideration of health circumstances and protected characteristics should be given to this as part of the risk assessment process. Permission should be sought from individuals before collecting any information on health conditions of those within their household.

Planning may have identified that ongoing physical distancing measures required to reduce the spread of the virus mean the number of employees able to be accommodated safely in the workplace is limited. The workforce may have questions or concerns after returning to work. Companies are encouraged to work with trade

union or workforce representatives to enable individuals to work from home while self-isolating, if appropriate. If able to work from home, employees should continue to do so after a period of self-isolation has ended.

Pay for workers who are sheltering, self-isolating, sick or balancing care responsibilities is likely to be a source of concern for employees. Companies should work with trade union or workforce representatives to provide ongoing guidance to workforces on processes and support for individuals affected by these issues. Again opportunities to facilitate home working where feasible should be actively pursued and maintained.

Mental Health

The main message employers should give to employees is: if you need help, help is available. It is important that everyone holds onto the reality that this is temporary, and things will get better.

It is important that companies realise that the change and uncertainty arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and employment are impacting on people's mental health and wellbeing, and that changing circumstances, including the rapid change to home working and furloughing, or returning from furlough, may create new challenges and demand for mental health support.

It can be challenging for workers to raise concerns about mental health when working remotely, especially if their living arrangements are not conducive to working from home. Some workers may find that working from home, additional caring responsibilities brings additional stress. The anxieties that some may feel about continuing to attend work or returning to workplaces is also likely to be a factor.

Companies and trade union or workforce representatives should be alert to this and direct anyone experiencing mental health issues towards available support.

In October, Scottish Government launched the [Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan](#), which outlines our response to the mental health impacts of COVID-19. In this plan, we recognise the economic and employment impacts that COVID-19 will have on the public's mental health.

We would encourage employers and employees to use the resources available in the Scottish Government's [Clear Your Head](#) campaign, which provides practical advice for maintaining good mental health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic, and directs those who need extra support to helplines operated by NHS 24, Breathing Space and Samaritans.

If someone you know is struggling with persistently poor mental health, we would encourage them to speak to their local GP. Alternatively, out of hours support can be provided by [Breathing Space](#), Scotland's national helpline for those experiencing low mood, depression, or anxiety, on 0800 83 85 87 - or [NHS24](#) on shortcode 111.

Companies should also acknowledge the range of factors likely to cause stress or anxiety amongst employees, ranging from living with lockdown arrangements to concerns about travel, schools, caring responsibilities and relatives impacted by the virus, amongst others. This may have implications for mental health with managers encouraged to be conscious of how these factors may impact on the well-being of individual staff members. Companies and trade union or workforce representatives should be alert to this and direct anyone experiencing mental health issues towards available support.

Childcare

Where schools and childcare facilities are closed, workers may experience difficulties attending work due to being unable to secure appropriate child care.

This will affect working parents with children at home and we encourage employers to be flexible and provide support to employees during this time.

There are already some good examples within the sector. Some companies have successfully trialled and implemented flexible working practices, and additional support measures.

Where a worker is unable to attend work as a result of school or childcare facilities closing, and home working or flexible working is not an option, check whether you are entitled to use the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#).

Definitions of key workers that were agreed with local authorities during the previous wave of the pandemic will continue to apply. The definitions of key workers and support for children of keyworkers can be found in the [Scottish Government Coronavirus guidance for schools, local authorities and parents](#) which sets out plans for a phased start to the 2021 spring term. Any queries regarding key worker status should be directed to the appropriate local authority.

Test and Protect

[Test and Protect](#), Scotland's approach to implementing the 'test, trace, isolate, support' strategy is a public health measure designed to break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the community.

The NHS will test people who have symptoms, trace people who may have become infected by spending time in close contact with someone who tests positive, and then support those close contacts to self-isolate. That means if they have the virus they are less likely to pass it on to others. Organisations will play a vital role in ensuring that their workers are aware of and able to follow the public health advice.

Organisations should follow public health guidance if a worker becomes unwell with coronavirus symptoms at work, see further information below. The person should leave work to self-isolate straight away and, if possible, wear a face covering on route and avoid public transport.

Organisations should direct workers to NHS Inform or, if they can't get online, call 0800 028 2816, to arrange to get tested.

Until they have been tested and told if it is safe to leave home, organisations should make sure that staff do not have to, or feel that they have to, come in to work. Workers can request an isolation note through NHS Inform.

From 14 December people who have tested positive for the virus will need to self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days. NHS contact tracers will interview them and get in touch with people they have been in close contact with, and tell them they must self-isolate for 10 days. If organisations are informed by a contact tracer that they should isolate, organisations should help them to do so straight away. They may feel well, as the virus could still be incubating when they are asked to isolate. Some people who are asked to isolate may not become unwell, but they must stay at home and self-isolate for the full 10 days. Organisations can ask them to work from home if they are able to and they are not unwell. Organisations should not ask someone isolating to come into work before their period of isolation is complete, in any circumstances.

In order to support Test and Protect, it is important that employers have clear and robust records of staff working on each shift, the make-up of teams and details of any visitors to the site, in case of need to contact trace. It is advisable for employers to identify a single point of contact to act as liaison with Health Protection Teams for any matters relating to Test and Protect, reporting potential outbreaks and seeking advice on matters relating to COVID-19 illness in the workforce.

Where Infection Prevention Control measures have been utilised such as protective screen or use of PPE the contact tracer will conduct a risk assessment to identify contacts at risk. The priority is to public health in order to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19.

See Scottish Test and Protect website and [NHS Inform](#) for further health advice and information including on duration of self-isolation.

Outbreak management

Organisations should suspect an outbreak if there is either:

- two or more linked cases (confirmed or suspected) of COVID-19 in a setting within 14 days - where cross transmission has been identified

or

- an increase in staff absence rates, in a setting, due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

If an organisation suspects a COVID-19 outbreak, they should immediately inform their local [NHS board Health Protection Team \(HPT\)](#). The organisation may be then

contacted by them, as they may get information from NHS Test & Protect or other sources.

In the event of an outbreak:

- continue to follow 'General Guidelines' to reduce risk, as detailed above
- the local Health Protection Team will undertake a risk assessment and conduct a rapid investigation. They will advise on the most appropriate action to take
- staff who have had close contact with case(s) will be asked to self-isolate at home. In some cases, a larger number of other staff may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, the local health protection team will take this into account in determining whether closure of the whole setting will be necessary.
- depending on the risk assessment outcome, the Health Protection Team may establish an Incident Management Team (IMT) to help manage the situation
- the Incident Management Team will lead the Public Health response and investigations, and work with the organisation to put appropriate interventions in place

To control an outbreak the Health Protection Team and Incident Management Team will work with the organisation to put appropriate interventions in place. These will generally include ensuring that the preventive measures described in 'General guidelines to prevent spread of COVID-19' (detailed above) are fully implemented. Other measures may include:

- cleaning in the setting - for cleaning and waste management, refer to [guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings for maintaining hygiene](#)
- consider wider testing of affected population and staff
- information - ensure that staff (and other relevant people) are aware of what has happened and the actions being taken
- closure - may be done following advice from the Health Protection Team and Incident Management Team or the business may make their own decision on closure ahead of this advice as a precaution or for business continuity reasons

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

For more information on what to expect during an investigation of an outbreak in a manufacturing business, read the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): investigation of outbreaks in manufacturing businesses – guidance for employers.](#)

Operational guide and checklist

Information about improving the workplace environment to protect your workforce.

- [safe workplace planning and communications](#)
- [enhanced hygiene](#)
- [physical distancing](#)
- [face coverings](#)
- [shift patterns](#)
- [dealing with emergencies](#)
- [travel to work](#)
- [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- [temperature checks](#)
- [Legionella testing](#)
- [security](#)
- [COVID symptoms within the workplace](#)
- [safe home working](#)
- [shared accommodation](#)
- [checklist](#)

As a minimum we expect:

- enhanced health and safety measures to be in place upon return to work, including physical distancing guidance and hygiene measures, generally and at bottleneck situations
- the mandatory wearing of face coverings in staff canteens and communal areas by staff members
- safe travel to work arrangements to be considered as part of a risk assessment, with any relevant adjustments adopted

Safe workplace planning and communications

It is vital steps are taken to ensure a safe working environment and related workforce confidence. This is best done through early, regular and ongoing engagement between companies and trade union or workforce representatives. As it will take time to complete the necessary risk assessment, identify the relevant mitigation measures and put those measures in place, the engagement between employers, trade union or workforce representatives should have started well before a planned production restart date (or ramp-up where production of essential goods has continued at less than full capacity).

It is important everyone understands the measures taken to establish the safe working environment as this is likely to have a significant impact on workforce confidence. Being and feeling safe will play an integral role in supporting a recovery in productivity levels.

Enhanced hygiene

Enhanced hygiene measures should be a key plank of workplace-specific measures to create a safe working environment, including for example:

- sanitiser and hand-washing facilities at key points, including on entry and exit points
- additional sanitiser and handwash facilities around communal areas
- regular cleaning of work equipment and work stations including considering how often and where deep cleans may be required
- minimising the use of touchpoints throughout buildings, including exploring where possible how digital processes or systems may replace the need for face to face discussion

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is the other key plank of workplace-specific measures to create a safe working environment. Factors companies should have considered include:

- facility layout and signage with clear marking of two metre boundaries around the workplace and workstations and signage which reinforces expectations of employees at relevant points. (As English may not be the first language for everyone onsite companies should consider how best to use visual material to reinforce messages)
- limiting access to parts of the workplace required by an individual to do their job as this will limit the chances for interaction with others
- staggering entry and exit times to prevent bottlenecks arising as people arrive or leave
- staggering break times and adjusting canteen arrangements to reduce opportunities for larger numbers of staff to interact on a face to face basis
- splitting the workforce into specific teams to avoid cross-team contamination and provide a level of operational resilience in case someone in one team develops COVID-19 symptoms

considering opportunities to introduce additional technology support and systems to assist in managing the safe working practices and in particular physical distancing

Face coverings

Following the First Minister's statement to Parliament on 15 October 2020, [regulations](#) were laid to bring the rules on wearing face coverings in workplace canteens into line with rules in restaurants and cafes. From 16 October, anybody in a workplace canteen will have to wear a face covering when they are not seated at a table - for example if they are queueing, or are entering or leaving the canteen or going to the bathroom. From 19 October, face coverings must be worn in other communal areas, defined generally as an area where persons are away from their workspaces and mingle or gather, such as corridors, passageways, stairs, lifts, staff rooms, training rooms, changing rooms, or entrances.

The responsibility for complying with these measures rests with individuals. However, employers are urged to take steps in their workplaces to explain and promote the new regulations. The new rules are a proportionate additional step, which will help employees to keep themselves and their colleagues that bit safer.

It is important to note the difference between face masks and face coverings. Face coverings are not classified as PPE, such as surgical masks, which are used in some settings like hospitals to protect wearers against hazards and risks. Face coverings are instead largely intended to protect others, not the wearer, against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19.

We have issued guidance on the [personal use of face coverings](#), which relates to use of face coverings by members of the public in specific circumstances. This advice is not intended as an infection prevention and control measure for the workplace where there are other health and safety considerations and measures in place, and must not be used as an alternative to physical distancing and hygiene controls. Physical distancing, environmental cleaning along with good hand washing and respiratory hygiene, are the most important and effective measures we can all adopt to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The wearing of facial coverings must not be used as an alternative to any of these other precautions. The Scottish Government also encourages use of re-usable, washable face coverings, rather than single use masks.

Shift patterns

Companies may develop or implement plans to change shift patterns to both protect the workforce and optimise productive capacity. This could include considering opportunities to reduce the need for travel at peak times and opportunities for flexible working patterns. While this might help boost production it requires proper negotiation with trade union or workforce representatives if it involves a change in employee terms and conditions.

Dealing with emergencies

Protocols for dealing with emergencies, evacuations and accidents will be impacted by the need to maintain physical distancing, while individuals who would normally lead or coordinate site responses in such situations may be amongst those working from home. Emergency, evacuation and accident response processes therefore should have been considered to ensure effective arrangements are in place. Everyone onsite should be familiar with new processes.

Travel to work

Health Protection Scotland (HPS) have provided [COVID-19 information and guidance for general \(non-healthcare\) settings](#), which reiterates that people should not travel if they exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms. The HPS advice and any subsequent safe travelling advice outlined in [Transport Scotland's Transition Plan](#),

which sets out guidance on travel and transportation, should be factored into company decisions on returning to work.

All arrangements for those staff who need to travel to work should be reviewed and consideration given to the need for additional measures to ensure these staff are able to maintain physical distancing when using public or private transport and are applying effective hand hygiene before and after journeys. For employees who live a reasonable distance from their workplace, the best and advised option is to walk or cycle.

Employers currently offering staff transport may need to re-schedule trips or offer an enhanced service to facilitate appropriate physical distancing. In light of the requirements, managers should also discuss with staff the need to review other travel arrangements, such as car sharing.

Car and vehicle sharing

Employees should be encouraged to avoid sharing a vehicle with anyone from another household, unless they absolutely have to. In situations where sharing a vehicle is unavoidable, such as travelling to work:

- all employees should be instructed not to use shared transport if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 and should stay at home and follow government guidance on self-isolation. Encourage drivers or designated persons to check employees prior to boarding vehicles to ensure those who have suspected symptoms do not travel;
- limit the number of people from another household, ideally no more than 2. This may result in organising more trips with fewer people;
- where possible, restrict car sharing to groups of people who use the same work area;
- all employees should be advised to wear face coverings in shared vehicles (as required when using public transport, and provided it does not compromise driver safety in any way) and perform hand hygiene before and after leaving the vehicle;
- vehicles should be well ventilated (i.e. by keeping the windows open), and passengers should sit as far apart as possible, with the passenger in the back seat, diagonally opposite the driver and aiming for 2 meter physical distancing between occupants;
- shared vehicles, including minibuses, should be cleaned regularly using gloves, with particular emphasis on handles, buttons, seat belts and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces.

Full advice on car and vehicle sharing can be found on [Transport Scotland website](#).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The HPS guidance also offers advice on the use of PPE, confirming workplaces should use PPE consistent with local policies and in line with measures justified by a risk assessment.

Both the Scottish Government and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommend a risk based approach focused on a hierarchy of control which seeks to eliminate risks, combat risks at source, adapt workplaces to individual needs, ensure adequate staff training around processes to manage the risk and then use PPE where required. Where PPE is deemed necessary, an adequate supply and quality must be maintained which is provided free of charge to workers and which must fit properly.

Temperature checks

We do not recommend the use of temperature checking employees as a means of testing for COVID-19 due to the low efficacy rate of this method.

Further information about the [reliability of temperature checking](#) as a test for COVID-19 can be found on the MHRA website.

Legionella testing

There is an increased risk of Legionnaire's Disease when buildings have been out of use, or not running at full capacity. This is because water systems may become stagnant when not in use, increasing the risk of legionella within water supplies. Many public and office buildings have been closed during the COVID-19 crisis, making legionella a legitimate concern as lockdown restrictions are eased.

The Health and Safety Executive have published [advice on the risk of Legionella in buildings which are closed or running with reduced occupancy during the COVID-19 crisis](#) on the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) website at

Building owners or operators should undertake a health and safety check of buildings, and deep cleaning prior to reopening where necessary, to mitigate risks. [More information can be found on the HSE website.](#)

Security

The interpretation and use of any guidance should be considered in line with normal protective security operations and practices. Organisations should consult with and involve their security departments in the interpretation and implementation of the guidance. In particular, security should be considered in any revised risk assessment.

Under no circumstances is it advised to remove, or alter, or reduce existing protective security measures without providing clear recommendations (e.g. from the National Technical Authority/police CT specialists) on how to maintain effective protective security.

This should extend to measures not primarily intended to provide a protective security benefit, but nonetheless doing so, for example removal of street furniture that could make moving or queueing pedestrians more vulnerable to vehicle-as-a-weapon attacks. Security staff should remain focused on security duties. Where

COVID-19 creates additional staffing requirements, e.g. for queue management employers should ensure additional suitable staff resource is made available. Employers should ensure security staff feel safe, e.g. having access to appropriate PPE and hand-washing facilities, and that they are able and confident to raise any concerns.

Further detailed guidance on managing security risks throughout COVID-19 can be found on the [Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure website](#) and the [UK Government website](#).

COVID symptoms within the workplace

The virus is expected to remain in the population for some time, even after lockdown restrictions have been eased and people begin to return to work. This will cause anxiety for people who will also want to understand how any outbreaks in the workplace will be handled. The approach of employers should be consistent with the guidance available on the [Scottish Government's Test and Protect web pages](#). As part of risk assessments companies should explore with trade union or workforce representatives how to respond should anyone develop symptoms while at work, including whether it is possible to identify any particular parts of the site the individual may have accessed or equipment used while symptomatic. As part of this consideration should be given how best to monitor health of all individuals in a workplace.

Employees have a responsibility to ensure they adhere to overall [COVID-19 advice](#) which says people with symptoms should remain at home and self-isolate. Companies and employees should remain in regular communication throughout any period of self-isolation with companies encouraged to work with trade union or workforce representatives to enable individuals to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.

Safe home working

Home working will be new to many and may have been implemented at pace, without normal health and safety planning to ensure people have suitable working arrangements and equipment. Companies should consider that, and how to best support working from home (for example, provision of laptops, mobile phones, video conferencing services etc.). Read [the Health and Safety Executive advice on home working](#) and [the Scottish Government guidance to support the continuation of homeworking](#).

Shared accommodation

Seasonal and migrant workers may rely on shared, self-catering accommodation for work. While the recommended position is for individual, self-contained accommodation for each employee, this is not always possible. Workers should only share accommodation:

- where it is not practicable for them to commute to and from home

- where separate accommodation is unavailable or impractical
- where assurance to workers and employers has been provided by accommodation providers that risk assessments have been undertaken and appropriate safety measures are in place and workers will comply with physical distancing and health measures

Read [more guidance on worker's accommodation](#).

Read [guidance on hotels, B&B, caravan accommodation etc.](#)

Read [guidance for employees who work in Scotland but are living in temporary guest accommodation in England](#).

Checklist

We have developed a [checklist to support companies implement this guidance](#). The actions in the checklist should be fully considered and implemented where possible as part of procedures to ensure a safe workplace. Organisations who wish to increase workforce or public confidence are encouraged to display the checklist to help to communicate actions being implemented or undertaken.

The Scottish Government has also published the COVID-19 Advice Card for Workplaces which can be found [here](#).

Deliveries, distribution and visitors

Protecting your workforce and those who come on-site.

As a minimum we expect companies:

- to provide early clarity to their supply chain about honouring of orders in the system, linked to new production capacity and consumer demand/contracts
- to treat all site visitors including contractors, suppliers and those making deliveries, as if they were employees, ensuring they are offered the same protections and are expected to follow the same rules.

Early supplier engagement

The global nature of COVID-19 means it may have impacted on both current demand for some goods manufactured in Scotland and on normal supply chain relationships. Early engagement and continuing conversations with suppliers is recommended to understand how well placed suppliers can provide inputs at the level required to meet a company's expected demand after restarting production. This should include considering any additional logistical issues associated with the current functioning of international supply networks.

During the COVID-19 pandemic minimising pressures on supply chains is paramount to ensure that suppliers at risk are better able to cope with the current crisis and ensure service continuity and delivery during and after the outbreak. Companies are encouraged to work with suppliers to understand the specific pressures they face and identify potential solutions on a case-by-case basis, including providing early clarity on the treatment of existing orders.

Site visitors

Many sites, especially larger sites, may normally have a number of contractors and visitors not employed by the company running the site. This presents increased risk of virus transmission if people do not adhere to the same interpretation of rules. To address this risk companies should consider limiting site access to those who need to be there for safe operation, ensuring safe working practices and production related activities and implementing a permit to work system for contractors and external visitors who still need to access the site. This should set out requirements for how everyone behaves on a site including entering and leaving the site, clarifying responsibilities for all around maintaining good hygiene and physical distancing.

Drivers accessing and leaving sites present another challenge and potential source of interaction or transmission to manage. Companies manufacturing essential goods like food manufacturers can provide good practice advice based on experience of continuing to operate at the current time. Measures introduced to maintain a safe working environment onsite, developed with suppliers and delivery companies has included looking to remove the need for documentation to change hands where possible by adopting electronic processes as well as reducing access to contact points by requiring drivers to remain in vehicles or providing access to facilities like

toilets which are only for external visitors, therefore avoiding risks of cross contamination to or from the manufacturing company's staff.

Training and compliance

- [workforce training](#)
- [apprenticeships and training providers](#)
- [compliance](#)

As a minimum we expect:

- training around processes and working environment expectations to be provided for all staff returning to work
- companies to establish measures, in collaboration with trade union or workforce representatives to monitor compliance with relevant regulations and processes put in place to enable a safe return to production

Workforce training

Every workplace should look and feel substantially different for employees. Physical distancing and enhanced hygiene will change how workplaces operate. Training will therefore be essential to build a common understanding of requirements within the new working norm, instilling confidence that changes put in place contribute to a safe workplace. In particular, training may be required to help people adjust to new processes for working from home, or to adjust when returning to work following a period of furlough.

Training methods should ensure effective delivery of relevant overarching and company specific measures and expectations of staff while onsite, in a way which maintains physical distancing. Companies should consider, as part of their risk based planning, how training can be safely delivered, especially if elements are normally outsourced to third parties. Visual aids may be required as part of the training and for ongoing guidance and communications. Some companies involved with the manufacture of essential goods have initiated a universal induction process covering their new, enhanced hygiene and physical distancing measures. This induction process can help demonstrate companies are taking the COVID-19 risks seriously, building confidence amongst the workforce that they are operating in a safe workplace while also reinforcing the importance of individual employee responsibilities.

Apprenticeships and training providers

Apprentices can return to work at the same time as their co-workers. For specific concerns regarding the safe return to work for apprentices, there is [information and support](#) on the Skills Development Scotland website and apprentices can speak to an advisor directly on 0800 917 8000.

It is important to ensure there is a functioning training infrastructure to support economic recovery and the sustainability of apprenticeship programmes. For those training providers and assessors that are providing continuity of contracted services for apprentices, learners and employers in the workplace during the pandemic must adhere to the applicable sectoral guidance.

Compliance

Employers should also put in place, with trade union or workforce representatives, robust local arrangements to monitor compliance with new operational arrangements. Remedial actions should flow from that monitoring, and be augmented by advice, guidance and support from external enforcement authorities.

It is vital for workers to have confidence in the steps being taken by their employers. Employers should look to establish processes to allow employee feedback on physical distancing and safety protocols, enabling employees to input on areas of concern and for employers to act upon these concerns.

A single point of contact has also been established for trade union or workforce representatives to help the Scottish Government understand how all COVID-19 workplace guidance is being implemented, and to help shape and refine that guidance based on the real experience of workers in the workplace. The mailbox can be contacted through scottishtradeunioncovidenquiries@gov.scot.

This contact is not intended to be a reporting mechanism for potential breaches of legislation. To ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken when needed, any potential breaches of legal requirements must be raised with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The regulator for health and safety at work, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is constantly applying their expertise to ensure people at work are protected, utilising the powers at their disposal under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. HSE is treating COVID-19 as a workplace health issue with regard to the protection of workers from infection. HSE can and will use the Health and Safety Work Act to ensure physical distancing in the workplace in relation to workers. HSE can be contacted by phone on 0300 003 1647 or online at [HSE contact form](#)

Where HSE identifies employers who are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health guidance to control COVID-19 health risks to workers, HSE will consider a range of actions to improve control of workplace risks including the provision of specific advice to employers through to issuing enforcement notices. These actions will be taken under existing health and safety law. A framework agreement between Police Scotland and local authorities supports the referral of complaints about lack of reasonable physical distancing at work.

Next steps

Review and future development

This guidance extends until further notice. It sets out both our current advice and guidance for the manufacturing sector in helping to handle COVID-19, and it reflects the latest iteration of our Route Map towards operating safely within overarching public health considerations.

We will continue to develop our plans to address the wider issues needed to support manufacturers to operate safely. The [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): framework for decision making – Scotland’s route map through and out of the crisis](#) provides an indication of the order in which we will continue to carefully and gradually lift current restrictions. All of this will be evidence led.

Physical distancing, hand hygiene, and other critical behaviours will be essential in each area to ensure public and workforce confidence.

This guidance has been reviewed on 8 March 2021 and will continue to be reviewed as required in consultation with the sector’s employers and unions. Please ensure you use the latest version.

It is for individual businesses in conjunction with trade union or workforce representatives to decide how best to successfully adopt and adapt guidance for their individual circumstances.

Related information

Manufacturing specific guidance

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): investigation of outbreaks in manufacturing businesses – guidance for employers](#)

Scottish Government advice and support

[Summary of COVID-19](#) developments in Scotland

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): framework for decision making](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): framework for decision making – Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): business and physical distancing guidance](#)

Further guidance on physical distancing can be found on [NHS inform.](#)

Advice on substantive [support packages available for business and their employees](#)

COVID-19 information and [guidance for general \(non-healthcare\) settings](#)

[Test and Protect – advice for employers](#)

[List of all guidance](#) for workers and employers for creating and maintaining a safe workplace. A list of [Scottish Procurement Policy Notes \(SPPNs\)](#) can be found on gov.scot.

SPPN 4/2020 covers procurement related issues as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak.

SPPN 5/2020 sets out guidance for public bodies on options for payment to their suppliers to ensure service continuity during the current COVID-19 outbreak.

Legislation

[Coronavirus \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#)

[The Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Additional Temporary Measures\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2020](#)

Fair Work during the COVID-19 crisis

Please see our [Joint Statement with the STUC](#)

Other sources of COVID-19 information

UK Government guidance on [working safely during COVID-19](#) in different workplaces

The [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) have provided advice related to COVID-19 and [ventilation and air conditioning](#) during the pandemic

[Healthy Working Lives](#) website provides examples of risk assessment templates and other practical tools for organisations and workers

[Food Standards Scotland](#) provide guidance for food business operators and employees.

Further detailed guidance on security can be found at <https://www.cpni.gov.uk/staying-secure-during-covid-19-0> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office>.

To contact Police Scotland for Protective Security advice, please contact your local Counter Terrorism Security Adviser:

- North: SCDCTSAberdeen@Scotland.pnn.police.uk
- East: SCDCTSAEdinburgh@Scotland.pnn.police.uk
- West: SCDCTSAGlasgow@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

Manufacturing Guidance – Operational Guide (COVID-19) Checklist and Summary

This checklist is designed to be used in conjunction with the [manufacturing guidance](#). Please ensure you read this guidance. A summary of the key points from the guidance follows this checklist.

Actions to take

Full risk assessment

- Must complete and implement full risk assessment across all areas of the workforce (including non-production areas where communal gatherings more likely, such as canteens, staff rooms, corridors, exit/entry area, etc), in consultation with employees, employee representatives or trade unions.
- Consider individual occupational risk assessments for individual employees, particularly those on the shielding list who have been issued letters by the Chief Medical Officer, employees with underlying health issues and employees whose household includes vulnerable people or who care for vulnerable people.

Revise all workplace risk assessments and work processes

- Working with your workforce, trade unions and workplace representatives, revise all risk assessments to reassess, record and mitigate any new risks identified as a result of the new variant of the virus. As part of revising risk assessments:
 - Look at your operations and make sure that every single function that can be done by people working from home, is being done that way.
 - Consider health factors when making any decisions around who should be at work.

- Identify how your employees will travel to work – in particular identify any employees who are required to car share, share company transport or use public transport. Consider whether it is practical to keep a record of those who car share.
- Consider what further physical distancing, enhanced hygiene or other safety measures can be introduced to the workplace.

Shielding

- Identify all employees on the shielding list who have received letters from the Chief Medical Officer. These employees should not attend work in any areas which are in Lockdown.
- Consider whether these employees can work from home and look at what support you can put in place to support home working.
- Where home working cannot be done, consider any alternatives that are available to you, such as additional annual leave or special paid leave. If there are no alternatives, consider whether your employee is eligible for furlough.

Childcare or other caring issues

- Undertake process to identify all staff affected by any closure of schools and childcare facilities.
- Undertake process to identify all staff who have vulnerable people in their household, or who are required to care for vulnerable people.
- Consider what flexible support you can put in place to support the employee to remain at work, such as, flexible working hours or additional annual or special paid leave.
- Where employees cannot work as a result of childcare or caring for a vulnerable person, consider working from home. If an employee is unable to

work from home due to caring responsibilities, consider whether your employee is eligible for furlough.

Home working

- Undertake process to identify all job roles that can be undertaken from home and put plans in place to support homeworking (e.g. monitoring wellbeing of staff, correct equipment to work successfully, process for keeping in touch and ensuring access to work systems).

Staff support

- Plan and implement appropriate engagement structures to ensure employee engagement on testing and modification of site measures is developed collaboratively and regularly informed by shared experience.
- Provide written or verbal communication of the latest guidelines to staff, develop communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.
- Engage with workers and worker representatives through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people are informed about new procedures, and are able to access facilities, i.e. handwashing facilities at wheelchair height, verbal direction for those unable to see floor markings or signage, etc.
- Consider support mechanisms to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workforce, supporting employees who may be anxious for many reasons relating to the changes resulting from Covid-19. This includes concerns or fears about:
 - remaining at work or returning to work
 - childcare or other caring responsibilities

- workplace closures
- loneliness as a result of social restrictions
- Consider support mechanisms for staff who are self-isolating as a result of being a workplace or community contact of a positive COVID-19 person
 - encourage testing where a member of staff who is self-isolating develops symptoms
 - checking on staff who are self-isolating to identify how they are coping and whether they need any advice or assistance

Physical distancing measures

- Decide upon the number of staff that your workplace premises can reasonably hold to maintain 2m physical distancing. Take into account total floor-space as well as likely pinch points and busy areas and then implement relevant measures.
- Physical distance marking:
 - Use tape or paint to mark 2m distances on the floor to help people comply with physical distancing regulations.
 - Use 2m floor markings for other common areas such as canteens, break rooms, toilets, showers, lockers and changing rooms and in any other areas where queues may typically form.
 - Ensure canteen or break room tables and chairs are set out in a manner that allows staff to sit 2m away from each other. Consider using markings to identify which tables and chairs should not be used.
- Signage should be used to communicate key health and safety points, such as hygiene, physical distancing and that there is no unintended impacts on disabled people or people with caring responsibilities. Messages should be clear and easy to understand.

- Lifts should only be used by disabled people, for essential purposes, or on a one person per lift basis where possible.
- If the premises has more than one access point, introduce a one-way system at entry and exit points if possible.
- Stagger arrival and departure times of staff to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace, if this is an issue.
- Where possible, take measures to reduce the potential crowding of people particularly in areas where communal gathering may be more likely (canteens, staff rooms, corridors, exit/entry points, etc) - for example by having more entry points for employees into the workplace or change opening hours.
- Review layouts to let employees work further apart from each other where possible.
- Identify high risk areas such as pinch-points like entrances or stairs where close physical contact is likely and/or obstructions force close physical contact. Take measures to reduce risk, including using drop-off points or transfer zones.
- Consider opportunities to reduce unnecessary movement within buildings, such as restricting access to certain areas and use of technology (e.g. telephones, radio transmitters)
- Corporate vehicles (e.g. work minibuses) – plan in place to ensure adequate physical distancing, such as empty seats, limiting numbers

Mandatory use of face coverings in canteens and communal areas of workplace

Using the risk assessment process:

- Identify which areas of your workplace are:

- areas where employees undertake tasks in the course of their employment, such as production/assembly lines, packing, delivery or storage areas, testing or quality control areas, waste disposal areas, offices
- canteens
- workplace communal areas, such as, passageways, stairs, lifts, staff rooms, training rooms, changing rooms, entrances or any other areas where people might mingle or gather

□ Consider where face coverings are required to be worn:

- identify in which of the above areas measures to comply with 2m physical distancing, or other measures to keep one individual separated from another, such as partitions, are not possible. Pay particular attention to any areas where employees are prone to gathering in groups, particularly at times where they may be more lax about physical distancing.
- consider whether the two broader exemptions to the requirement to wear face coverings apply to any area where employees undertake tasks in the course of their employment:
 - would the wearing of a face covering cause a material risk of harm when undertaking tasks in the course of employment?
 - if undertaking food handling tasks, consider the specific face covering exemption for this area as per guidance issued by Food Standards Scotland
- where employees are required to undertake work (where that work **cannot** be done from home) in an office environment, consider whether there will be any requirement for employees to wear a face covering in

any area of the office. For more general information for safe office working see [Safer Working Guidance](#).

- identify the ability of individual staff members to wear a face covering in any area of the workplace, taking into account any individual health or other issues - this should be done via an [individual risk assessment](#).

□ Consider:

- whether it is practical or appropriate for employees to use their own face coverings in these workplace areas, or whether it is more practical or appropriate for you to supply face coverings for your employees.
- whether these face coverings have to be stored in certain places when not in use, and where these will be stored
- the logistics of employees having to retrieve face coverings, and the possibility of employees having to travel through communal areas, without their face covered, to retrieve these
- how used face coverings will be disposed of or washed safely and hygienically
- using signs which clearly identify each designated workplace area, the rules that apply regarding the wearing of face coverings in each of these areas, and at which point these should be worn

□ Enforcement:

- Consider both employer and employee legal responsibilities under Employment and Health and Safety Law
- Consider how you will use these laws to ensure health and safety is complied with to provide a safe working environment for everyone
- Consider how you will communicate this message to your employees

Staff Safety: Other methods of reducing transmission

- . Provide hand sanitiser in locations around the workplace, including at entry/exit points, reception desks, communal areas and workstations
- Provide a nearby supply of hand sanitiser for employees to use when boarding vehicles or handling deliveries when handwashing is not practical and ensure staff have access to and are able to regularly wash their hands.
- Increase ventilation where possible and where it is safe to do so. i.e. do not keep fire safety doors open. See [COVID-19 Ventilation Guidance](#)
- Stagger break times and make use of outdoor space for breaks where possible.
- Use a consistent pairing or grouping system where employees work on shifts together.

Visitors

- Maintain a record of all visitors, if this is practical
- Consider physical distancing protocol for on-site visitors:
 - Provide clear guidance on physical distancing and hygiene expectation, for example, inbound delivery drivers or safety critical visitors, on arrival, for example, signage, visual aids, and before arrival, for example, by phone, on the website, by email.
 - Establishing host responsibilities relating to COVID-19, providing any necessary training for people who act as hosts for visitors.
 - Review entry and exit routes for visitors and contractors to maintain physical distancing.
 - Coordinating and cooperating with other occupiers for those working in facilities shared with other businesses, including with landlords and other tenants.

- Limit the number of visitors at any one time
 - Limit visitor times to a specific time window and restrict access to required visitors only
 - Determine whether schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people
 - Revise visitor arrangements to ensure social distancing and hygiene, for example, where someone physically signs in with the same pen in reception areas
- Consider the requirement for visitors to wear face coverings in workplace communal areas
- Consider signs at visitor entrance points that identify the rules that apply regarding the wearing of face coverings when visiting your workplace
 - Consider how you will make your suppliers and their delivery drivers aware of your rules concerning the wearing of face coverings in your workplace

Enhanced hygiene

- Staff should be encouraged to use contactless or cashless payment where possible, if required in staff canteens.
- If staff have to use touch-based security devices such as keypads to enter the business through controlled areas, either seek alternatives or implement cleaning and diversification arrangements.
- Use signage, tannoy announcements and any other relevant communication tools to remind staff to maintain hygiene standards. i.e. hand washing and coughing etiquette.
- Encourage staff to wash their hands by providing hand sanitation facilities at entry and exit points and in any common areas.

Cleaning

- Work areas, staff rooms, canteens and equipment should be cleaned frequently between uses. A cleaning schedule should be designed and staff trained to implement the schedule.
- Frequent touch points should be identified and disinfected regularly including all objects and surfaces that are touched regularly. Adequate disposal arrangements should be made available for any additional waste created.
- Workspaces should be kept clear and all waste should be removed. All personal belongings must be removed from work areas at the end of a shift, i.e. water bottles, mugs, stationary etc.
- Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean.
- Consider whether additional waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection can be provided.
- Where shower and changing facilities are required, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that physical distancing is achieved.

Manufacturing Guidance – Summary

To support the manufacturing sector to restart safely under Phase 2 of the Scottish Government's [routemap](#) out of lockdown, [specific guidance](#) was published on 26 May. We are continually working with employers and trade unions from the manufacturing sector to ensure that this ongoing guidance is evidence-based, fair and ethical, clear and realistic. It sets out our expectations on what manufacturers of all sizes and sub-sectors need to consider, based on five key areas for planning:

- (1) assessing risk;
- (2) workforce planning;
- (3) operational guide;
- (4) deliveries, distribution and visitors; and
- (5) training and compliance.

As a minimum, we expect manufacturers to:

- Take a risk-based approach to protect health and safety of employees and ensure the longer-term economic viability of the business (1);
- Engage employees fully in that process, through trade union or workforce representatives (1);
- Revise all work processes to ensure all those who can work from home are working from home, (2);
- Consider health factors, in particular those of employees who are on the shielding list, when making any decisions around who should be at work (2);
- Test and modify new arrangements through collaboration between employers and employees (2);
- Take travel to work and childcare considerations into account in decisions around who should be at work (2);

- Ensure enhanced health and safety measures are in place (3);
- Consider safe travel to work arrangements as part of a risk assessment (3);
- Provide early clarity to their supply chain about honouring of orders in the system (4);
- Treat all site visitors including contractors, suppliers and those making deliveries, as if they were employees (4);
- Consider how training around processes and working environment expectations to be provided for all staff (5); and
- Establish measures, in collaboration with trade union or workforce representatives to monitor compliance with relevant regulations and processes put in place to enable a safe return to production (5).

The key message is that it is essential companies undertake a robust risk management approach, developed and actively maintained through collaboration between companies and trade unions or employee representatives.

An operational checklist has been developed as an aid to support efforts to fully consider the range of activities needed to ensure safety in the workplace.

Our approach is a mixture of regulation and guidance:

- The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 came into force on 26 March, imposing the two metre rule on all businesses and service providers that remain open. Physical distancing rules are now set out in the Schedules 1 – 5 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions and Requirements) (Local Levels) (Scotland) Regulations 2020.
- On 16 October, regulations were introduced requiring anybody in a workplace canteen to wear a face covering when they are not seated at a table - for example if they are queueing, or are entering or leaving the canteen or going to the bathroom. These regulations were extended on Monday 19 October,

requiring face coverings to be worn in communal areas (in general terms, any area where a person is not at their workspace and may mix with others), such as corridors.

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is treating COVID-19 as a workplace health issue, taking action where necessary to ensure compliance with the relevant public health guidance to control COVID-19 health risks to workers.