



**How we are dealing with the Covid-19  
crisis and going back to the office**

PM  M



# OUR CHARTER FOR INTERACTIONS WITH OUR CLIENTS AND VISITORS

At PM+M the health and wellbeing of our team along with clients and visitors with whom we interact is paramount. That's why we want to be clear about what safety measures we have in place in our offices, what we expect of you when you visit us and what we and you should expect if our team come to visit you. We have prepared detailed risk assessments for our offices and these are available for inspection on request.

## VISITING OUR OFFICES - WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:



We are limiting the number of meetings which can take place in our offices so that meeting rooms and facilities can be thoroughly cleaned between uses. As such, we will explore with you whether the meeting needs to take place face to face or whether an online alternative such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams is more appropriate.



Hand sanitiser and hand washing facilities will be available for your use.



Social distancing and hygiene measures are our main protective measures. Strict hygiene measures are in place, along with procedures to minimise unnecessary contact and maintain social distancing as well as ensuring that anyone with any symptoms of illness stays away from the office.



We are also limiting the number of our team members who are working in the offices to essential working only, with the majority of our team working from home in line with Government guidance.



Our team will be wearing a face covering when away from their desks.



We have carried out a thorough risk assessment and implemented safety measures in accordance with the Government guidance and specialist health and safety advice.



We may choose to open windows or doors of meeting rooms to allow appropriate ventilation but will of course be mindful of confidentiality of matters being discussed.



The reception team will direct you to the toilet facilities which are being reserved exclusively for visitor use.



You will be shown to a meeting room with chairs arranged to allow appropriate social distancing during the meeting.

## VISITING OUR OFFICES - WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU:



We are currently accepting visitors by appointment only. As such, we would be grateful if you could contact us in advance to agree appropriate arrangements before visiting us, whether that be to see a member of our team or just to drop off records or documents.



Please consider whether you need a face to face meeting or whether an online alternative via Zoom or Microsoft Teams will work for you.



We ask that anyone with any illness or symptoms, no matter how mild, stays away from our offices. We will refuse entry to anyone who appears to have any relevant symptoms and hope you will understand the need for us to do this.



We require you to wear a face covering when visiting our offices.



Please sanitise your hands before entering our reception area and maintain an appropriate social distance from our reception team and anyone else that you encounter.



Please continue to maintain social distancing from all our team and other meeting attendees.



All our offices have QR codes visibly displayed, please can we request you scan the codes on the NHS Covid track and trace app upon your arrival.



**We hope that this is all clear and that you will understand the need for these measures. If you have any questions or concerns before or during your visit, please do ask us.**

## OUR TEAM VISITING YOUR PREMISES

It is essential that our team are protected and safe when they visit our clients' premises and that we understand your safety procedures and are comfortable that they are sufficient.

It is also essential for your protection that our team understand what behaviour and compliance with safety measures that you require of us. We will bring our own equipment and do our best to minimise unnecessary contact with your team, equipment and premises. Please work with us to agree how best we can do that, as we believe that full and open communication is vital in order to ensure everyone's safety and effective working together.

As such, we will ask for details of the measures that you have in place for the protection of our team, along with details of what you require of the team, so that we can agree an appropriate plan before we visit your premises.

We hope you will understand that we reserve the right for our team to withdraw from site if they feel that their safety is being compromised in any way.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU IN CONTINUED HEALTH.**

# Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020

We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19

## • FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER •

- ✓ We have carried out a **COVID-19 risk assessment** and shared the results with the people who work here
- ✓ We have **cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures** in line with guidance
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **help people work from home**
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **maintain a 2m distance** in the workplace
- ✓ Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to **manage transmission risk**

Employer PM+M Date 10/06/20

Who to contact: Kirsty Pilkington Safety Representative  
(or the Health and Safety Executive at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) or 0300 003 1647)



# COVID-19

# RETURN TO WORK

# RISK ASSESSMENT

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**Assessed by:** Kirsty Pilkington

**Authorised by:** Jane Parry

**Next review date:** 10 December 2020

**Date:** 10 June 2020

**Date:** 10 June 2020

**Persons at risk:** Team members, vulnerable team workers, pregnant team workers, visitors, clients, contractors and members of the public

# EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES IN PLACE (ACTIONS ALREADY TAKEN TO CONTROL THE RISK)

## 1. HAZARD - POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

All our team members who can work from home are doing so.

All team members are aware to follow Government stay at home guidance if they start to show coronavirus symptoms.

Signage is displayed before entering the office reminding everyone that they should not enter the office if they are displaying coronavirus symptoms or are feeling ill in any way.

All team members are aware to follow the Government stay at home guidance if anyone in their household starts to display coronavirus symptoms.

All team members are aware to follow Government guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure. Signage has been placed around the office.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Limit travel where possible to reduce potential exposure.

All team members that are vulnerable are individually assessed.

If someone becomes unwell in the workplace with coronavirus symptoms they will be sent home immediately and asked to follow Government stay at home guidance. They should return directly to their home. If they use public transport, they should try to keep away from other people and catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue.

If a team member has helped someone who was taken ill, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell with symptoms of coronavirus.

Current Government advice is that we would not need to close the office or send team members home.

If we did have someone in the office that started with symptoms, we would organise a deep clean as priority.

The number of team members in the office has been reduced through home working with only essential team members working in the office.

The office has been carefully mapped out to ensure that we have a series of designated working desks which allow social distancing to be maintained for safe working. This mapping ensures we have no face to face working. Capacity in the office will be at 25% of its normal occupancy. Attendance at the office is being centrally managed.

Work stations are cleaned and disinfected Monday to Friday before team members arrive so that they are available for use each morning.

All team members use their own keyboard and mouse.

Phone handsets will be cleaned at the start of each day and team members are advised to wipe down before and after use. However, team members can continue to keep incoming calls diverted to their mobile. Use of Microsoft Teams is encouraged for internal calls and headsets for use on Teams and Zoom calls will be offered to all team members and provided where required.



Entrance and exit measures:

- Staggered start times/lunch breaks/finish times and flexible working has been made available.
- External door pad is disabled during normal working hours.
- Internal door will remain locked for security purposes and will require key code for entry. Reception team will buzz team members in/out when possible to reduce a contact point.
- Signing in book has been removed from reception and the reception team will sign team members in/out of the office.

There are plenty of hand washing facilities throughout the office. Additional sanitisation units have been purchased. Hand sanitiser gel is available before entering/leaving.

All team members are regularly reminded to wash their hands thoroughly and as often as possible throughout the day.

- Upon arriving and leaving the work place
- Before and after eating
- Before and after using shared items

Plenty of hand sanitiser gel is available throughout the office along with tissues and antibacterial wipes.

Team members are aware they should avoid touching their face, eyes and mouth.

Team members are only to only bring into the office essential items and are advised to leave all non-essential items in cars or at home.

Coat stands have been removed from the office. Rules have been relaxed around coat storage. Coats are to be stored on the back of chairs or in lockers.

Social distancing requirements are fully implemented throughout the whole office ensuring a 2-metre distance is maintained between team members. Signage placed around the office as a reminder.

Government guidance is that face coverings are not needed where social distances can be maintained. Our policy is that we only work in the office if we can maintain social distancing. It is appreciated that a team member may prefer to wear their own face covering if they so wish, however they will still be responsible for the safe and hygienic usage and be expected to observe and adhere to social distancing.

Face masks will only be provided for exceptional circumstances where social distancing cannot be maintained. For example, when administering First Aid.

Fixed groups of team members maintained.

Locations and floors all have allocated zones – i.e. kitchen and toilets.

Team members encouraged not to make non-essential trips around the office. Encouraged use of phone/Microsoft teams/e-mails.

Floor markings displayed around hot spot communal areas i.e. printers to ensure social distance maintained.

Social distancing mat in place for reception to keep people 2 metres from the reception desk. Reception have the power to remind people not to breach social distancing.

Clear desk and self-sanitising policy in place. Regular reminders are sent round the office.

Potential "hot spots" identified and measures put in place:

- Printers – printer wipes placed next to all printers. Note on printers. Team reminded to wipe down before use and after use.
- Bins – lids removed
- Toilets – allocated in zones with one-way system in place
- Kitchens – allocated in zones with a maximum capacity of one
- Internal doors – propped open
- Banister on stairwell – only use if necessary and is regularly wiped down

High touch shared items such as whiteboard marker pens and remote controls have been removed from use.

Where possible, equipment sharing is prohibited and minimised by introducing safe working procedures. For larger items such as the printer and hole punches they are to be wiped down before and after use.

No cash payments are received for services. All payments are made either by cheque, by electronic means or over the phone.

### **VENTILATION**

Good ventilation of all workspaces.

Air-conditioning and desk fans are not to be used.

Team encouraged to open windows.

### **STAIRCASE AND LIFT**

Pedestrian traffic flow at central staircase considered. Team advised to stop before ascending or descending and to give way to anyone already using the stairs. Ideally there is no passing on the stairs but if passing is unavoidable then it is recommended this is done with faces turned away from each other.

The lift is also available for use and is limited to one-person occupancy.

### **KITCHENS**

One-way system in place for main kitchen upstairs with all kitchens restricted to one-person occupancy.

The upstairs kitchen has been highlighted as our highest risk area.

The oven and hob are not to be used. Microwaves and kettles can be used but must be wiped down both before and after use.

There is plenty of soap, hand sanitiser and antibacterial wipes/spray for use in all kitchens.

Congregation spaces have been taken out of use. Our main chill-out room is out of use and is now used as part of a one-way system to and through the main kitchen.

Chairs and tables in chill-out area marked up as not in use and chairs removed from main kitchen.

Food can be eaten at desks, meeting rooms or high tables.

Lunch breaks can be staggered and are to be agreed on an informal basis rather than enforcing a formal system.

The team have been advised to avoid doing "tea rounds".

No sharing of cups, plates or utensils. Team members can bring their own cutlery if they prefer. All crockery to be immediately washed in hot soapy water, dried and put away after use.

Tea towels have been removed from kitchens and replaced with paper towels that are to be disposed of immediately.

### **SHOWERS**

As Government advice is to encourage cycling or running to the workplace our showers will remain available for use. Showers will be cleaned first thing in a morning. Cleaning materials will be available and team members are asked to clean down the area after use. All shower mats have been removed. Towels and belongings are to be put in bags and stored away not left hanging to dry.



## **PAPERWORK AND POST**

PM+M runs a document management system. Only essential documents are printed where use of electronic means is not practicable. Where possible documents are sent by electronic means rather than in hard copy.

Where posting of hard copy is essential, post is collected by Royal Mail and control measures are in place to maintain social distancing.

When external post is received it is scanned onto our system and unless the original is needed it is then shredded. All outside packaging is disposed of.

## **DELIVERIES TO THE OFFICE**

Clients books and records can be dropped off at the office with prior approval. Team members are aware to avoid touching their face and to wash or sanitise their hands immediately after touching.

In order to keep the number of deliveries to the office to a minimum –

- Stationery supplies are ordered monthly
- We are not allowing any personal deliveries to the office

## **COMPANY VAN**

The company van will only be used by James Cooper unless agreed in advance and wiped down before and after use.

## **CLEANING REGIME**

Our cleaning regime has been reviewed. The office is thoroughly cleaned with approved products out of hours Monday to Friday, prior to the team arriving. Our cleaning contractors are following HSE guidance on cleaning and disinfection.

Clear desk policy in place so that desks can be thoroughly cleaned.

High touch areas are cleaned throughout the day. Regular tannoy announcements are made throughout the day to remind the team to regularly wipe down their own work space.

Measures in place to ensure we have a 30-day supply of all cleaning and hygiene products.

## **2. HAZARD- EMERGENCY FIRST AID & FIRE WARDENS**

### **FIRST AID**

The office is a low risk environment. Minimum First Aid cover maintained throughout reduced occupancy. In addition, reception, as a responsible individual, should take responsibility to call an ambulance should one be required if there is no First Aider on-site.

First Aid box contents are checked monthly.

It is unlikely that First Aid could be administered whilst adhering to social distancing. Gloves and masks have been placed with First Aid kits for both our First Aiders and the individual being treated.

Posters are up throughout the office detailing who our First Aiders are along with their photos. Posters also advise where First Aid boxes are located with a reminder to complete an accident form for any accidents in the workplace.

### **FIRE WARDENS**

Fire wardens reviewed for minimum capacity.

Visitors are kept to a minimum and it is the responsibility of the person holding to meeting to be responsible for their visitor.

### **3. HAZARD - PROPERTY/PREMISES**

As the office has not been closed, we do not need to consider legionella. Showers are run for 15 mins each week.

Maintenance checks are up to date:

- Fire system maintenance. Weekly check of the fire alarm continues to take place.
- Fire extinguishers.
- Emergency lighting testing and maintenance.
- Lift

### **4. REDUCED OCCUPANCY & MODIFIED WORKING PROCEDURES – LONE WORKING PROPERTY/PREMISES**

Guidance issued to advise that no team member should be working alone in the Blackburn office.

### **5. TRAVEL TO WORK AND FOR WORK**

We have minimised non-essential travel. We always consider how we can do a job remotely before either requesting to work in the office or work out at clients premises.

Our team are to travel separately. No car sharing allowed.

We have considered the risks to our team from travelling to work on public transport to ensure latest Government guidance is followed. Public transport usage is discouraged and avoided where possible.

### **6. WORKING/VISITING CLIENTS PREMISES**

Policy prepared for working or visiting client premises in view of Covid-19.

### **7. VISITORS TO OUR OFFICES**

All non-essential visitors or clients are not permitted to visit the office. Access is restricted to essential deliveries/ collection of goods, essential client meetings, contractors undertaking statutory works and emergency maintenance work.

All visitors to the office are centrally managed and booked into a suitable meeting room.

Signage is displayed before entering the office reminding everyone that they should not enter the office if they are displaying coronavirus symptoms or are feeling ill in any way.

Hand sanitiser gel is available before entering and upon leaving the office.

Reception team will buzz approved visitors into the office and sign them in.

Magazines and marketing literature have been removed from reception.

All meetings rooms are noted with maximum occupancy to allow for social distancing and have hand sanitiser gel available.

Visitors movement around the office is restricted to the allocated meeting room and allocated visitor toilet. Visitors are not allowed access to team areas.

Only one meeting per day is to be held per meeting room to allow for a full clean of the room before further use.

## **VISITOR CHARTER**

Our visitor charter is available at the beginning of this document, on our website and will be issued to all visitors in advance of them attending our office. All visitors are asked to confirm they have read and confirm their agreement to comply.

This charter has been drawn up to protect the safety of our team along with all visitors to the office. The charter explains what safety measures we have in place in our office and what we expect of any visitors.

## **8. PREPARING OUR TEAM**

As the majority of our team are working from home, we are maintaining regular contact whether that be through Microsoft Teams, phone calls or Zoom meetings.

### **HOME WORKING**

Team reminded to familiarise themselves with the working from home policy. All risk assessments have been completed.

We appreciate the importance of a suitable area to work from which allows good lighting and ventilation. If any additional equipment is needed the team have been asked to contact HR.

Office chairs are also available for use at home to ensure good posture.

Team members are reminded about good posture and taking regular breaks. Weekly desk-based exercise sessions are organised with engagement encouraged.

### **Return to work**

Anxiety of returning to the workplace has been mitigated through change management and actively involving and engaging the team in changes to how we work and implementing a new way of working.

- Team survey
- Focus group
- New ways of working document drawn up to deal with the current Covid-19 crisis and our remote working situation

Consideration will be given as to how individuals can benefit from returning to work whether that be a productivity or from a mental health and social perspective.

Consideration will also be given as to why our team can benefit from continued working from home and the ability to flex their hours for health reasons, family commitments, reduced commute time or it might be that technology enables working from home without loss of productivity.



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