

Your Homes Newcastle
Corporate Risk Assessment
Working Safely During Coronavirus (COVID-19)
June 2020

Your Homes Newcastle take the health, safety and wellbeing of employees as one of its highest priorities, we carry out our work in a way that does not create risks for others, such as members of the public, employees of other agencies, and contractors, as far as reasonably practicable, this document gives our approach to the risks presented by COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the ability of YHN to deliver services, yet key business areas have adapted and remained operational to ensure the needs of our customers are met, in a manner that recognises and follows guidance from government policy, public health guidance and sector best practice.

The corporate risk assessment in this document sets out the measures YHN will put in place, to meet government policy and public health guidance, there will be further service specific risk assessments, where required, to address specific risks identified.

In response to government guidance and recovery plan, YHN are committed to the following key principles as part of our transition phases;

1. Wherever possible staff will work from home
2. Prior to any staff returning to the workplace the following steps must be completed;
 - Authorisation from YHN executive team must be given before any team returns to work.
 - Any staff returning to work receive a re-induction, to ensure they are fully aware of any new working practices affecting the role they fulfil.
 - Any staff returning to work are consulted on the proposed workplace arrangements to ensure they are aware of changes to working practices and given an opportunity to raise any concerns/questions.
 - All work locations to have nominated persons to monitor, and reinforce where necessary, social distancing and hygiene measures.
 - Trade Union representatives consulted in any planned return to work and given opportunity to raise any concerns.

- Risk assessments be carried out for service areas and be shared with staff.
3. Clear and regular communications will be provided to staff to share health and safety information and updates.
 4. YHN recognises the right of its employees to choose to wear face coverings as highlighted in the Government's guidance for public transport & some shops.
 5. Where required by public health guidance relevant PPE will be provided.
 6. All risk assessments will be published on the staff intranet and regularly reviewed and updated.

GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT



Corporate Risk Assessment for risk to all Employees from COVID-19

Date Completed: 21st May 2020

Next review: To be reviewed fortnightly or following any updated government guidance

Health & Safety Advice (where required): **Compliance Manager**

Activity with risk potential:

Date Section Amended:

Contact with other Employees and members of the public.

Contact with surfaces contaminated with Coronavirus.

Significant risks arising from the activity:

Risk to staff of becoming infected with Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Risk of staff passing on the infection to other staff, contractors and customers

1. General Corporate Control Measures:

- Employees identified as being at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable) defined on the NCC Coronavirus webpage Guidance note 1, should shield at home until this is advised by Public Health England/other medical professional as no longer required.
- For employees identified as being vulnerable defined on the NCC Coronavirus webpage Guidance note 1, managers should assess the employee's duties against the individual's particular health condition/s and circumstances and apply the following hierarchy:
 1. Can the employee work productively from home?
 2. Can the employee be located in a separate room/office/behind a physical screen.
 3. Can robust social distancing (2 metres separation) be maintained at all times from other employees and members of the public.
 4. Where the above measures aren't achievable provide appropriate PPE relevant to the task, and seek guidance from the Compliance Manager on other PPE needs
- Employees should contact their manager for further advice if they have any concerns about whether they should be at work, due to their particular circumstances
- **Other Employees should homework** where they can do so productively if necessary, with additional IT equipment/support and/or, at the manager's discretion, a temporary change in tasks where this is possible. They should only go into a work base/location with their manager's express prior permission and having completed an appropriate re-induction.
- Non-essential tasks should be avoided where social distancing cannot be achieved.
- Where tasks are needed to deliver an essential service/activity to keep the business running and 2 metres separation can't be maintained for reasons of safe working, face to face working must be kept to the shortest possible time (ideally to seconds and for no more than a couple of minutes).
- If this cannot be achieved the task should be assessed by the manager, who may seek advice from the Compliance Manager. Options including the use of appropriate PPE will be considered.
- Any worker displaying symptoms of Coronavirus (C19) must not come to work, instead they must:
 - Contact their line manager and arrange a C19 test where possible. If tested positive they must inform their line manager and should not return to work for a minimum of 7 days plus 2 days clear of symptoms, (some persistent coughs would not count in this context if they were otherwise well at that point)
 - If testing isn't available/appropriate they must stay at home and self-isolate for the appropriate period (check the NCC Coronavirus webpage, Guidance note 2)

Social Distancing

It is expected that employees will comply with Public Health England (PHE) guidance on social distancing by remaining 2m apart from other people at all times, wherever possible, inside buildings, outside, during meal/rest breaks, on arrival and departure.

The following are examples of options which will be introduced where relevant and practical to manage social distancing:

- Restrictions to limit/reduce number of persons (employees and public) in work locations (buildings/meeting rooms/kitchens/toilets/lifts etc) based on the available space.
- Use of alternative entrances/exits to reduce pinch points
- One-way systems in and around buildings and sites for pedestrians/vehicles
- Floor marking to delineate footpaths and direction of flow/travel.
- Spacing useable desks in offices and meeting rooms to a minimum of 2m in all directions.
- Staggered start/finish and break times.
- Employees to be briefed on all arrangements before returning to work and reminded to maintain 2m distance including breaktimes/lunchtimes, arriving/leaving work etc.
- Where 2 metres separation can't be maintained mitigating measures such as the use of screens, paired / small team working, back to back or side to side working will be considered as alternatives.
- Homemade cloth face-coverings can marginally help reduce the risk of transmission in some circumstances and employees may wear them if they choose to do so. Employees should avoid touching them, should keep them clean and change them when they become damp/dirty and on a daily basis.
- Relevant media to be used to communicate measures and restrictions to employees and members of the public e.g. posters/notices/signs/letters/emails/newsletters etc.
- Measures to be regularly monitored, particularly at peak times of activity and kept under review to confirm they are being followed and working.

Cleaning and Hygiene

- Previous arrangements of 'hot desking' have been removed, managers will allocate workstations to individual members of staff for appropriate lengths of time. If staff are using offices on a rotational basis then they will be allocated workstations for each period of attendance. In any event, staff are asked to sanitise phones, keyboards, mouse, desk, edges of chair seat/back before and after each day's work.
- Eliminate use of shared equipment where possible and sanitised shared equipment after use, where elimination isn't possible.
- Staff encouraged to provide their own drinks/food in a cool bag, use own cup, water bottles and sanitise any hand contact surfaces used in kitchens after use.

- Robust regular cleaning and disinfection arrangements put in place for fixed hand contact surfaces in buildings/sites/kitchens/rest/toilet facilities, door handles, hand-rails etc to ensure high standards of cleanliness.
- Employees are reminded that they should follow PHE guidance by practicing regular good hand hygiene and cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue or inside of their elbow, dispose of tissues in the bin and immediately wash/sanitise their hands afterwards etc.
- Supplies of soap, hot water and means of drying hands to be regularly checked and restocked at wash hand basins.
- Provision of alcohol gel/sanitiser for use by staff to support regular hand hygiene following contact with regularly used hand contact surfaces and in locations where hand washing facilities are not available and good hand hygiene should be practised.

Travelling while at Work

- Avoid using public transport, if possible. Consider using a car, going on foot, cycling.
- If using a pool car or any other vehicle used by others, ensure you wipe all hand contact surfaces on first getting in and when finishing your journey e.g. steering wheel, gear stick, controls, door handles etc. Thoroughly wash your hands for 20 seconds or sanitise your hands before entering and on leaving the vehicle. All belongings and rubbish should be removed after using the vehicle.
- Vehicles should be well ventilated to increase air flow, for example by opening a window.
- Employees should travel in separate vehicles where possible when driving for work purposes.
- Where this can't be achieved, explore options such as using minibuses where 2m distance can be maintained between all individuals, travelling with open windows and facing away from other passengers. When sharing smaller vehicles restrict journey times to less than 15 minutes, keep windows open.
- Single person or contactless payments used when refuelling, where possible.
- Where the above measures aren't achievable seek guidance from the Compliance Manager.

Home and Site Visits

- Visits to alternative work locations from your normal work base, where other persons are likely to be present, should only be carried out if essential for service/business delivery and with the prior permission of your manager.
- Prior to visiting other work locations make enquiries about any site-specific social distancing measures in place, which might impact on where you park and how you access the site/work location, how you move around the building and access welfare facilities etc. Follow social distancing guidance.
- Where essential home visits are required arrangements should, where possible, be in place to identify whether any householders present are shielding or confirmed/displaying symptoms of COVID-19 in advance of the visit. Protective

measures followed, including the wearing of PPE, should be in accordance with relevant PHE Guidance, if social distancing cannot be observed.

Occupying new/re-opening existing work locations and sites

- Managers must give careful consideration to how the site/work location will be set up and managed to take adequate account of social distancing measures before the site opens. This should encompass:
 - Any ICT requirements, installation of additional technology, removal of unneeded devices, moving existing hardware, ensure correct equipment is set up and working.
 - Arrival/departure times entrances/exits, pedestrian flow of staff and members of the public inside and outside the building/site, common areas, offices/meeting spaces, storage areas and welfare facilities.
 - Liaison with customers and building managers to ensure interfaces and impact on common areas are fully considered, this applies to multi occupancy buildings, such as Housing hubs

- Consideration must be given to the safe recommissioning of any water systems, passenger lifts, fire alarm systems etc prior to reopening where routine maintenance/ monitoring and inspection has not been maintained in buildings/locations which have been completely or partially shut down. Advice should be sought from the Compliance Manager.
- Consideration must be given to emergency arrangements including:
 - Fire evacuation, and the need for social distancing to be carried out on reaching the assembly point
 - First aid requirements proportionate to the risks potentially posed by the nature of the work activities. Emergency/First aiders will be provided with instruction, Fluid Resistant Surgical Face Mask, disposable gloves and apron for circumstances where they need to make physical contact with the casualty. First aiders supporting services where CPR may be required will only carry out chest compressions and will be provided with eye protection and FFP3 face mask and will be face fit tested. First aiders must double bag any disposable PPE used, dispose of in normal waste and practice good hand hygiene following contact with a casualty.

2.Managers to put in place tailored procedures (where relevant) to manage social distancing in specific service areas, where they aren't adequately covered by these general control arrangements, for assistance contact the Compliance Manager.

3.Precautions and control measures outlined in existing risk assessments and procedures to manage additional risks associated with the work activity must also be followed.

If you have any queries please talk to your line manager or email the YHN Covid-19 Project Team at Covid-19@yhn.org.uk