

Policy on Safe Working During the Covid-19 Pandemic



Date issued: July 2020

Version: 001

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Introduction

As the Covid-19 lockdown is eased, we recognise that our organisation needs to return to normal operations where possible and adapt to new ways of working where required. This policy explains the changes to our working environment and new ways of working.

These adaptations have been informed by our Covid-19 risk assessment. We have consulted employees about the changes.

We encourage you to let us know if you have any concerns, have identified any potential risks, or have any suggestions for further adaptations we can make - you can do this by speaking to your line manager in the first instance, which is Tara Green.

In advance of your return

We shall be re-opening the 387 Hackney Road office.

We have identified the number of workers that can operate safely and effectively, while maintaining social distancing in line with Government guidance. With the measures we have put into place and in line with current social distancing guidance, we will can operate with up to 6 employees in the office.

We are asking workers to attend work and have chosen a time to return to work in line with government guidance and where we have deemed that the work environment allows them to do so safely.

Workers with serious underlying health conditions who have been advised to shield against Covid-19 should continue to do so for the duration of their shielding period. Workers in other vulnerable groups, including pregnant workers and those aged 70 or over, will continue to work from home.

If you, or someone you have been in contact with, has Covid-19 symptoms

It is absolutely essential that if you, or anyone you live with, develops a:

- fever, particularly a high temperature (i.e. a temperature of 37.8 degrees or over);
- continuous cough; or
- loss of sense of taste or smell,

you do not attend work and self-isolate at home in accordance with the Government's guidance at www.gov.uk/government/publications/Covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-Covid-19-infection.

Anyone with symptoms should arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19 - see www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-Covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ for more information on how to get tested. While you are waiting for your test results you should not attend work and self- isolate at home.

You should also not attend work and self-isolate at home if the NHS "test and trace" service alerts you that you have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus - see www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-Covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ for more information on what happens if NHS test and trace service contacts you.

If you test positive for Covid-19 or you have been contacted by the NHS “test and trace” service you should:

Notify your line manager and self-isolate at home.

If you are already at work and have Covid-19 symptoms, you should:

- tell your manager immediately and go home
- avoid touching anything, and wash your hands regularly
- cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if you do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- avoid using public transport to travel home, if possible

What happens if someone that has attended the workplace tests positive for Covid-19?

Covid-19 is mainly passed on by person-to-person spread between people who are in close contact with one another and by droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

It can also spread through contact with a surface or object that has the virus on it. Cleaning helps minimise the spread of Covid-19. Fortunately, normal cleaning methods do kill this virus.

If someone in the office has tested positive for Covid-19, everyone that has attended the office will be notified and the office and common areas would be cleaned in accordance with the governments guidance document; COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings.

Once this thorough clean has been completed, the office will re-open.

If you are self-isolating because you, or someone you live with has developed symptoms and you yourself are not unwell and can work from home, arrangements will be made for you to continue working.

In line with our sickness absence reporting procedure, if you are unwell you should notify your line manager by telephone before you are due to start work, or as soon as possible if that is not practical.

If you are unable to work due to Covid-19 symptoms you will be paid in line with your contractual sick pay entitlement.

Travelling to and from work

We encourage workers to minimise their use of public transport, including by walking or cycling where possible. If travelling by car, you must not car-share with anyone outside your household.

Where you need to use public transport, please think about social distancing, where possible staying two metres away from others and avoiding touching surfaces. You are now required by the Government to wear a face covering on public transport.

Workers using public transport may find it helpful to refer to the Government's guidance at www.gov.uk/guidance/Covid-19-Covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers and www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering.

You should wash your hands thoroughly when you arrive at work, using the handwashing facilities or hand sanitisers provided. You should also wash your hands thoroughly as soon as you get home from work.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Our approach to additional PPE

In line with our Covid-19 risk assessment, the use of additional PPE is not required as an infection-control measure while at work.

Face coverings

The use of a face covering (which is not considered PPE) is a matter of individual choice. If you choose to use a face covering, you must follow the Government's advice at www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering. This advice includes that you:

- wash your hands thoroughly before putting a face covering on and after removing it;
- change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you have touched it; and

- change and wash your face covering daily.
- We have supplies of disposable face coverings for essential visitors (Maintenance Operatives etc) and staff if required

The use of a face covering is not a replacement for observing our social distancing guidelines.

Gloves

Disposable gloves will be provided for certain jobs such as opening parcels and post, they are meant for single use only and must be disposed of in the bins provided. Workers are reminded to avoid touching their face whilst wearing gloves and that gloves are not a substitute for regular handwashing.

What changes have been made in the office?

Hygiene and cleanliness

General measures

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we have introduced the following measures:

- installing hand sanitising stations, including at entrances and exits;
- providing hand sanitisers, antibacterial wipes and tissues at each workstation;
- cleaning work areas and equipment frequently;
- having signage and posters to provide regular reminders to workers to maintain hygiene standards;
- cleaning of high touch areas within the office on an hourly rota;
- contractors to complete a thorough bi-weekly office cleaning using anti-viral products; and
- contractors to complete a monthly office clean using an anti-viral fogging system.

Playing your part

While we are taking these stringent additional measures, we would like to remind you to play your part by:

- cleaning your workstation with the antibacterial wipes provided, each day before you start work;
- washing your hands often and thoroughly;
- using hand sanitiser after touching high contact areas, such as doors;
- avoiding touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose and mouth;
- coughing or sneezing into a tissue, and binning it safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available and using hand sanitiser afterwards;
- removing your belongings from the work area at the end of shifts; and
- Clearing your workstation of all personal belongings and non IT equipment at the end of shifts to enable thorough cleaning.

Social distancing measures

General measures

While at work, you must maintain social distancing of two metres wherever possible. To assist with social distancing, we have introduced the following measures:

- spacing workstations out;
- having floor markings to help workers to maintain social distancing;
- working back to back or side to side (rather than face to face) where possible;
- introducing one-way systems to reduce instances of workers having to pass each other in close proximity;
- having signage and posters advising on limits to numbers entering specific areas such as lifts and in toilets;
- kitchen area being restricted to one person for the time being; and
- removing hot-desking arrangements

You should speak to your line manager if you have any specific needs around your working patterns, for example because of childcare responsibilities or travel difficulties.

Meetings

As part of our social-distancing measures, workers should continue to conduct meetings remotely via MS Teams. When physical meetings are necessary:

- only essential participants should attend the meeting;
- meetings should be kept as short as possible;
- social distancing of two metres should be maintained throughout;
- objects such as stationary should not be shared; and
- meetings should be held outdoors or in a well-ventilated room whenever possible.

Deliveries and visitors

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we have introduced the following measures:

- personal items i.e. on-line shopping deliveries, will no longer be permitted for delivery to the office;
- providing clear guidance to visitors to our premises, such as delivery workers;
- allowing for non-contact deliveries, for example via pick-up and drop-off points; and
- changing delivery patterns, ordering supplies less often but in larger quantities.

What changes have been made in the common areas of the building?

Hygiene and cleanliness

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we have introduced the following measures:

- installing hand sanitising stations and anti-bac wipes including at entrances and exits;
- completing a daily checklist of cleaning measures using appropriate cleaning chemicals for the toilets on all floors; and
- cleaning staff to wear appropriate PPE whilst on site.
- Cleaning of offices increased to two days per week

You should continue to practice social distancing in common areas, including at workplace entrances and exits, stairs and when using the outdoor smoking area (Courtyard or street).

Fire Safety

In the case of a fire evacuation the 2m distancing will not apply as the building will need to be evacuated quickly. Once you are out of the building, on the way to and at the Assembly Point then stand apart as safely as you are able.

First Aid

Urgent first aid assistance will take priority over distancing, mask/gloves should be worn where possible and St John's Covid-19 CPR advice will be followed.

<https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/Covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/>

Please note that due to the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, this policy will no doubt develop and be subject to updates in line with best practice and changes in guidance from the Government.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE ABOVE POLICY:

SIGNED:

PRINT NAME:

DATE: