

Action card guidance

- This action card should be used in conjunction with current Welsh Government guidelines.
- Its purpose is to highlight those actions that are key to controlling COVID-19 infection in the workplace.

Setting context

- Includes call centres, small and large office workplaces.
- Undertaking a Coronavirus risk assessment is a pre-requisite to this guidance and the workforce/unions should be consulted. The assessment should be regularly reviewed in particular when the Alert Level is changed in the area where that business operates.
- The 'hierarchy of controls' principles should always be adopted in managing COVID-19 in your workplace.

How do I keep COVID-19 out of my workplace?

In line with the 'working safely' guidance, the key actions for you to take to be as safe from Covid as possible are outlined below:

1. Staff and visitors who are symptomatic, have tested positive or are close or household contacts of positive cases must not come to the workplace setting. They must be following the self-isolation guidance. This should be rigorously monitored.
2. Any member of staff that is self-isolating and has received a negative test result will still be required to complete the 10 days isolation period. Those who receive a negative result **MUST NOT** return to work early.
3. Help people to work from home: discuss home working arrangements and ensure they are supported and have the right equipment for remote working.
4. For staff who come to the office, maintain rigorous staff rotas so that you can always identify close contacts of any staff member. Their number of possible contacts should be kept to a minimum.
5. Keep an up to date database of the contact numbers/e-mail addresses of all staff (permanent and agency) including contractors and regular visitors.
6. Maintain 2m social distancing, put up signs to remind workers and visitors of social distancing guidance, use tape to mark 2m distance between work spaces and ensure the office is adequately ventilated.
7. In the exceptional circumstances where people cannot be 2m apart during work activities, manage the transmission risk: by wearing face masks/coverings at all times, using screens or barriers to separate people from each other and staggering arrival/departure times.
8. In communal areas (stairwells, canteens, toilets, smoking shelters, rest/locker rooms etc) ensure that the 2m rule can be maintained at all times. It may be necessary to stagger shifts and break time to support the implementation of this.
9. If the 2m rule cannot be guaranteed in these spaces face coverings should be worn at all times indoors, for example where staff are moving around the office or using the stairwell etc.
10. **Frequent** cleaning and disinfection of hand contact surfaces including shared equipment is an important control measure. This should include end of shift cleaning and disinfection of screens, barriers and other exposed surfaces. These practices should be strictly implemented.
11. All employees should wash their hands regularly throughout the day, this can be supplemented by applying hand sanitiser. Employers should facilitate this by providing an adequate supply of hand sanitiser, liquid soap and disposable hand towels.
12. Actively encourage employees and contractors to report positive tests to you directly.

What action should I take when an employee or visitor tests positive for COVID-19?

1. You'll learn of a confirmed case at your workplace in a number of ways: from staff, a contractor, your medical centre, environmental health service or from Public Health Wales.
2. When you are informed of a positive case you will need to identify any work colleagues who had close contact with the positive individual in the 48 hours before onset of symptoms. This information is a requirement of the TTP process and will be requested.
3. Once these contacts have been identified they will need to be informed of the risk and advised and supported to self-isolate for 10 days.
4. Employers **should not** require any member of staff that has been required to self-isolate as a contact or a case to submit a negative test before returning to work. They can return to work after their 10 day isolation period is complete.
5. It is important that this information is collected and acted upon prior to first contact with TTP.

How can I minimize the spread of infection in my business?

Should you have 2 or more cases from your workforce (including contractors and visitors) testing positive for COVID-19 in a 14 day period you will need to consider if there are inherent risks within the workplace, you may wish to:

1. Review your Coronavirus risk assessment including working practices, number of staff working at the office, cleaning and disinfection practices, adherence to the 2m rule and wearing of face masks or coverings where recommended.
 - Where it is impossible to reduce the risk of transmission during a work activity by 2m spacing or the use of screens/barriers you must consider whether it is necessary to provide PPE to staff, such as face masks (type IIR or FRSM) rather than face coverings. Where staff may come within 2m of others when walking around the workplace (such as corridors, stairwells etc) then cloth/reusable face coverings are sufficient. However prolonged contact within 2m of someone else at a workstation for example may require the additional protection provided by a face mask.
2. Staff and union engagement and communicating the revised plan are a critical part of this and provide the opportunity to reinforce good practice and ensure that signs and symptoms of COVID-19 are understood and acted on appropriately i.e. self isolating and testing.
3. Any cluster in the workplace will prompt action from the local authority. They will be able to support and advise you on further actions required to mitigate ongoing risks. One of the actions they may wish you to take is to support whole testing of staff to identify asymptomatic individuals.

Links to key guidance: gov.wales/coronavirus www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/risk-assessment.pdf

www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/risk-assessment.htm gov.wales/offices-and-contact-centres-coronavirus-workplace-guidance

