



Guidance Note: Keeping Welsh Workplaces Safe

19.1.21

Following the First Minister's announcement on Friday 15th January, there will be a legal requirement upon all Welsh businesses with 5 or more employees to carry out specific covid-19 risk assessments. This new move will cover both premises open to the public and private workplaces. The new legal requirement has been brought in to ensure workplaces and shops are safer environments for staff and customers alike. The risk assessments will have to consider key issues such as whether ventilation is adequate, hygiene, ensuring physical distancing is taking place and the use of PPE and face coverings.

The First Minister's full announcement can be read here: [Welsh Government to strengthen legislation to ensure workplaces and shops are safer | GOV.WALES](#)

The Welsh Government have produced [Five Key Steps to Keep Wales Safe at Work \(gov.wales\)](#) it contains the five key responsibilities upon employers:

- Carrying out Covid-19 risk assessment.
- Helping staff to work from home whenever possible.
- Implementing other measures to reduce the risk of exposure.
- Actively implementing Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) in the workplace.

Full details and guidance can be found here: [Keep Wales safe at work \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

The main impact upon businesses from the announcement is that all Welsh employers with 5 or more employees will have to carry out a new covid-19 risk assessment. Some businesses will have already done this but will be required to refresh it. There will also be a legal responsibility upon businesses to repeat the task as the First Minister detailed:

"Risk assessments must be reviewed and updated regularly, whenever circumstances change and I want to make clear in law this includes whenever the coronavirus Alert levels change in Wales."

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have information and resources including templates on what should be covered in a COVID-19 workplace risk assessment: [Health and Safety Executive \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

They have comprehensive guidance on [Making your workplace COVID-secure during the coronavirus pandemic \(hse.gov.uk\)](#) and the key points to consider when carrying out a Covid-19 risk assessment.

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Please note risk assessments are a legal requirement for pregnant women, so even if you fall below the threshold of 5 employees, if you have a pregnant employee you will be legally obliged to carry out a risk assessment.

Welsh Government have also produced free, printable signs for workplaces and employers to use, such as physical distancing and the use of face masks: [Safety and physical distancing signs for employers: coronavirus | GOV.WALES](#)

We recommend that businesses keep up to date with new guidance and announcements.

Welsh Government: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Topic | GOV.WALES](#)

Wales Cooperative Centre: [Covid-19: Hub | Wales Co-operative Centre](#)

Social Business Wales: [Covid-19: Support for your social business | Business Wales - Social Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

Business Wales: [COVID-19 Support for Business | Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

HSE: [HSE: Information about health and safety at work](#)

For further support and to talk to one of our Business Advisers give us a call on 0300 111 5050 or e-mail sbwenquiries@wales.coop and we can arrange a call back.