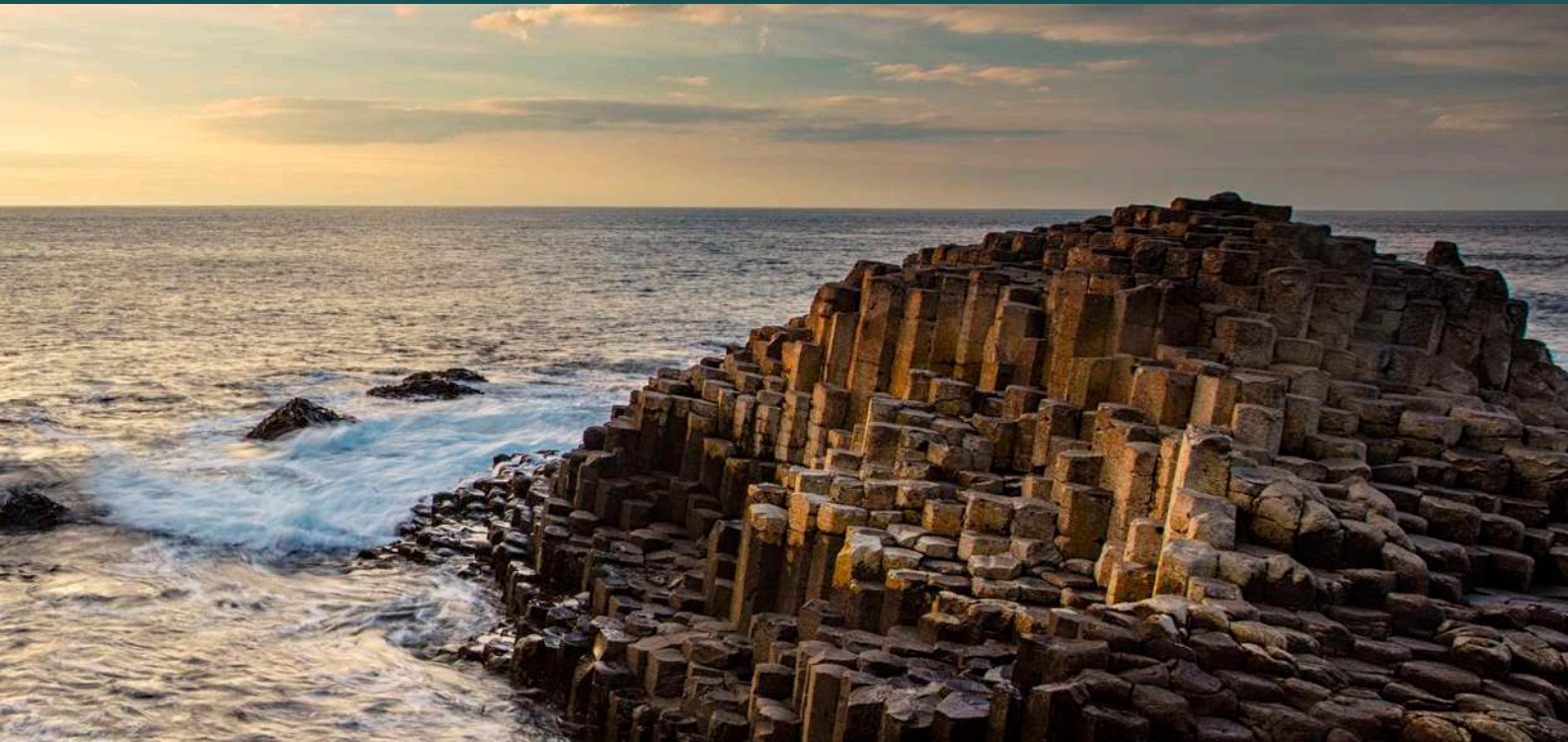


# COVID-19

## A Practical Guide for the Hospitality Industry



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## FOREWORD

In response to the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality sector, Hospitality Ulster and the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation came together in early March of this year to establish an Industry Response Group. The Group's objectives are to assess and consider the practical implications of the pandemic and also to consider how the sector and its stakeholders could best respond.

I was asked to chair this Group and we then set about forming a diverse and representative mix of operators and stakeholders to contribute towards the above objectives.

The Group members have worked hard throughout the lockdown period and have contributed a significant amount of their own personal time towards the achievement of the set objectives. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of the members for their dedication and hard work during what was already a difficult time for them and the sector as a whole.

The initial objective of the Group was to consider and assess the immediate impact of the pandemic on the hospitality sector and to engage with Government and other stakeholders to shape a strategy and a series of financial interventions that would serve to preserve and protect it and its employees while the pandemic continues.

In the early days of the lockdown, the Group presented its views and suggestions to Government and assisted our Ministers in formulating their responses to the

pandemic. We also engaged with operators and the local banks to facilitate the many loan applications that were being made.

As the lockdown period continued, the focus of the Group proactively moved to the next phase, the Road to Recovery.

The priority has always been the safety of staff and customers. To that end the Group has developed, in conjunction with UK Hospitality, advice and guidelines for the sector to follow in Northern Ireland. Extracts from the COVID-19 Secure Advice and Risk Assessments for Hospitality Businesses (Northern Ireland) guidance are now presented within this document. In addition, the group has developed SOP's, checklists and other appropriate documents.

With the proposed timetable for the re-opening of the hospitality sector now set by Government, it is imperative that operators assess their businesses and put in place the processes necessary to create a safe environment for customers and staff. It is recognised that some businesses will not be able to reopen under social distancing restrictions. The Group will continue to lobby for support for these businesses going forward.

The Group will also continue to assess the developing situation and to press for further financial support for the sector to ensure its survival and the preservation of the many jobs and livelihoods within it.

BRIAN MURPHY  
Chairman



## NOTE

This guidance applies to businesses in Northern Ireland. Similar guidance is in development for other areas of the UK based on national frameworks. This guidance document is not a legal document, it is intended to help hospitality businesses plan and prepare their own operational procedures measured against overarching Government COVID-19 Secure guidelines. This will undergo revision as further guidance and operational practices develop over coming weeks.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guidance has been created through consultation with members, Government and hospitality organisations. We would like to express our gratitude to the contributors for providing their invaluable input, and for continuing to work together as guidance and procedures develop.

# POSITIONING HOSPITALITY FOR AN OPTIMUM RECOVERY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

## COVID-19 Secure advice and risk assessment for hospitality businesses in Northern Ireland

### What is this document?

UKHospitality, in partnership with Hospitality Ulster and the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation, has consolidated advice and good practice from many parts of the hospitality and visitor sector into one guidance document, to help businesses make their workplaces COVID-19 Secure, in line with Northern Ireland Executive guidelines which can be found here:

- Practical Guidance for Working Safely During Covid-19
- <https://covid19.tourismni.com/support-centre/business-support-advice/practical-guidance-for-working-safely-during-covid-19/>

This document can be used in conjunction with other advice and, crucially, your own bespoke measures that fit your business. Links to relevant sources of further advice for businesses in Northern Ireland are provided below.

### What do I need to do?

The Northern Ireland Executive's guidance is the requirement to assess your premises against risk to make your business COVID-19 safe. As an employer, you have a legal responsibility under health and safety legislation (Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978) to protect workers and others from risk to their health and safety. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them, recognising you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19.

This means you must undertake a risk assessment for your individual premises, assessed against the relevant Northern Ireland Executive guidance. The examples in this advice document are to help you to translate this into areas that may be relevant to your business, and any measures that are taken should fit appropriately with the operational needs of your business.

You should consult on, and share, the results of your risk assessment with your staff and colleagues. It is important both to provide evidence and communicate that you have risk assessed your premises and taken appropriate steps to minimise the risk of COVID-19 in your individual workplace.

This guidance does not supersede any legal obligations relating to health and safety, food hygiene, employment or equalities and it is important that as a business you continue to comply with your existing obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics. It contains non-statutory guidance to take into account when complying with these existing obligations. When considering how to apply this guidance, take into account agency workers, contractors, customers and other people who visit your premises such as delivery drivers, as well as your employees.

### Key Steps to working and delivering services safely

- Working safely during Covid-19 in the Visitor Economy guidance and;
- Working safely during Covid-19 in restaurant, pubs, bars and takeaway services guidance
  1. Carry out a COVID-19 Risk Assessment and revise all standard operating procedures as required
  2. Develop suitable cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures
  3. Help people to work from home, where possible
  4. Maintain the recommended social distancing, where possible
  5. Where people can't maintain the recommended distance, manage transmission risk
  6. Clear communications to be aware of the symptoms and what to do if symptoms present

The sectoral advice in this document is a collation of good practice from across the wide variety of business in the hospitality sector, to help inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, supported by individual risk assessments for each specific site - as each hospitality business is different.



Advice from Northern Ireland Executive and relevant agencies in NI can be accessed at:

#### TOURISM NI Working safely during Covid-19

- Practical Guidance for Working Safely During Covid-19
- This includes guides for visitor economy, hotels and other accommodation, restaurants, pubs and bars, and attractions.

<https://covid19.tourismni.com/support-centre/business-support-advice/practical-guidance-for-working-safely-during-covid-19/>

#### NI BUSINESS INFO

- For businesses and employers

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-businesses-and-employers>

- For the self employed

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-support-and-advice-self-employed>

- Workplace Safety Guidelines and Social Distancing

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-workplace-safety-guidelines-and-social-distancing>

- Working Safely In Different Business Settings

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-working-safely-different-business-settings>

- A Practical Guide For Making Workplaces Safer

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Covid-19-Working-Through-This-Together.pdf>

#### LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY

- For employers and employees

<https://www.lra.org.uk/covid-19-advice-employers-and-employees>

## HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE (HSE) NI

- Advice and Guidance for Places of Work

<https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topic/covid-19-advice-and-guidance-places-work>

- Workplace Risk Assessment Template

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-example-workplace-risk-assessment-template-covid-19>

## HSC (PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY) NI

- Guidance for Employers and Businesses

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-workplace-safety-guidance-and-priority-sector-list-published>

## FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY NI

- Reopening and Adapting your Food Business During COVID-19

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/reopening-and-adapting-your-food-business-during-covid-19>

Businesses in Northern Ireland should also refer to [HSC ONLINE](#) for further advice on what action to take in the event of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within the premises.

It will be key to ensure that all elements of the risk assessment can be evidenced in a practical way in line with the overarching Northern Ireland Executive's guidance. This document brings together input from across the wide spectrum of hospitality to help businesses inform their own risk assessments.

This has been subdivided into different industry sectors to assist businesses in developing their own risk assessments, in line with Northern Ireland Executive's guidance, to ensure they can open and operate safely for their staff and customers in line with Government COVID-19 guidelines. Some businesses will operate across sectors and therefore may need to consider which elements work best for their premises.



## Other considerations

### Legionella

Due to premises being closed or having reduced occupancy during the COVID-19 outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease. Please find HSE advice here regarding reinstating water systems, air conditioning units and related systems.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>

### Terrorism

Whilst the risk to health from COVID-19 is at the forefront of everyone's minds, the threat of terrorism nonetheless remains substantial. It is essential that businesses and other organisations remain cognisant of these threats as they look to adjust their operations, ensuring that security measures are proactively adapted to support and complement other changes.

You should consider the security implications of any changes you intend to make to your operations and practices in response to COVID-19, as any revisions may present new or altered security risks which may need mitigations. If you have a security department or manager, they should be consulted and involved throughout to help ensure good security is maintained as far as possible and that there are not any unintended security consequences of these changes. This should be achieved by conducting a security risk assessment of any new measures or changes. For further information consult the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) and Centre for Protection National Infrastructure (CPNI) for specific security advice related to COVID-19

<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/staying-secure-during-covid-19-0>,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office>

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## Our core aim is to ensure our staff and our customers are safe in our businesses

Please note that this is a working document, the operational requirements outlined in this document are taken from current Government advice, operational practice and existing health and safety guidelines carried out by all hospitality businesses, enhanced social distancing measures and cleaning measures, and member planning for their individual businesses.

These guidelines have been developed by individual hospitality sub-sectors and other partners, as each sector and businesses within them are different. Using these guidelines and/or your own measures to develop site-by-site risk assessments will help business meet the Northern Ireland Executive guidelines.

# Hotel and accommodation provider operational risk assessment considerations

The Northern Ireland Executive Working Safely during COVID-19 in Hotels and tourist accommodation guidance sets out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe.

To do this, you need to complete an individual risk assessment for your premises and work activities outlining how you are meeting these guidelines and implementing them in your business to keep your staff and customers safe. An example risk assessment can be found at annex 1.

The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, supported by individual risk assessments for each specific site as each hospitality business is different.

### Staff return and fitness to work

It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

You should also provide support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. See [current Government guidance](#) for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## People who need to self-isolate

The current advice is that individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace program. Enable workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate. See current guidance for employers and employees relating to statutory sick pay due to coronavirus. See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## Hygiene

Good hygiene is vital to the reduction of transmission. All handwashing to always be in line with Government guidelines regarding method and length of washing. All staff should wash their hands when arriving at work, as well as before handling or eating food, or after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing, or going to the toilet.

Communications to staff should remind everyone to wash their hands or use a suitable hand gel at the start of every shift. Hand sanitiser could also be placed in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.

## Advice for staff to take home

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside of the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

## Staff protection

All Government advice should be adhered to with regard to protection of staff from COVID-19 and actions to limit risk of transmission. This will include developing cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures and maintaining social distancing, where possible. Below are some suggested control measures to consider as part of your risk assessment and development of risk management procedures. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

The most important thing is to remember the routes of transmission, and to work out what actions are most effective in **your** business.

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection to disinfect all frequently touched areas in staff areas such as tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines, etc.
- For staff break areas/canteens, stagger timings so that groups of staff have slots to come for their meals to reduce gathering.
- Encourage staff to take 'grab and go' lunches, buying food to be consumed away from crowded spaces.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Make sure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch or smoking / vaping breaks
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

## Protective equipment

The Government advises that when managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE (beyond what you usually wear) is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE. Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

The Government advises that unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is extremely limited. Government guidance can be found here - [More information on PPE and face coverings](#).

## Waste disposal

Contact your waste contractor to advise them of any changes in your procedures, such as increased frequency of collections. Consider additional litter bins on your



premises to encourage customers to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

## Training

**Training** should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).

## Advice to staff working in hotel kitchens

- Kitchen management is challenging and will require planning and rearranging. See current Government guidelines regarding distancing in kitchens [here](#).
- As every accommodation business is different, a detailed plan for the individual site and kitchen should be developed as part of your overall risk assessment, reviewed and communicated to all staff.
- In kitchens, continue to use your regular cleaning regime as usual, and at the end of the shift you may want to go over all hand touch surfaces one more time before closing.
- You could include guidance regarding the number of people allowed in the chilled stores or dry stores at one time, keeping to social distance requirements, or the changing rooms / staff toilet areas.
- Use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry used **crocker** and **cutlery**. If this is not possible, **wash** them by hand using detergent and warm water and dry them thoroughly, using a separate tea towel.

## Customer safety

Information should be made available to guests via pre-stay communications, as to the additional measures in place regarding COVID-19.

- Staff communication is key here – regularly communicate your plan regarding customer safety to staff.

## Reception areas

If social distancing can't be maintained, staff should further increase the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning, keep the activity time involved as short as possible. **Where appropriate and achievable, consider screens between staff and guests/visitors in communal areas.** Consider reducing collateral and complementary items to a minimum, in reception areas. Below are further points to consider:

- Communicating, through signage and/or other means, explanations of social distancing rules and additional hygiene measures in place to protect guests and staff.
- Make clear in pre-stay communications the extra measures that are being taken, to offer reassurance.
- If you have a doorman present, use them to ensure that guests observe social distancing, for example, if there is a queue for the reception desk.
- Make sure all reception staff, guests and visitors have access to sanitiser at the desk and that staff use this between serving guests.
- Reception desks should be organised so that staff can be the at the Government recommended distance away from guests as much as possible.
- Floor markings or other physical indicators, where implementation is appropriate and achievable, will be used to act as visible reminders of social distancing requirements.
- When guests sign documents and use the chip and pin machine, reception staff should step back to keep their distance. Any pens or machines that are used should be disinfected before the next guests, and staff should sanitise their hands. Consider the use of adopting non-contact payment methods/electronic signing of documents, etc. where reasonably practicable.
- Consider minimising the offer of staff to help guests with luggage, and if staff do help guests with luggage, they should keep the required distance apart from guests whilst collecting luggage and either take it to the room before the guest arrives there or knock on the door, step back and leave the luggage at the door. After handling luggage, staff should wash their hands or use a hand sanitiser.
- Consider a central key card deposit box placed in the lobby for disinfection of room keys.
- You could consider a welcome note/material including requesting guests recognise the importance of the local community, and respect social

distance and good hygiene practice in all contacts and activities both inside and outside of the hotel.

## Lifts

Consider minimising lift usage from reception, and advice for safer use of lifts throughout the hotel can be advised in pre-stay communications and in-building signage and staff communications. Current Government advice states reducing maximum occupancy for lifts, providing hand sanitiser for the operation of lifts and encouraging use of stairs wherever possible.

## Room Service

Hotels are advised to develop a plan to minimise cross-contamination as part of the site risk assessment. In-room dining has obvious advantages in terms of managing social distancing and is an important element of hotels' ability to reduce risks of transmission/infection. This guidance is offered for those hotels choosing to offer room service and is not a minimum expectation. You should also refer to Government guidance on food preparation and service.

- Manage expectations - ensure guests know that staff will have to operate social distancing and that room service trays will not be brought into the room. Explain what your process will be.
- Staff should wash their hands before picking up the room service tray to take to the guests.
- If you can, use butlers' trays which can be left on the floor next to the door, or think of other ways to protect the order, for example a small light table, or a folding luggage rack both of which have been disinfected first.
- Staff should knock on the door and leave the tray outside the door and step away. The guest can then pick the tray up, and the staff can remove the tray stand or table etc.
- The member of staff should wash their hands afterwards.
- Avoid any paperwork.
- If the guest wants to tip, then this should be done on the bill. Discourage the use of cash.
- Make clear whether guests are expected to retain their tray in the room, for later collection, or to leave the tray outside their door, for collection.

- Where guests are advised to leave trays outside their doors for collection, a system will be in place to ensure regular, timely collection, to reduce clutter of corridors and reduce cross-contamination risks.
- When trays are picked up, they need to be taken to the relevant area and disinfected – crockery and cutlery to go in the dishwasher, and the tray to be disinfected. Any linen used should be used in line with new housekeeping standards. Staff should wash their hands immediately after handling the trays.
- Single use items should be used where possible and disposed of in accordance with relevant guidelines.

## Housekeeping

There is a risk of contamination/transmission subsequent to hand contact surfaces in bedrooms, on linen and towels. Staff should follow handwashing guidelines as per Government guidelines.

- Hotels will review the frequency of the cycle of cleaning and in-room services to take into account different lengths of stay.
- Room cleaning will be undertaken in the absence of the guest, unless it is difficult for the guest to leave the room (e.g. due to mobility constraints) whereupon social distancing shall be observed in the presence of the guest.
- The frequency of cleaning, requirement for the guest to vacate the room and any other relevant criteria shall be communicated appropriately, including in pre-arrival communications.
- Hand contact surfaces should be disinfected. Make a check list of all the touch points which could include, but is not limited to, the following, all of which would – as a minimum - be disinfected when a guest checks out:
  - Light switches
  - Bedside tables
  - Remote control
  - Taps
  - Flush handles and toilet seats
  - Door handles – inside and out
  - Hair dryer handles
  - Iron and ironing board, trouser press
  - Safe buttons
  - Wardrobe doors

- Mini bar handle
- Kettle handle and lid
- Heater and/or air conditioner controls.
- Room collateral should be kept to a minimum.
- Glasses and crockery should be removed and washed in a dishwasher not the room sink.
- Towels and linens should be washed in accordance with washing instructions.

## Health clubs/fitness/pools

Section to be expanded once Government guidance published.

## Other considerations

### Air-conditioning:

- Consider air filtration – review latest guidance, keep spaces and rooms well-ventilated.
- Where possible and appropriate, natural ventilation solutions to be applied.

### Transportation of guests – i.e. airport pick up

- Provide sanitiser dispensers with signage in shuttle bus service
- Vehicle to be disinfected subsequent to each journey
- Remove collateral
- Amend vehicle capacities to ensure social distancing
- Contactless payment where possible
- Drivers should minimise assisting with luggage, if this is necessary they should maintain the required distance where possible whilst handling luggage
- After handling luggage, staff should wash their hands or use a hand sanitiser afterwards.

## SUSPECTED COVID-19 CASES IN YOUR BUSINESS

### Suspected COVID cases and guest self-isolation

If a guest presents themselves with symptoms of COVID-19 or is asymptomatic but declares the need to self-isolate, they should be advised to self-isolate according to current government guidance. This will apply to all guests that were present in the room. If the guest shows acute symptoms has breathing difficulties or their life is at potential risk, seek medical help immediately. **Businesses in Northern Ireland should refer to [HSC NI](#) for further advice on what action to take in the event of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within the premises.**

### Hotel cleaning after a suspected contamination

Whether an infection is confirmed or suspected relating to your premises, there is specific guidance that should be followed which includes how to deal with bedrooms safely. **Businesses in Northern Ireland should refer to [HSC NI](#) for further advice on what action to take in the event of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within the premises.**

Be aware that guidance can change, so always check the government sites if a case arises in your business.

It pays to make a plan for this eventuality before it happens and to make sure that you have the cleaning products you need. You also need to make sure that your staff are trained on new procedures.

### Bedrooms where there has been a suspected infection

Where there has been a confirmed or suspected infection, follow the latest Government advice via [HSC NI](#).

This will reduce the risk to your housekeeping staff and guests and means that soft furnishings which can't be disinfected easily will be safe.

### HVAC units

In addition to the cleaning protocols outlined previously in this document, at checkout of a suspected guest infection, the HVAC unit filter should be changed,



and the old filter bagged and disposed of properly. All vents and louvers should be wiped down and cleaned with a disinfectant. Appropriate protection worn throughout.

## Public Areas

You will need to clean and disinfect all high frequency touch points in the public areas in the hotel as per your risk assessment and new operating procedures: disinfect surfaces such as grab-rails in corridors and stairwells, door handles and lift buttons. Don't just clean the touch points on the floor level where the infected guest was staying, others may have picked up the virus and transferred it to other floors and areas. Dispose of any cloths, mop heads etc. by double bagging and keeping secure for 72 hours before disposing in the general rubbish.

## If you can't isolate the room

If you can't keep the room unoccupied after an infected guest has left, Government guidance includes some of the following information and we have added more suggestions to consider:

- Don't shake laundry and bag up in double bags and leave securely before washing. Wash hands and disinfect any surfaces that may have been contaminated by the bags after taking to the secure place.
- Steam clean soft furnishings and mattresses only if you can guarantee that the steam cleaner actually emits steam when it leaves the machine.
- Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the disinfecting / sanitising products you normally use.
- Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, in the room as listed above.
- After cleaning dispose of single-use protective clothing, cloths and mop heads and any other waste in the room by double-bagging, and then store securely for 72 hours then throw away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.
- After cleaning and bagging up waste, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and dry them with a paper towel. Dispose of paper towel appropriately.

## Note

- Although not mandated, hotels may wish to use professional third-party cleaning services but check provider's credentials and that they have performed their own risk assessment for COVID-19.

## Food & Beverage

For premises that offer a Food and Beverage service, an Operational Plan needs to be developed to ensure employee and customer safety. This should include social distancing controls and how payments and any cash transactions should be made. The plan should be trained out to all staff and refreshed regularly. Government [guidance](#) on takeaways and deliveries should be followed. Suggestions below include:

- Consider access restrictions at the entrances to manage numbers. Where queues may form or within waiting areas, measures should be taken to maintain social distancing.
- Reservations preferred to limit the queues with guests arriving at acceptable intervals
- Signage on the entrance to the premises could include:
  - Details of any access or movement restrictions (e.g. one-way systems).
  - Customers to wash their hands before entering or use hand sanitiser station provided.
  - Requirement to adhere current social distancing requirements.
  - Customers not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms
- 'Goods in', if using the same entrances as guests, to be received before or after guests, preferably a back of house delivery and similar care taken to cross contamination and social distancing. Marked social distance for deliveries. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting, extra attention to touch points, door handles and services.
- Potential pinch points should be identified and monitored as part of the overall risk assessment in your operational plan.
- Social distancing should be maintained between customers at tables
- Your risk assessment should include reference to customer toilets, and monitoring of their use to ensure compliance with social distancing requirements.

- Toilet areas should be regularly monitored and disinfected including frequent disinfection of high-frequency touch points in bathrooms and toilet areas.
- Signage and guest communications should be used to encourage the use of their hotel room bathrooms and toilets wherever possible.
- Contactless or room account payments should be used whenever possible.
- Customer contact with collateral such as menus, trays, napkins etc. should be limited to what is necessary or designed in such a way that cleaning / replacement is carried out after each use.
- There should be hand sanitiser at the entrance to the premises.
- Methods to define social distancing should be considered and applied. For example, use of floor distance markers, barrier systems etc.
- Where a counter service system is operated e.g. Canteen:
  - Customers asked to step back from counters so that staff can serve them to ensure social distancing.
  - Plates should be picked up only by hospitality staff, rather than customers handing the plates to the staff to fill.
  - When the food is plated, the plate can be placed on the customer's tray and, then the member of staff moves back, and the customer picks it up.
  - Where staff come into contact with items used by customers, they need to ensure that they wash their hands before moving on to another task.
  - Individually wrapped condiments and sauces could be offered on request and put with the plated food on the customer's tray.
  - Cutlery to be brought to the customer rather than customers helping themselves.
  - Space out tables in the canteen and allow only one person per table, or if very large tables, operate the social distancing rule.
  - Promote contactless payments wherever possible.

# Hostel accommodation provider operational guidelines

## HOSTELS - UNDERSTANDING A MULTI-BED ROOM ENVIRONMENT

Hostels are designed to accommodate like-minded individuals who are looking for a cost effective and social approach to sharing accommodation. Rooms are priced and beds are sold primarily on the basis that the more people sharing a dorm room, the cheaper the bed price. Guests are primarily younger than traditional Hotel guests and will range from School groups to those in their mid 30s. The configuration of hostel rooms will vary greatly between hostels but generally there are few Private / Single/ Twin rooms and most hostels offer a range from 4- bed to 12-bed Dormitory accommodation with a mix of ensuite and/or shared bathroom facilities.

Our core aim is to ensure all staff, customers and visitors are safe when returning to our businesses and to mitigate the primary risks within our premises.

The advice outlined here is the initial draft following the initial consultation with the UKH working group looking at the hostel sector, and other relevant feedback.

**The Northern Ireland Executive Working Safely during COVID-19 in Hotels and tourist accommodation guidance sets out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe.**

To do this, you need to complete an individual risk assessment for your premises and work activities outlining how you are meeting these guidelines and implementing them in your business to keep your staff and customers safe. An example risk assessment can be found at annex 1.

The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, supported by individual risk assessments for each specific site as each hospitality business is different.

### Staff return and fitness to work

It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised

not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

You should also provide support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. See [current Government guidance](#) for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## People who need to self-isolate

The current advice is that individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace program. Enable workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate. See current guidance for employers and employees relating to statutory sick pay due to coronavirus. See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## Hygiene

Good hygiene is vital to the reduction of transmission. All handwashing to always be in line with Government guidelines regarding method and length of washing. All staff should wash their hands when arriving at work, as well as before handling or eating food, or after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing, or going to the toilet.



Communications to staff should remind everyone to wash their hands or use a suitable hand gel at the start of every shift. Hand sanitiser could also be placed in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.

### Advice for staff to take home

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside of the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

### Staff protection

All Government advice should be adhered to with regard to protection of staff from COVID-19 and actions to limit risk of transmission. This will include developing cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures and maintaining social distancing, where possible. Below are some suggested control measures to consider as part of your risk assessment and development of risk management procedures. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

The most important thing is to remember the routes of transmission, and to work out what actions are most effective in **your** business.

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection to disinfect all frequently touched areas in staff areas such as tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines, etc.
- For staff break areas/canteens, stagger timings so that groups of staff have slots to come for their meals to reduce gathering.
- Encourage staff to take 'grab and go' lunches, buying food to be consumed away from crowded spaces.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Make sure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch or smoking / vaping breaks
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

## Waste disposal

Contact your waste contractor to advise them of any changes in your procedures, such as increased frequency of collections. Consider additional litter bins on your premises to encourage customers to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

## Training

**Training** should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home and self-isolate according to government recommendations.

## Advice to staff working in Kitchens

- As much as possible, staff should adhere to social distancing guidelines and be instructed as to what measures are in place if social distancing cannot be maintained
- As every hostel business is different, a detailed plan for the individual site and kitchen needs to be developed, reviewed and communicated to all staff.
- In kitchens, continue to use your regular cleaning regime as usual, and at the end of the shift you may want to go over all hand touch surfaces one more time before closing.
- You could include guidance regarding the number of people allowed in the chilled stores or dry stores at one time, keeping to social distancing requirements, or the changing rooms / staff toilet area
- Use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them by hand using detergent and warm water and dry them thoroughly, using a separate tea towel.

## Customer safety

- **There should be reference in the information provided to guests about to the increased risks of using shared facilities, and a confirmation from guests that they will adhere to the current government guidance on social mixing outside of household groups and to social distancing requirements**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

- Information shall be made available to guests via pre-stay communications, as to the additional measures in place regarding COVID-19.
- Staff communication is key– regularly communicate your plan to staff.
- Customers should be able to sit and adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Many Hostels operate guest kitchens and it is recommended that this facility is withdrawn from use until it is able to be managed safely.

## Housekeeping of Rooms

There is a risk of contamination/transmission subsequent to hand contact surfaces in bedrooms, on linen

and towels. Staff should follow handwashing guidelines as per PHE guidance.

Hostels will review the frequency of the cycle of cleaning and in-room services to take into account different lengths of stay.

- Room cleaning will be undertaken in the absence of the guest, due to the multi occupancy nature of the hostel it will be necessary to preclude access for an enforced period of some hours to allow housekeepers free and safe access to the rooms.
- The frequency of cleaning, requirement for the guest to vacate the room and any other relevant criteria shall be communicated appropriately, including in pre-arrival communications.
- Hand contact surfaces should be disinfected. Make a checklist of all the touch points which could include, but is not limited to, the following, all of which would – as a minimum - be disinfected during regular cleaning on a daily basis:
  - Light switches
  - Bedside tables
  - Remote control
  - Taps
  - Flush handles and toilet seats
  - Door handles – inside and out, and access control pads where fitted
  - Electronic key entry system
  - Ladders and Rails

- Safe buttons
- In Room Lockers
- Kettle handle and lid
- Heater and/or air conditioner controls.
- Room collateral should be kept to a minimum.

## Shared Bathroom and Toilet Facilities

- In hostels many of the WC and Showering facilities are on a shared basis, in normal operating times customers can pick and choose which shower room or WC they use.
- Hand washing and sanitising posters/facilities should be in place at entrance/exit of the bathrooms
- In view of the rules around operating with COVID where possible best practice would be to assign one group of bathrooms to one sleeping dormitory or group of dormitories.
- The housekeeping of these areas will need to be increased during this period and the cleaning materials regularly used, in line with government guidelines.
- Also the provision of cleaning equipment could be made available to our guests so they are able to clean facilities before or after use.

## Reception

Where appropriate and achievable, screens between staff and guests/visitors will be used in communal areas. There will be a reduction of collateral and complementary items to a minimum, in receptions.

- Communicating, through signage and/or other means, explanations of social distancing rules and additional hygiene measures are in place to protect guests and staff.
- Make clear in pre-stay communications the extra measures that are being taken, to offer reassurance.
- Staff will act to ensure that guests observe social distancing, for example, if there is a queue for the reception desk.
- Make sure all reception staff, guests and visitors have access to sanitiser at the desk and that staff use this between serving guests.
- Reception desks should be organised so that staff can be safely distanced away from guests as much as possible.

- Floor markings or other physical indicators, where implementation is appropriate and achievable, will be used to act as visible reminders of social distancing requirements.
- When guests sign documents and use the chip and pin machine, reception staff should step back to keep their distance. Any pens or machines that are used should be disinfected before the next guests, and staff should sanitise their hands.
- If staff help guests with luggage, they should keep a safe distance from the guests whilst collecting luggage and either take it to the room before the guest arrives or knock on the door, step back and leave the luggage at the door. After handling luggage, staff should wash their hands or use a hand sanitiser afterwards.
- Consider a central key card deposit box placed in the lobby for disinfection of room keys when guests check out.
- You could consider a welcome note/material including requesting guests recognise the importance of the local community, and respect social distance and good hygiene practice in all contacts and activities both inside and outside of the hostel.

Minimising lift usage from reception, and advice for safer use of lifts throughout the hostel, can be advised in pre-stay communications and in-building signage and staff communications. Follow Government guidelines on lift usage.

## Locker Room and Luggage Storage

- Locker Keypads should be disinfected regularly
- Left Luggage/Items need to be disposed of safely Stored for 72 Hours before being removed
- After handling luggage, staff should wash their hands or use a hand sanitiser afterwards.

## Other considerations

Air-conditioning:

- Consider air filtration – review latest guidance, keep spaces and rooms well-ventilated.
- Where possible and appropriate, natural ventilation solutions to be applied.

## Suspected COVID-19 cases in your business

If a guest presents themselves with symptoms of COVID-19 in either a private room or shared dormitory or is asymptomatic but declares the need to self-isolate, they should be advised to self-isolate according to current government guidance. This will apply to all guests that were present in the room. If the guest shows acute symptoms has breathing difficulties or their life is at potential risk, seek medical help immediately. **Businesses in Northern Ireland should refer to [HSE NI](#) for further advice on what action to take in the event of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 within the premises.**

## Hostel cleaning after a suspected contamination

Whether an infection is confirmed or suspected relating to your premises, there is specific guidance that should be followed which includes how to deal with dormitories safely. A link to this government guidance is found [here](#).

Be aware that guidance is changing daily as more scientific evidence comes in, so always check the Government sites if a case arises in your business. It pays to make a plan for this eventuality before it happens and to make sure that you have the chemicals you need. You also need to make sure that your staff are trained on new procedures.

## Public Areas

You will need to clean and disinfect all high frequency touch points in the public areas in the hostel: disinfect surfaces such as grab-rails in corridors and stairwells, door handles and lift buttons. Don't just clean the touch points on the floor level where the infected guest was staying, others may have picked up the virus and transferred it to other floors and areas. Dispose of any cloths, disposable mop heads by double bagging and keeping secure for 72 hours before disposing in the general rubbish.



## If you can't isolate the room

If you can't keep the room unoccupied after an infected guest has left, Government guidance includes some of the following information and we have added more detail to help:

- Where there is evidence of bodily fluids, further personal protection may be needed according to the latest Northern Ireland Executive guidance.
- Don't shake laundry and bag up in double bags and leave securely for 72 hours before washing. Wash hands and disinfect any surfaces that may have been contaminated by the bags after taking to the secure place.
- Steam clean soft furnishings and mattresses only if you can guarantee that the steam cleaner actually emits steam when it leaves the machine.
- Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the disinfecting / sanitising products you normally use.
- Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, in the room as listed above.
- After cleaning dispose of single-use protective clothing, cloths and mop heads and any other waste in the room by double-bagging, and then store securely for 72 hours then throw away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.
- After cleaning and bagging up waste, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, and dry them with a paper towel. Dispose of paper towel appropriately.

### Note

- Although not mandated, hostels may wish to use professional third-party cleaning services but check provider's credentials to ensure that they are suitable.

# Other relevant guidance for accommodation and related sectors

For holiday and home parks and visitor attractions, please see the detailed guidelines in the relevant sections of this main document.

## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Conference and events guidelines developed by the Meetings Industry Association can be found on the MIA website via the following links:

- To the full guidance page: <https://www.mia-uk.org/Safety-Resources>
- Direct to the Guidance document: [https://www.mia-uk.org/write/MediaUploads/mia\\_Roadmap\\_to\\_reopening\\_and\\_operating\\_safely.pdf](https://www.mia-uk.org/write/MediaUploads/mia_Roadmap_to_reopening_and_operating_safely.pdf)
- To the Meetings Industry Association home page: <https://www.mia-uk.org>

## SELF-CATERING & SHORT TERM ACCOMODATION

Extensive cleaning guidelines and specific advice for the self-catering sector have been developed by the below bodies as part of PASC UK developed by PASC UK, the ASSC and Premier Cottages and are endorsed by:

- PASC UK (Professional Association of Self-Catering UK)
- ASSC (Association of Scotland's Self-Catering)
- WASCO (Wales Association of Self-Catering Operators)
- Tourism Alliance
- Wales Tourism Alliance
- Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Premier Cottages
- Short Term Accommodation Association

They can be downloaded free of charge from:

- [www.pascuk.co.uk/standards](http://www.pascuk.co.uk/standards)
- <http://www.assc.co.uk/policy>

## BED AND BREAKFASTS

The Bed & Breakfast Association and its members has developed guidelines for B&Bs based on the main document, which can be found here once published.

Other links/sections will be added as further sectoral guidance is developed and revised over time

# Restaurant and casual dining operational risk assessment considerations

The Northern Ireland Executive's Working safely during Covid-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services guidance set out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe.

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The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, as every hospitality business is different.

### Staff return and fitness to work

It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

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## Hygiene

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Communications to staff should remind everyone to wash their hands or use a suitable hand gel at the start of every shift. Hand sanitiser could also be placed in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.

## Advice for staff to take home

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside of the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

## Staff protection

All Government advice should be adhered to with regard to protection of staff from COVID-19 and actions to limit risk of transmission. This will include developing cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures and maintaining social distancing, where possible. Below are some suggested control measures to consider as part of your risk assessment and development of risk management procedures. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

The most important thing is to remember the routes of transmission, and to work out what actions are most effective in **your** business.

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- Encourage staff to take 'grab and go' lunches, buying food to be consumed away from crowded spaces.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Make sure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch or smoking / vaping breaks
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

## Waste disposal

Contact your waste contractor to advise them of any changes in your procedures, such as increased frequency of collections. Consider additional litter bins on your premises to encourage customers to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

## Training

**Training** should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).



## Advice to staff working in kitchens

- Kitchen management is challenging and will require planning and rearranging.
- As every restaurant business is different, consideration for the individual site and kitchen should be developed as part of your overall risk assessment, reviewed and communicated to all staff.
- In kitchens, continue to use your regular cleaning regime as usual, and at the end of the shift you may want to go over all hand touch surfaces one more time before closing.
- You could include guidance regarding the number of people allowed in the chilled stores or dry stores at one time, keeping to social distance requirements, or the changing rooms / staff toilet areas.
- Use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them by hand using detergent and warm water and dry them thoroughly, using a separate tea towel.

## Customer protection – Eat-in restaurant operations

Below are points to consider if appropriate, as part of your own individual risk assessment.

- Access restrictions at the entrances to ensure that guest numbers are managed effectively. In possible queues / in the waiting area, measures are also taken to maintain social distancing.
- Potential pinch points to be identified and monitored as part of the overall risk assessment plan.
- Establishments may use reservation systems to control the frequency and placement systems.
- Customers informed of any access restrictions and social distancing by appropriate notices.
- Ensure social distancing is maintained between guests at different tables (e.g. by positioning furniture accordingly)
- Customer contact with commodities (menu, menus, trays, napkins) will be limited to what is necessary or designed in such a way that cleaning / replacement is carried out after each use.
- Advise customers not to enter if they have symptoms of COVID-19
- People will need to be told to keep to social distancing in queues, for example posters, floor markings

- Order and service at table, with staff keeping a safe distance in line with current Government distancing guidelines.
- Plates and glasses should be picked up only by staff to return to the kitchen
- Where staff come into contact with items used by customers, they need to ensure that they wash their hands before moving on to another task.
- Individually wrapped condiments and sauces should be offered on request and put with the plated food, otherwise they could be contaminated by other customers' hands.
- Cutlery to be brought to the customer with the food and condiments rather than customers helping themselves or left on the table.
- If payment is contactless that is easier and safer.

### Takeaway services

Many businesses are offering take-aways and deliveries. You and all who work for you (and volunteers) need to follow the legal requirements for food safety, including providing allergen information on request.

# Pubs operational advice and risk assessment

Hospitality Ulster, the British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), the Scottish Beer & Pub Association (SBPA) and UKHospitality have developed the below guidelines to assist pubs in risk assessing their businesses, as we look towards the hospitality, leisure and tourism sector gradually re-opening venues, in order to play our part in the national economic recovery.

Pub businesses have been operating successfully to high standards within the existing requirements of Health & Safety in the workplace, food hygiene and licensing conditions. In particular, existing licensing conditions ensure our pubs operate a professional, managed and safe environment for the consumption of alcohol. Overall, we feel pubs will be well equipped to successfully implement operational protocols in their business, based on the below advice.

The Northern Ireland Executive's Working safely during Covid-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services guidance set out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe.

To do this, you need to complete an individual risk assessment for your premises and work activities outlining how you are meeting these guidelines and implementing them in your business to keep your staff and customers safe. An example risk assessment can be found at annex 1.

The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, as each hospitality business is different.

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It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest

available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

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- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

## Waste disposal

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containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

## Training

**Training** should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).

## Staff protection

- As every pub business is different, a risk assessment needs to be developed that takes account of the specific characteristics of the premises, reviewed and communicated to all staff, as part of the overall operational risk assessment for the specific business. Advice to consider for your business is listed below.
- Staff serving customers or taking payments should be protected and wherever possible staff should maintain social distancing. Where maintaining the distance is not possible, other mitigating measures should be considered.
- Implementation of measures best suited to the business and to protect staff and customers will be informed by the risks posed by the main routes of transmission.
- More frequent cleaning regimes should be implemented, in particular to disinfect all high throughput areas and frequently touched surfaces such as bar tops, tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines etc.
- For staff break areas, stagger timings so that staff have specific slots to come for their meals/break to reduce bunching up.
- Avoid as far as possible any need for sharing equipment i.e. phone, keyboard, pen, mouse and desk in the pub back office.
- Where this is impossible, all shared equipment should be cleaned before use as advised by Government guidelines.
- Maintain social distance rules when taking deliveries and where possible use digital forms of delivery verification.

- Advise that social distancing rules are applied at meal breaks, or smoking / vaping breaks
- For staff to protect others - Always sneeze or cough into a tissue and which should be placed into the bin immediately afterwards. If a tissue is not available, you should sneeze or cough into the crook of your arm. In all cases, wash your hands or use an alcohol sanitising gel immediately after coughing or sneezing
- For cleaning contaminated surfaces in the pub, use disinfectants and sanitisers that are effective against bacteria as well as cold and flu viruses.
- Continue to remind staff that if they have a high temperature and/or a new, continuous cough they should not come to work and follow the latest self-isolating guidance (currently 7 days self-isolation). Advise checking staff temperatures as part of your overall risk assessment and operational plan.
- Continue to remind staff that if they live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus they should not come to work and should self-isolate (currently for 14 days).

### Advice to staff working in pub kitchens

- Cleaning regimes for kitchens should reflect the need to reduce risk from COVID-19 as well as maintaining all expectations relevant to a food business regarding hygiene. Recognising that cleaning measures are already stringent in kitchen areas, consider the need for additional cleaning and disinfection measures.
- You could include guidance regarding the number of people allowed in the chilled stores or dry stores at one time, keeping to social distancing requirements, or the changing rooms / staff toilet areas.
- Handwashing of glassware etc. should be avoided where possible with glassware washed separately from plates and cutlery.
- Use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them by hand using detergent and warm water and dry them thoroughly, using a separate tea towel
- Where handwashing is necessary, staff should wear rubber gloves and use suitable products for cleaning and sanitation.
- During rinsing processes, advise temperatures above 60°C are reached, as disinfection of crockery and glasses requires this.
- Cloths and sponges etc used for cleaning should be changed daily and similarly used materials disposed of safely on a daily basis. Tea towels used for drying should be changed on a daily basis and washed in accordance



with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely.

## Customer protection - Public bar operations

We recognise that the bar area(s) in pubs will be a challenging area to operate under social distancing requirements. Dining area considerations, where customers could be managed to a higher degree, are set out separately. Below are considerations to take into account when drafting risk assessments:

- Each pub is different, ensure you have a bespoke plan for your specific premises that reflects your risk assessment.
- Advise identifying potential pinch points in the pub, where possible action to be taken to resolve or mitigate, and this process evidenced in the risk assessment.
- Customers informed of access restrictions and distance regulations by appropriate notices.
- Where possible obtain hand sanitiser for dispensers at bar (point of sale and/or order) and/or at external doors.
- Include measures to control social distancing in any queues / waiting areas in the business.
- Advise customers not to enter if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- You will need to manage current levels of distancing in queues or at the bar – for example posters and/or floor markings. Customers may need to be asked to step back from bar counters so that staff can serve them safely if the counter is less wide than the current social distance.
- As part of your risk assessment, have a plan specifically for communicating and controlling access to customer toilets to ensure compliance with social distancing rules and ensure all staff are aware. Cleaning regimes for toilet facilities should be more frequent than under normal circumstances and using regular cleaning products. Examples of other considerations include looking at closing urinals to maintain social distancing levels if practicable or installing some form of divider between them.
- Assess the flow of staff and customers in the pub as part of the risk assessment. If it appears to be a suitable mitigation, encourage table service where practical. For bar orders, people will need to be told to keep the minimum safe distance from bar staff as well as from other customers waiting in a queue to be served – e.g. as directed by tape marks on the floor. Measures to consider include managing the bar to create directional movement of customers ordering drinks at a till point, then moving to a

second point to collect their drinks. Consider advising empty glasses are collected from tables by staff, and customers discouraged from returning empty glasses to the bar.

- Consider restrictions on customers remaining at the serving area after ordering and to eat and drink, or put mitigating measures in place.
- Clean bar tops on a regular basis and table surfaces immediately after use.
- Clean high throughput areas, toilet facilities and regular touchpoints including door handles, push plates, PDQ machines, customer information screens, amusement machines on a regular basis.
- If you can offer cashless payments do so as a primary option. Discourage the use of cash.
- Promotion within the pub of measures being taken by the staff and the pub operator, so customers are aware of their own responsibilities to create a safe environment when visiting the pub.
- Consider the cleaning and management of amusement machines, pool tables, juke boxes etc. as part of your risk assessment.

## CUSTOMER PROTECTION - PUB DINING AREA/RESTAURANT OPERATIONS

Measures to consider could include:

- Customers informed of access restrictions and distance regulations by appropriate signage.
- Potential pinch points to be identified, action should be taken to resolve or mitigate, and this process evidenced in the risk assessment.
- Consider the use of reservation systems to control the frequency and placement of customers
- Customers will be informed of access restrictions and distance regulations by appropriate notices.
- Ensure social distancing is maintained between guests in queues and between tables (including arranging furniture etc. to achieve this separation) to reflect Government social distancing recommendations.
- Customer contact with commodities (e.g. menus, trays, napkins) should be limited to what is necessary or designed in such a way that cleaning / replacement is carried out after each use. Menus/table talkers discouraged in favour of customer display. Consider the use of single-use, disposable menus.

- Advise customers not to enter if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- People will need to be told to keep the current social distance apart in queues – it is a good idea to put tape on the floor to mark out the distance.
- Plates, cutlery and glasses should be picked up only by staff to return to the kitchen/bar. Staff should wash their hands following collection of table items and before moving onto another task, in particular the delivery of food to a new customer.
- Individually wrapped condiments, sauces and cutlery, could be offered on request and brought to the table together with customer's food order, rather than table being pre-laid or customers helping themselves.
- Cutlery to be brought to the customer with the food and condiments rather than customers helping themselves or left on the table. Individually wrapped condiments and sauces could be offered on request but should not be available to customers from a communal service area.
- If you can offer cashless payments do so as a primary option. Discourage the use of cash.

## Takeaway services

Many businesses are offering take-aways and deliveries. You and all who work for you (and volunteers) need to follow the legal requirements for food safety, including providing allergen information on request.

## Coldrooms

As well as operational issues such as working in the coldroom, your risk assessment will need to consider the various preparations that will need to be made in advance of opening; curtailment of furlough and potentially any relaxation of social distancing to support these activities:

- Coldroom/stock clearance
- Equipment safety and operational assessments
- Cleaning and hygiene measures
- Stock delivery, replacement equipment and delivery of dispense gases etc.

Wash hands before entering the cellar. Normal practices for cellar maintenance should be followed and where possible by one person. If more than one person is required ensure that Government guidance on social distancing is being followed.

## Outdoor areas

Although easier to manage if a large outdoor area, there is a danger of groups forming. Review current government guidance and consider the below as part of your risk assessment:

- Regular patrol of outside areas
- Patrolling gardens
- Restrictions that may be required for children's play areas.

## Pubs with rooms

- Please refer to the overarching Northern Ireland Executive advice, and advice above regarding hotels.

# Late night/bar operational advice and risk assessment

Late night/bar businesses already operate successfully to high standards within the existing requirements of Health & Safety in the workplace, food hygiene and licensing conditions. In particular, existing licensing conditions ensure our late-night bars operate a professional, managed and safe environment.

The Northern Ireland Executive's Working safely during Covid-19 in restaurant, pubs, bars and takeaway services guidance set out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe.

To do this, you need to complete an individual risk assessment for your premises and work activities outlining how you are meeting these guidelines and implementing them in your business to keep your staff and customers safe. An example risk assessment can be found at annex 1.

The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, supported by individual risk assessments as each hospitality business is different.

### Staff return and fitness to work

It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

You should also provide support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. See [current Government guidance](#) for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## People who need to self-isolate

The current advice is that individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace program. Enable workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate. See current guidance for employers and employees relating to statutory sick pay due to coronavirus. See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## Hygiene

Good hygiene is vital to the reduction of transmission. All handwashing to always be in line with Government guidelines regarding method and length of washing. All staff should wash their hands when arriving at work, as well as before handling or eating food, or after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing, or going to the toilet.

Communications to staff should remind everyone to wash their hands or use a suitable hand gel at the start of every shift. Hand sanitiser could also be placed in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.

## Advice for staff to take home

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside of the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

## Staff protection

All Government advice should be adhered to with regard to protection of staff from COVID-19 and actions to limit risk of transmission. This will include developing cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures and maintaining social distancing, where possible. Below are some suggested control measures to consider as part of

your risk assessment and development of risk management procedures. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

The most important thing is to remember the routes of transmission, and to work out what actions are most effective in **your** business.

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection to disinfect all frequently touched areas in staff areas such as tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines, etc.
- For staff break areas/canteens, stagger timings so that groups of staff have slots to come for their meals to reduce gathering.
- Encourage staff to take 'grab and go' lunches, buying food to be consumed away from crowded spaces.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Make sure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch or smoking / vaping breaks
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

## Waste disposal

Contact your waste contractor to advise them of any changes in your procedures, such as increased frequency of collections. Consider additional litter bins on your premises to encourage customers to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

## Training

**Training** should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature,



new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).

## Customer protection – Late night bars

Each premises is different, ensure you have a bespoke plan for your specific premises. Below are some suggestions to consider for your individual risk assessment and operational practices:

- Advise identifying potential pinch points, where possible action to be taken to resolve or mitigate, and this process evidenced in the risk assessment.
- Customers informed of access restrictions and distance regulations by appropriate notices.
- Where possible obtain alcohol hand sanitiser (with minimum 60% alcohol content) for dispensers at bar (point of sale and/or order) and at external doors.
- Include measures to control social distancing in any queues / waiting areas in the business.
- Advise customers not to enter if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- You will need to manage current levels of distancing in queues or at the bar – for example floor markings. Customers may need to be asked to step back from bar counters so that staff can serve them safely if the counter is less wide than the current social distance.
- As part of your risk assessment, have a plan specifically for communicating and controlling access to customer toilets to ensure compliance with social distancing rules and ensure all staff aware. Cleaning regimes for toilet facilities should be more frequent than under normal circumstances. Examples of other considerations include looking at closing urinals to maintain social distancing levels if practicable or installing some form of divider between them.
- Assess the flow of staff and customers as part of the risk assessment. If it appears to be a suitable mitigation, encourage table service where practical. For bar orders, people will need to be told to keep the minimum safe distance from bar staff as well as from other customers waiting in a queue to be served – e.g. as directed by tape marks on the floor. Measures to consider include managing the bar to create directional movement of customers ordering drinks at a till point, then moving to a second point to collect their drinks. Consider advising empty glasses are collected from tables by staff, and customers discouraged from returning empty glasses to the bar.

- Consider restrictions on customers remaining at the bar after ordering and to drink.
- Clean bar tops on a regular basis and table surfaces immediately after use.
- Clean high throughput areas, toilet facilities and regular touchpoints including door handles, push plates, PDQ machines, customer information screens, amusement machines on a regular basis.
- If you can offer cashless payments do so as a primary option. Discourage the use of cash.
- Promotion within the venue of measures being taken by the staff and the pub operator, so customers are aware of their own responsibilities to create a safe environment when visiting the pub.
- Obtain bacterial sanitizer (ideally with 60% alcohol content) for dispensers at bar and at external doors (recognising potential supply restrictions).
- Visible signage at entrance reference social distancing requirements, queue discipline and entry process. This should also be communicated via social media, email database and bookings confirmation emails.
- Distancing markings to be set out to aid queue discipline in all areas where queues will form including cloak room and toilets.
- Security operations
  - The duties of personnel in the security industry are similar to that of police officers and or first responders who are still attending incidents of crime and disorder. All security staff on duty will face a realistic chance of having to be hands on at some point.
  - Ensuring door supervisors are trained and continuously reminded of the importance of regular hand washing/sanitising/physical distancing and are carrying/wearing the appropriate protective equipment for the task they are dealing with to reduce the risk of infection.
  - Door supervisors should have available to them relevant protective equipment, antibacterial hand gel, antibacterial spray and bottled drinking water.
- Cleaning regimes – Door supervisors at the front entrance to ensure that all entry touch points, equipment, tables, wands, arches etc. are regularly cleaned using antibacterial wipes / spray.
- Emergency evacuations – Risk assessments and evacuation procedures to be updated to ensure appropriate distancing is achievable at evacuation assembly point/points.
- Cloakroom – As above appropriate social distancing markers to be in place. Cloakroom attendant to avoid close contact and if unavoidable, handwashing

and hygiene are key considerations. Where relevant, protective screening should be considered.

# Disclaimers

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# Annex 1

## Template COVID-19 Secure Risk Assessment

Currently this example is for a food-led business, you will need to complete one for your own individual business. Please note that the final Risk Assessment can only be developed by YOU because it is about YOUR business. Any steps or controls in this document are only examples, not prescriptive stages – only you will know how your business works.

Risk assessment template and further guidance on risk assessments can also be found on the [HSE website](#)<sup>[5]</sup>

There is also a hospitality risk assessment tool developed by HOTREC and EFFAT [here](#).

### Risk Assessment Approach

Whilst every business is different, there are two things in common – the staff and the customer. Both will have ‘journeys’ through the premises. An example can be found here <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-example-workplace-risk-assessment-template-covid-19>.

The main aim is to demonstrate that the business has considered the routes people take through the business and the hazard and risks encountered by both customers and the staff; confidence in management can be achieved by demonstrating the implementation of necessary controls. This is a hybrid of HACCP and a risk assessment.

Tracing the routes that people will typically take, either to carry out their jobs or as customers, will help inform what risks from COVID-19 are involved, and subsequently how to take action to reduce these risks. This first flow diagram may then need to be adjusted if it is found that the route or journey needs to be changed to ensure a safer environment.

## The purpose of this COVID-19 risk assessment document

By setting concerns and control measures out in a logical way this will give confidence to enforcement officers and customers to show that that due consideration has been undertaken.

Customers can be advised in advance of their visit of actions taken to give confidence that the business has considered everyone's safety. This will also be useful to ensure that customers know what the new "rules" are so that everyone's expectations are managed in advance and that there is a reduced risk of any aggressive behaviour during their visit.

Similarly, staff can be reassured that every aspect of their work has been considered in relation to COVID-19, and they will have an understanding of the measures you will take together to ensure safety of them and the customers.

Primary Authorities could also be involved where businesses have one, although many do not currently provide Assured Advice on this aspect.

## Flow Diagrams

By plotting out the routes taken by staff and customers in your business, you will have a clear idea of where the potential issues may arise, particularly in relation to social distancing.

After doing this you may find that your business needs to be adapted because you can't manage social distancing rules effectively, and you may to reconsider your whole business, or part of it to make it work. It is likely that you may then have to re-draw the "new normal" customer or staff journey.

Things you may need to consider include:

- New routes, for example a separate exit and entrance
- Reduced number of staff

## How to use this document

This document should form part of your Health & Safety management system and be referenced within your business/organisation's Health and Safety policy.

- You should complete a Risk Assessment document for COVID-19 prior to re-opening after the lock down period. See the introduction to the main document for more information on what you should consider.
- After drawing the flow diagrams and thinking about all the steps staff and customers do and could take in your business, check the steps on the first column and add or delete as appropriate to your business.
- Examples for different sectors are included in the sectoral guidance
- You can support this document with photographs of your control measures where appropriate and this would be useful for any discussions with the EHO which would have to take place virtually.
- Staff briefing on your controls is an essential part of this process and should be documented. HSE has guidance on talking to you employees <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/talking-with-your-workers.pdf>
- Once this is done, you can communicate the message to customers to ensure that they understand that you are behaving responsibly with everyone's safety in mind, and everyone knows what to expect and how to behave.
- Review the document frequently – possibly weekly during the initial stages of re-opening to ensure that you are taking into account any changes in national guidance.

## Living Document

This is a living document that will be continuously edited and updated as understanding of the virus improves, government guidance changes and UKH members develop improved solutions.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Business Name and Address:

Type of Operation (pub, restaurant, hotel, food service etc)

Services Provided:

Head Office Details (if relevant):

Name of Person who has developed this document:

## The hazard

SARS-CoV-2 is a respiratory virus that can invade a host via the respiratory route or via hand to eye / mouth / nose contact, causing the disease COVID-19.

People who appear healthy may be carrying and shedding the virus, which can be passed on either directly or indirectly to others. This means we need to assume that anyone could be carrying the virus.

## The routes of transmission (how the hazard can cause harm – the risks)

- Direct contact to face – eyes, nose from droplets or aerosols spraying from an infected person onto another person who is in close contact.
- Contamination via droplets from sneezing and coughing landing on surfaces and then transferring via hands on to eyes and nose and mouth. Other means of secretions getting on to surfaces could be from infected people touching their eyes, nose and mouth and then touching surfaces with contaminated hands.
- Contaminated hands of infected people can transfer the virus directly to others (e.g. handshakes) or on to hand contact surfaces which can be picked up by other people's hands and transferred to their eyes, nose or mouth
- Possible transmission from faeces to hands and then directly or indirectly to the body via hands and hand contact surface transfer.

## The main controls are:

- Social distancing in accordance with government guidelines
- Disinfecting hand contact surfaces
- Hand washing and hand sanitiser use at key moments
- Not touching eyes, mouth or nose with contaminated fingers (if used)

The controls set out in this document will be specific for this operation, taking into account how the business operates, and how customers and staff use the premises and interact.



## Flow Diagrams

Routes taken by staff and customers in the business, are considered to show the steps in the journeys where controls are needed. Sketch out your own flow diagrams (you may have several for a large business). You could number each step.

You may see an immediate issue and have to rethink the way you run the business at this stage.

## Prerequisites

These are controls which will work throughout the system and are not part of the flow diagram. You may have more to add to the list.

This is a list of possible examples of controls that you might pick.

Write in your Prerequisites for your business here:

ITEM	OUR CONTROLS
Back to work (fitness to work) policy	
Disinfection	
Ventilation	
Hand hygiene	
Social distancing goal	

Menu operation and adaptation	
First Aid	
When staff feel unwell	
Smoking or vaping	
Number of staff at work	
Customer capacity	

## Customer Journey Risk Assessment

The next part is to write in all the steps that you have identified in column 1 and **delete any that don't apply to you**. You may have additional ones – put them all in.

The put in the controls that you intend to operate in your business. This depends on the type of business you have, and only you will know what works. Opposite is an example of what sort of controls you could put in – but this is only an example!

## Example of Risk Assessment

Customer Journey Risk Assessment (please delete steps that are not needed, add any others)

<b>Customer Journey</b>  <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	<b>Controls in my business</b>  <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Pre-booking (if feasible)	
Arrival outside venue	
Queuing outside venue	
Entering the business	
Walking to table either inside or outside	
Ordering food and drinks	
Bar Service	

Customer Journey <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	Controls in my business <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Food and Drinks Service	
Clearing the customer table	
Going to the toilet	
Paying	
Leaving the business	

You may have other steps that may be found in your business and its sector, for example:

- Entry to changing rooms
- Accepting room service
- Checking in at the hotel
- Canteen service in the work-place

You may have a number of separate customer journeys to note, if you have a number of different operations under one roof. Treat each one separately.

**Staff Journey Risk Assessment (delete if not appropriate, add other controls as necessary for YOUR business)**

Follow the same process for staff journeys as for customer journeys – tailor the list in column 1 to your operation and pick the steps from the list below, delete those that are not relevant add more as necessary.

<b>STAFF JOURNEY</b> <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	<b>CONTROLS IN MY BUSINESS</b> <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Before returning to work	
Pre-arrival	
Arrival	
Uniform change (if applicable)	
Changing / locker rooms (if applicable)	

<b>STAFF JOURNEY</b> <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	<b>CONTROLS IN MY BUSINESS</b> <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Kitchen steps Food Storage (chillers, freezer, dry stores) Work benches and tables Equipment Dishwashing Pot washing Grill Fryers Pass	
Service	
Outdoor areas (guest areas, bins and storage)	
Cellars	
Deliveries	

<b>STAFF JOURNEY</b> <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	<b>CONTROLS IN MY BUSINESS</b> <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Front of house	
Table clearing	
Dish / glass washing	
Payment	
Interaction with work colleague	
Using the Staff office	
Leave work	
Using the Staff rest rooms	
Using the staff kitchen	

<b>STAFF JOURNEY</b> <i>(add or delete according to the steps identified in your flow diagram)</i>	<b>CONTROLS IN MY BUSINESS</b> <i>(Pick controls that suit your business from the UKH Sector specific advice or other guidance, or your own bespoke controls)</i>
Using the toilets	

Other steps, for example could be:

- Taking room service
- Reception desk
- Canteen / counter service
- Bar service

Select possible controls to insert in column 2 for this section from the UKH sector guidance or your own controls.

## Final Stages

Once you have completed your risk assessment, share it with team through briefing sessions and create the necessary signs and communications to customers to make sure everyone plays their role.

This document should be kept ready to discuss with an enforcement officer who may wish to discuss how you are controlling the hazard of SARS-CoV-2 in your business.



## System and Document Review

Make sure you review this document frequently (probably weekly) during the crisis because guidance may change, and also you may find that working adjustments need to be made. Keep a note of this here.

REVIEW DATE	ISSUE NUMBER (IF APPLICABLE)	SIGNED

# COVID-19

Sample

Standard Operating Procedures,  
Check Lists and Risk Assessments



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HOTELS  
FEDERATION



# SOP 1 - Social Distancing Standard Operating Procedure Template

NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING - STAFF**

- Social distancing protocols that follow Government guidelines must be observed in all areas
- Where this is not possible or where staff operate in small teams, workers must avoid direct physical contact. Consider the use of screens, face shields or back to back working
- The workplace should develop and display examples of physically distanced floor plans
- COVID-19 floor and wall signage should be prominently displayed outlining the social distancing requirements
- Where possible, separate doors should be used for staff entering and exiting the workplace
- If a locker or changing room is provided, provide signage and stagger access times to enable physical distancing
- Where possible create two teams of staff to work alternate shifts - if exposure to Covid-19 occurs on one shift, only the team working that shift will be affected
- Divide the workspace into zones - control the movement between these areas and limit the numbers of people in each area
- All delivery personnel must follow the social distancing guidelines when making deliveries- make arrangements for paperless delivery acceptance where possible
- Social distancing includes refraining from hugging or shaking hands – ensure all staff adhere to this.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING - CUSTOMERS**

- Social distancing protocols that follow Government guidelines must be observed in all areas
- Queue management should be implemented to limit the number of guests gathering - clearly demarcate queuing areas by using floor markers, signage and barrier systems and minimise the number of entrances/exits where possible
- Full capacity limits should be defined in advance and all staff made aware with personnel in place to enforce capacity limits
- Communicate procedures and practices to guests in advance if possible, provide signage and verbally explain the social distancing to customers on arrival
- Encourage use of contactless payment methods
- Where possible, encourage advance bookings rather than walk-ins and stagger reservation times
- Entrance doors should be propped open where possible, if in line with fire regulations
- Individuals and family members who wish to be seated together should continue to do so
- Unrelated guests should not congregate in groups.

## SOP 2 - Staff Protection Standard Operating Procedure Template

NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions

### STAFF PROTECTION

- All staff must complete a 'Return to Work Assessment' to identify possible symptoms, potential exposure, and fever
- Any worker who displays symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must stay away from work, self-isolate and contact their GP by phone
- You must alert your supervisor if anyone else in your household is ill or if they have had any direct contact with someone known or suspected to have coronavirus anywhere else outside of work
- If you become unwell in the workplace with symptoms such as cough, fever, difficulty breathing – report immediately to your line manager
- On arrival at work staff must change into clean, appropriate workplace attire and relevant PPE (if required)
- Uniforms should be washed at 60°C
- If uniforms are not supplied, staff must wash their clothes at 60°C after each shift
- Do not bring mobile phones or other personal belongings into the workplace. If you must use a phone, disinfect it with a sanitizing wipe and wash your hands
- Wash your hands thoroughly before commencing work and every 30 minutes (more often if required)
- Use the hand sanitising stations before entering the workplace and throughout the day after washing
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Do not share objects that touch your mouth for example, pens, bottles, cups. Use disposable drinking cups
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze and put used tissues into a sealed bin before washing your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (TOUCHPOINTS)
- Carry out scheduled sanitising of all shared surfaces every 30 minutes
- Do not shake hands

## SOP 2 - Staff Protection Standard Operating Procedure Template

- Staff must familiarise themselves with all wall and floor signage erected throughout the building and follow this guidance
- If deemed necessary, PPE must be worn at all times
- Social distancing protocols that follow Government guidelines must be observed in all areas

## SOP 3 - PPE Standard Operating Procedure Template

*NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions.*

### **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT – PPE**

- PPE should only be worn in the event that the risk cannot be managed by other methods. PPE should always be a last resort.
- Gloves do not provide complete protection against hand contamination and should only be worn if the job dictates - washing and sanitising hands is the most effective way of hand hygiene and protection for staff
- Disposable gloves - Do not wear disposable gloves in place of washing hands.
- If avoiding contact is impractical or not enough to protect employees, gloves may be needed
- Single use gloves should be disposed of appropriately after each interaction
- Wash and sanitise hands after disposing of gloves
- Do not touch other foreign surfaces with the same pair of gloves - change gloves after each task to avoid possible cross contamination
- Do not touch face (eyes, nose or mouth) if in contact with surfaces and wearing gloves
- Disposable aprons may be provided in areas where the job requires added protection of the uniform from possible contaminated surfaces
- Face covering – Using a face covering is unlikely to be of any benefit if the wearer is not sick
- If using a face covering - Note that disposable face coverings can only be used once
- Where face coverings are being considered, using a visor may be more customer friendly, especially to customers with special needs. Note, visors may be suitable to be used more than once, if so, training in how to clean the visor should be given to staff
- If wearing a face covering, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser before putting the face covering on, and after removing it
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste

## SOP 4 - Hand Washing Standard Operating Procedure Template

NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions.

### HANDWASHING

- Washing your hands properly is one of the most important things you can do to help prevent and control the spread of COVID-19.
- A pre-shift briefing should be held with all workers to remind them about hand-washing and the need to keep fingernails short.
- Hand washing should be frequent for all staff throughout their shift.
- All staff must be aware of the key times to wash their hands including
  - On arrival in the workplace
  - After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
  - After touching your eyes nose or mouth
  - After using the bathroom
  - Before and after preparing or eating food
  - Between different tasks
  - After touching any shared surfaces such as door handles, chairs, equipment handles, taps, work tools, work surfaces etc.
  - Before and after serving/clearing a table
  - After handling waste
  - After all cleaning activities
- Do not wear disposable gloves in place of washing hands. The virus can get on gloves in the same way it gets on hands
- Wearing disposable gloves can give a false sense of security. Gloves can become contaminated when taking them off
- All staff must keep fingernails trimmed short
- Please ensure you wash your hands properly – for at least 20 seconds. Make sure that you wash both your hands including the tips of your fingers, the palms of your hands and thumbs.
  - Wet hands thoroughly with water
  - Apply enough soap to cover all surfaces of the hand



# SOP 4 - Hand Washing Standard Operating Procedure Template

- Rub the palms of your hands together - right palm over back of left hand and vice versa
  - Ensure you clean between your fingers
  - Complete rotational rubbing of thumbs with palms
  - Rinse hands well with water
  - Dry hands thoroughly with a disposable towel
  - Use disposable towel to turn off tap
- Staff must familiarise themselves with all handwashing signage and follow this guidance

## HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS

and to stop the spread of germs in the workplace

HAND WASHING SHOULD TAKE 20 SECONDS





Wet hands with water and apply soap or handwash.



Rub hands palm to palm.



Rub palm over the back of the other hand with interlaced fingers and vice versa.



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced.



Back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa.



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.



Rinse hands under running warm water.



Dry hand thoroughly with a paper towel.



Use your elbow or paper towel to turn off the tap.

### Why is Hand Hygiene So Important?

- Millions of germs are picked up by hands during every day activities. Many of these are harmless but some cause illness such as colds, flu & stomach bugs.
- Hand hygiene is essential to prevent the transfer of these germs to other people & surfaces to stop the spread of illness.
- Poor hand hygiene can lead to the spread of Campylobacter, Salmonella, MRSA, E.coli, TB & Coronavirus.

## WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

**Wash your hands before you:**

- + Prepare or eat food
- + Treat a cut or a wound
- + Visit a hospital ward
- + Insert or remove contact lenses

**Wash your hands after you:**

- + Use the toilet
- + Blow your nose, cough or sneeze
- + Touch a sick or injured person
- + Handle rubbish

- + Handle uncooked food
- + Visit a hospital ward
- + Touch animals or animal waste
- + Change a nappy



# SOP 5 - Customer Protection Standard Operating Procedure Template

NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions

## CUSTOMER PROTECTION

- Encourage pre-booking with staggered arrival times
- Communicate procedures and practices to guests in advance if possible, provide signage and verbally explain the social distancing to customers on arrival
- Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is to be permitted in the premises – "Stay home and seek medical attention if you have symptoms consistent with the disease"
- Determine entry/exit to and from toilets to establish paths that mitigate proximity for customers and staff (see toilet checklist)
- Customers should be reminded when entering and leaving the premises to use the hand sanitation station
- Customers attention should be drawn to the additional wall and floor signage giving more information and effective guidance
- Queue management – limit the number of guests gathering within or outside the premises and ensure queues are fast-moving
- Seating management– Customers should be seated in a manner that complies with the current government social distancing requirements
- Individuals and family members who wish to be seated together should continue to do so
- Screens should be used where appropriate to support social distancing
- Dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs to be sanitised after each use
- Scheduled sanitising of all shared surfaces every 30 minutes
- All linen including underlays to be replaced after each use
- Tables should not be pre-set. Staff should provide cutlery, napkins as required - Condiments will be single use where possible – this includes salt, pepper and sugar
- Customers should not order at the bar. Bars should operate waiter service only
- Customers should not sit at the bar and should sit at one of the tables - placed in order to comply with the current social distancing requirements
- Menus to be single use and/or disposable

## SOP 5 - Customer Protection Standard Operating Procedure Template

- Hands, tills and card machines should be sanitised after each staff member interaction.
- Encourage use of card payment methods
- All crockery cutlery and glassware should be washed and disinfected in a dishwashing machine, including items that have not been used, as they might have been in contact with the hands of guests or staff - Avoid washing by hand where possible
- When clearing tables, staff member should avoid touching face and should wash hands immediately afterwards
- Kitchen preparation benches should be sanitised before use and every 30 minutes thereafter, unless further sanitation is needed between tasks
- Where possible, two kitchen porters should be in place, one with responsibility for handling dirty dishes and the other with responsibility for the safe handling of clean dishes
- All shelves used for stocking clean dishes etc. will be disinfected at the end of each shift
- Where appropriate, meals to be prepared and served on one plate to avoid the use of multiple dishes and plates etc
- All buffet and self-serve style events should be suspended until further notice

## SOP 6 - Table Service Standard Operating Procedure Template

NOTE: The following is a template and should be used to develop premises specific 'Standard Operating Procedures' (SOPs) following a 'Risk Assessment' of individual premises. Measures suggested in this template may not be required as premises specific mitigations; behavioural, physical and technological may provide alternative solutions

### TABLE SERVICE

- Pre-shift briefings should be carried out with staff to reinforce key areas such as handwashing, staff and customer protection, social distancing and cleaning regimes.
- Staff must be aware of the procedure to follow if a customer on the premises displays with COVID-19 symptoms – e.g. isolation area, protocols to follow, emergency contacts etc.
- Pre-booking should be encouraged with staggered customer arrival times. Customers should be given information, in advance, in relation to specific COVID-19 procedures
- Capacity levels must be agreed and monitored to ensure maximum numbers are not exceeded (do not forget to include Front of House staff in this calculation).
- Physical barriers should be placed to assist social distancing e.g. screens or rope barriers.
- Customers should be reminded, on arrival, of social distancing and hand sanitising protocols.
- Hand sanitising stations must be available at all entrances and exits.
- Staff should have bottles of hand sanitiser spray or anti-bacterial wipes available to use as required.
- Configuration of the seating areas must ensure a safe distance between tables and between seats as set out in current Government guidelines. Individuals and family members who wish to be seated together should continue to do so, but there should be an adequate spacing maintained between different groups of guests in accordance with Government physical distancing guidelines.
- Where and when possible, all Front of House staff should comply with physical distancing guidelines. The amount of personnel at waiter stations should be limited and minimise movement between stations. (These should be cleaned and sanitized at least twice per day).

## SOP 6 - Table Service Standard Operating Procedure Template

- All Menus should be single use and disposable (or easily sanitized, through lamination for example). Alternatives include electronic menus, phone apps or menu boards.
- All staff should have their own equipment, e.g. individual pens, pads or electronic devices should be assigned to relevant staff.
- If equipment and tools are shared, they must be sanitised before being 'passed over'.
- Waiting staff should take the customer order from an appropriate physical distance (as per current Government guidelines). With the time required for order taking to be less than 15 minutes (this also applies to all other communication between the guest and the server).
- Where it is impractical to practice social distancing, alternative measures must be in place
  - Clear screens in place to create a physical barrier
  - Staff to wear a disposable face covering.
- Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and table service. When serving/clearing tables, staff should wear a disposable face covering and avoid touching their face.
- Disposable gloves are not compulsory as handwashing is a greater protective barrier to infection than wearing disposable gloves. If gloves are worn, then they must be disposed of properly. Correct hand hygiene is extremely important, whether using gloves or not.
- Where staff come into contact with any items used by customers, they must ensure they wash their hands before moving on to another task.
- Where appropriate, meals should be served on one plate to avoid the use of multiple dishes.
- Cutlery should be brought to the table as a 'Roll Up' and stored in a cleaned disinfected covered area.
- Condiments should be provided in single use portions or sanitized individual containers.
- Tables and chairs should be sanitised between customer usage and at the beginning and end of each service.
- Tables should not be pre-set, and napkin service should be suspended (no placing in a guest's lap or refolding) Avoid use of candles/flowers etc. on table. Tableside cooking should be suspended.
- All linen, including underlays, should be replaced after each use. Where possible use disposables.

## SOP 6 - Table Service Standard Operating Procedure Template

- Individual bottles of water should be offered in place of jugs/carafes. Bottles must be wiped in advance with sanitiser.
- Drinks should not be garnished with pre-cut fruit. Accessories for drinks, such as straws, must be individually wrapped. Embellishment of drinks should be kept to a minimum.
- Cashless transactions should be encouraged. Where possible, Point of Sale terminals should be assigned to a single server and sanitized before and after each shift.
- If multiple staff are assigned to a Point of Sale terminal, hands and surfaces must be sanitised after each use.

## Toilet Facilities Checklist

# Checklist for Businesses opening Toilet facilities

Structure and signage considerations

	Action	Person Responsible	Action Taken	Date Completed
1	Ensure that a building re-opening checklist has been completed with reference to water supplies/legionella risks etc.			
2	Ensure that clear signage is erected so that people know the restrictions/rules for using the toilet facilities.			
3	Consider where people will have to wait/queue to use the toilet facilities, consider using floor markings/barriers etc. Consider if the waiting area must be remote from the Toilet/s if the access is narrow. If the toilet queue is going to go past desks or tables in a café/restaurant/bar will those persons who are seated be protected or should the desk/table be moved or closed?			
4	Consider providing sanitiser dispensers before the entrance of the toilets to reduce potential viral load on touch points and for customers to use after exiting the toilets to reduce viral load from touch points after hand washing (for example exit doors.)			
5	Measure your toilet facilities to determine the maximum occupancy while maintaining 2m social distancing.			
6	Identify urinals and/or cubicles and wash hand basins that need to be closed to maintain social distancing: - for example closing every other urinal, or wash hand basin. (Unlikely a cubicle would			

## Toilet Facilities Checklist

	need to be closed unless access is very tight.)			
7	Close off the facilities identified above so that they cannot be easily utilised.			
8	Decommission hand dryers it is thought that hand dryers can circulate the virus in the air so their use should be avoided.			
9	Display clear signage within the toilets reminding people to wash their hands thoroughly before and after using the facilities.			

## Staffing and management considerations

	Action	Person Responsible	Action Taken	Date Completed
10	Consider using a 'toilet attendant' during busy times to ensure no overcrowding occurs inside the toilets.			
11	Ensure that soap and hand sanitiser dispensers are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Adequate supplies of soap, and hand sanitiser should be provided at all times and any defective units should be rapidly repaired or replaced.			
12	Provide paper towels for hand drying and ensure an adequate supply is maintained.			
13	Consider disposal arrangements for paper towels and ensure the bins are emptied before they are full.			
14	Ensure that a thorough regular clean takes place of all surfaces that are likely to be touched such as taps, door handles/locks toilets seats etc. Organise cleaning after busy periods such as lunch time or			



## Toilet Facilities Checklist

	shift changes. You are likely to need to extend the hours of, or take on more, staff for cleaning.			
15	Consider if the Toilets need to be closed while cleaning is taking place to ensure staff safety.			
16	Consider PPE for cleaning staff including disposable gloves and aprons if required.			
17	Consider disposal arrangements for PPE can it be retained for 72 Hrs before disposal?			
18	Consider separate changing area and toilet for staff if possible.			

### Supplementary Information.

Example of points to include in signage for Toilet Facilities, in addition to Public Health Agency handwashing signage, available [here](#): -

1. These facilities are cleaned/inspected [X] times a day or [throughout the day]. It is still essential that you follow the guidance given to keep yourself and others safe.
2. The toilets will be closed/remain open during cleaning.
3. You must maintain a safe distance of 2 metres from others when entering, waiting or leaving the toilets.
4. Please use the hand sanitiser provided before entering the toilets (if provided).
5. If on entry you are unable to maintain social distancing, please wait in the designated queuing area, keeping 2 metres apart from others and avoid blocking the entrance to the toilet.
6. No more than X people [insert what is appropriate for the space] should be in the waiting area at one time.
7. Some facilities may be closed for your safety – do not use if closed
8. Avoid touching surfaces where possible and do not touch your face.
9. Before leaving the toilet WASH YOUR HANDS with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.

# Toilet Facilities Checklist

10. Dispose of paper towels in the bins provided.
11. Please use and leave the facility as quickly as possible.
12. Please use the sanitiser provided after you leave the toilets (if provided).

Please respect our staff. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe.

## Design considerations / possible physical alterations.

Structure – Consider, could we alter any of the following to improve social distancing?

Access to the toilets

Size of toilets

Would making the toilet unisex be a benefit particularly space wise?

Should screens be provided within toilets?

Hardware - Consider could we use any of the following to reduce risk of infection?

Sensor taps

Sensor sanitiser dispensers

Sensor flushes

Sensor doors

Management – Consider could we provide sanitising wipes and a bin in each cubicle to clean toilet seats (how do we stop patrons blocking the sewer with wipes?)

# Risk assessment template

Company name:

Assessment carried out by:

Date of next review:

Date assessment was carried out:

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done

This is a draft copy of a **generic Risk Assessment** for dealing with the current Covid-19 situation in the workplace. It is not likely to cover all scenarios and each employer should consider their own unique circumstances. To keep up to date with HSENI advice to workplaces in this fast changing situation visit <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-and-hseni-contact-details-update>

More information on managing risk <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topic/covid-19-advice-and-guidance-places-work>

# Risk assessment template (sample with details)

Company name: The Hotel

Assessment carried out by: Joe Bloggs

Date of next review: 1/9/2020

Date assessment was carried out: 01/07/2020

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Spread of corona virus	Staff	Survey of Staff SOP's in revised form Training completed Available online & revised Return to work interviews Register of pre-conditions Increased Sanitation stations Teams assigned Handwashing Breaks PPE available	Review of Sanitation Online Staff Survey Fortnightly review schedule to be completed Review Teams & Shift patterns	Joe Bloggs	1.8.2020	
Spread of corona virus	Guests	Pre-Booking Survey				

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
		SOP's online & revised Information Additional Sanitation Social Distancing Mensure				

This has been completed as a sample ONLY and you should look at your business operations, staff needs and SOP's to ensure that this risk assessment to a compliant standard.

More information on managing risk <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topic/covid-19-advice-and-guidance-places-work>