

Working Safely During COVID-19: Shops and Branches Guidance

1 - Thinking About Risk

- All employers should carry out a Covid-19 risk assessment. You could use the [Health and Safety Executive Shop Risk Assessment Tool](#).
- As part of your assessment, consider whether any employees are especially vulnerable to Covid-19.
- Share the results of your risk assessment with employees. Display [this notice](#) in shops to demonstrate compliance.

2 - Who should go to work?

- All employees should work from home, wherever possible.
- [Clinically vulnerable employees](#) who cannot work from home should be offered the safest possible on-site roles, if the level of risk is acceptable. [Clinically extremely vulnerable employees](#) must remain at home.
- Consider the impact of protected characteristics on level of risk for employees, making [reasonable adjustments](#) where necessary, so all employees are treated equally.

3 - Social Distancing at Work

- Follow [social distancing guidelines](#) to keep 2 metres about wherever possible.
- Where social distancing guidelines cannot always be met, take mitigating actions where possible. For example, increasing handwashing and installing screens at tills.
- You could also; introduce floor markings and signage, minimise contacts around transactions and use outside spaces for employee breaks to promote social distancing.

4 - Managing Your Customers, Visitors and Contractors

- To minimise contact you could limit the number of customers in store and implement queue management or one-way flow systems.
- In-store cafes should continue to be closed unless selling food for consumption off the premises.
- You should provide clear signage and guidance on social distancing and hygiene policies on arrival.

5 - Cleaning the Workplace

- Ensure air conditioning systems do not reduce ventilation levels during lower occupancy periods.
- Frequently clean objects and surfaces that are touched regularly and workspaces at the end of shifts.
- Provide hand sanitiser and regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.

6 - PPE and Face Coverings

- Do not encourage the precautionary use of PPE, which is extremely limited for providing additional protection.
- Face coverings (not face masks) can be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure for infected individuals who are asymptomatic.
- Employees cannot be required to wear face coverings. If used, face coverings should be washed daily.

7 - Workforce Management

- Create distinct groups of workers to minimise the number of contacts each colleague has.
- Minimise person-to-person contact during deliveries and minimise contact during exchange of documentation.
- Clearly communicate changes in workplace policies and procedures, avoiding face-to-face interactions where possible.

8 - Inbound and Outbound Goods

- Consider whether the frequency of deliveries can be reduced by ordering in larger quantities less often.
- Where possible, have a single colleague load or unload vehicles or using consistent pairs of colleagues where required.
- Encourage drivers to stay in vehicles during the exchange of goods.