

<b>STAYING COVID-19 SECURE</b>			
<b>Review</b>	Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak		Version 1.0
<b>Date</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2020		
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### Scope and reference

Management of business impact of global Coronavirus (COVID19) outbreak, considering;

### Summary

- 1 Business response to UK government guidelines
- 2 Risk assessment and actions

### Key updates on progress

### Detailed review

1. Thinking about risk
2. Who should go to work?
3. Social distancing at work
4. Managing your customers, visitors and contractors
5. Cleaning the workplace
6. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and face coverings
7. Workforce management
8. Inbound and outbound good

Key points of reference;

Government advice 'Working safely during Covid-19 Office and contact centres'

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97e7686650c278d4496ea/working-safely-during-covid-19-offices-contact-centres-110520.pdf>

## 1. Thinking about risk

### Approach

A full review of government guidance has been completed using resources at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

the output of which will be a detailed risk assessment that is shared with our internal teams and externally via our website:

- <https://www.patrickparsons.co.uk/>

### Engaging our people

Since the beginning of the Corona virus outbreak, we have implemented a detailed business continuity plan. A key focus of this plan was the wellbeing and support of our people. Steps taken to ensure all staff have had the opportunity to feed into our response are as follows:

- Business continuity planning (BCP) steering group – Made up of our senior leaders and a representative from each of our offices meet daily to raise any questions or concern
- Our CEO has completed weekly communications to all staff via email and held monthly meetings with all staff to keep teams posted and gather feedback.
- Our employee forum meetings have been increased in frequency to every two weeks. Each office has two staff representatives. Meetings are focused on discussing our Covid-19 response and provide opportunity for questions, concerns and suggestions to be raised both in advance and on the day.

### Objective of this assessment

To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

- In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.

Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option. Where working from home is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (keeping people 2m apart wherever possible).

Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.

Further mitigating actions include:

- Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.

- Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
- Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).

Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.

## **2. Who should go to work?**

### **Our approach**

Our Business continuity plan (BCP) focused on homeworking. Our full workforce has worked from home with access to all systems and information. While this has been a success, there have been pockets of team members that have struggled to work effectively from home. Reasons include;

- Home connectivity (Broadband speed)
- Ways of working
- Mental health considerations

Our key mitigation to Covid-19 risk is the majority of our workforce continuing to work from home. Those that are struggling to do so for the above reasons will be the exception.

Requests to work in the office will be considered by our BCP steering group so there is a clear control measure on the numbers of people that may be in one of our office spaces at any given time.

There are occasions where our team members may need to attend a site-based meeting or go to site to complete works. This has been infrequent over recent months. Where this is a client requirement, members of staff are able to go to a site-based meeting or work directly from home.

We have provided a separate clear guidance for these situations in this document.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Keeping in touch with home workers and monitoring wellbeing**

We are using Microsoft Teams and Zoom in order to collaborate while our workforce is home based.

These platforms have provided the tools we needed to hold large all group meetings, team meetings and conduct 'video' one to ones. There is an increased level of meetings to attempt to mitigate as far as possible the lower levels of interaction individuals are having during this period.

To support increased levels of social interaction we have implemented a full calendar of virtual social events and launched Yammer. Our teams are actively engaging and sharing.

## **2.1 Protecting people at higher risk**

As part of our BCP we have completed a review of any of our team members that we considered to be vulnerable. Clear actions assessed on an individual basis have been taken to support our team members in this category.

## **2.2 Self isolation**

Any member of staff that needs to self isolate is able to work from home.

## **2.3 Equality in the workplace**

During our Covid-19 response planning we have carefully considered the personal situations of all of our team members. This has allowed us to support all staff in the way most appropriate to them.

## **3. Social distancing at work**

### **3.1 Coming to work and leaving work**

Our current approach is to mitigate the need for social distancing as far as possible through home working. Office working will need to be requested by staff members and considered/agreed by our business continuity steering group.

#### **Arrival and departure times**

We will offer flexible working to any member of staff that decides and is approved to office work. Provided client needs can be serviced, the times at which office hours are completed will be at the discretion of the individual. Cleaners will attend the office outside of the hours people are present to reduce the amount of people in the office at any one time. This will be organised on a site by site basis.

#### **Additional parking and space for bicycles**

Our offices have limited parking. The consideration for returning workers will include their travel to work plans. Where possible we will provide parking spaces for those that drive and increased space for the storage of bicycles.

#### **Limiting passengers in company vehicles**

Our policy is that all company vehicles are limited to strictly single person occupancy at all time's during working hours. This includes personal vehicles used for company business.

#### **Reducing congestion**

We have completed visits to all of our office locations. Where possible there will be separate entry and exit points and one-way circulation systems. These arrangements will be clearly marked out for staff with appropriate signage.

#### **Providing storage for clothes and bags**

Our approach is to minimise as far as possible the number of people in our offices. As a result, there is far more storage space for personal belongings. Personal belongings should be stored away from workstations.

### **Using markings to manage flow of people**

Our offices will be clearly marked with one-way people flow systems and entry and exit points. If a one way system is not possible priority of people flows and stopping points to ensure social distancing will be clearly marked.

### **Hand cleaning at entry and exit points**

During working hours when the buildings are occupied, doors will be propped open where appropriate but will be closed again each day when the buildings are vacated for fire safety. This will not include entry and exit doors. As a result, we will provide hand cleansing stations at all entry and exits.

## **3.2 Moving around buildings and worksites**

### **Moving around our buildings**

Numbers in our offices will be significantly reduced. Those that do attend an office will be allowed to work flexibly. There will be times when there are multiple people in our offices. Staff will be encouraged to limit movement around the buildings, working at their own desk.

Where movement is required clear markings people flow will be followed. Multiple use items such as printers will have adequate cleaning materials.

## **3.3 Work places and work stations**

### **Review layouts**

We have completed detailed plans of each of our offices, detailing desk space that can be used in order to maintain social distancing guidance. Working at a personal desk will achieve the 2m social distancing guidelines. No hot desking will be permitted.

### **Appendix 2**

These plans clearly detail the total maximum occupancy based on current guidelines.

Desks will be allocated per individual approved to attend the office in advance of their return.

### **Occupancy levels**

Occupancy levels will be kept to a minimum in offices and will not rise above the levels at which social distancing can be achieved.

The control for this is all requests for office working being considered by the BCP steering group.

## **3.4 Meetings**

We have implemented virtual meeting tools; Microsoft Teams and Zoom. These are available for our teams to conduct both internal and external meetings.

All internal meetings should be held by virtual means. All internal meeting rooms will be closed.

There will be occasions where external meetings and works need to be carried out on site with clients. Which is covered in our separate guidance here;

## Appendix 1

### 3.5 Common areas

#### Shared buildings

We have considered our buildings that share areas with other tenants / occupants within the same building. Our Gateshead office has the greatest amount of shared space and has no separate toilet or kitchens. As a result of this, at this time we will not re-open this office.

#### Breaks and food

Our teams will be able to work flexibly when in the office so working times of those in are likely to differ. Individuals will be encouraged to take any breaks at different times to others in the office.

Kitchen and toilet facilities will be restricted to one person at a time. This will be clearly signposted to teams.

Teams will be encouraged to bring their own food to work in an airtight container. Fridge facilities will be provided as normal, but there will be more space per individual due to lower numbers of staff in the office.

Toilet facilities will be allocated per individual in the office.

Teams will be encouraged to limit as far as possible leaving the premises at break times reducing interaction with other people.

#### Reception areas

Our reception areas will remain closed at present, a buzzer system is in place in all offices to notify staff of things such as deliveries.

Our reception areas are controlled by a bell to ring for entry with clearly signed instructions for visitors and staff alike.

### 3.6 Accidents, security and other incidents

Social distancing measures are not required during an emergency situation such as a fire.

People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

## **4. Managing customer visitors and contractors**

### **4.1 Manage contacts**

We have implemented Microsoft Teams and Zoom to manage both internal and external meetings. This option should be provided to all external parties before agreeing a face to face meeting.

Where face to face meetings are necessary it is likely they would occur at a client location, particularly site specific visits. Team members should request in advance the guidance from the business responsible for the location at which the visit is planned.

Internally our onsite meeting rooms are currently out of operation. This should limit our onsite contacts.

Our reception areas are controlled by a bell to ring for entry with clearly signed instructions.

Where site visits are required, for example tradesmen working on our property. In the first instance they should be pointed to our website to review our risk assessment:

<https://www.patrickparsons.co.uk/>

All sites have visitor sign in books that should be completed.

When booking any work only one trades person should be on the premises at any one time.

Any request to deviate from this guidance should be made to the BCP steering team who meet daily at 3pm.

### **4.2 Providing and explaining available guidance**

Our risk assessment and guidance will be published on our website, and potential visitors will be directed here before attending any of our locations.

Internal teams will consume the contents of this document through our learning management system, where it will be mandatory reading. This will be recorded once completed and reports to check completion can be generated.

Our offices have clear signage displayed at entry and exit points and throughout the building. All visitors will use the detailed entry and exit routes set out clearly with signage.

Any member of staff hosting a visitor will be responsible for them during their stay.

Where facilities such as toilets and kitchens in buildings are shared with other tenants our current approach is not to open them.

## **5. Cleaning**

### **5.1 before re-opening**

Ventilation systems will be reviewed against guidance that has been considered by our MEP discipline.

Where safe to do so, we will encourage teams to open external windows and doors.

Each office will receive a cleaning service from our external providers.

## **5.2 Keeping the workplace clean**

Offices will be cleaned by our cleaning partners daily.

Team members will be working at single use work stations assigned to them. There will be no hot desk working allowed. Cleaning of your workstation the assigned staff should take place at the beginning and end of a shift.

We will focus on maintaining a clear desk policy.

Printers will be cleaned after every use, activated using non touch access cards. Touch pads/ buttons should only be used where absolutely necessary. Cleaning wipes will be provided at each printed and the printer should be cleaned with wipes before and after use.

Kitchen areas should be used by only one person at any one time. Clear signage will communicate this to team members. Team members should use hand sanitiser before and after using the kitchen areas.

Should there be a confirmed case of Corona Virus the cleaning procedure should follow this guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

## **5.3 Hygiene - handwashing, sanitation facilities and toilets**

Good handwashing technique is important, hands should be washed thoroughly for 20 seconds. Hands should be washed frequently using soap and hot water in toilet facilities and using the multiple hand sanitising stations. Team members should avoid touching their face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

Hand sanitation stations will be situated around our offices. These will be in all Kitchen areas, entrance and exits to the office and at other convenient locations.

Toilet access will be limited to only one person at any one time, with toilet facilities allocated per individual attending the office. Adequate cleaning provisions are available in all toilets. Wash your hands and use hand drying facilities.

Our cleaning provisions will be reviewed and enhanced in partnership with our cleaning suppliers.

## **5.4 Changing rooms and shower**

We do not have changing room facilities in any of our office locations. Shower facilities will be out of use at present.

## 5.5 Handling goods, merchandise and other materials, and onsite vehicles

Any deliveries of goods or merchandise into offices should be robustly cleaned prior to opening or use. This includes any packaging. Team members that open packages should wear gloves when opening any items. This also applies to team members sharing survey or monitoring equipment, which has been transported between offices and/or staff members.

Any non-work deliveries to our offices are prohibited until further notice.

Company vehicles should be used by one individual at any one time. Vehicles will ideally be assigned only to one individual. You must avoid touching your face whilst using the vehicle. High touch areas of the vehicle should be cleaned before and after use. Team members operating a vehicle should wash their hands before and after use and should carry hand sanitiser in the vehicle.

The same guidance on vehicles also applies if you are using your own vehicle on company business.

## 6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

Our guidance on PPE is unchanged. PPE use should continue to be used and identified in accordance with our standard risk assessments as normal.

### 6.1 Face coverings

We will follow government guidance on face coverings. Current government guidance is here:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97e7686650c278d4496ea/working-safely-during-covid-19-offices-contact-centres-110520.pdf>

It states:

*Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by law, including in the workplace. If you choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off.*

*Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one.*

*This means telling workers:*

- *Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a 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.*
- *Continue to wash your hands regularly.*
- *Change and wash your face covering daily.*

- *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.*
- *Practise social distancing wherever possible. You can make face-coverings at home and can find guidance on how to do this and use them safely on GOV.UK*

## **7. Workforce Management**

### **7.1 Shift patterns and working groups**

Our approach is for the large majority of our workforce to continue to work from home. Only small numbers of people will regularly attend our offices. Team members attending the office will be only on an exception basis and approved by the BCP steering group.

There should be no need in our offices for team members to need to pass each other items. Any handover of work can be completed electronically.

### **7.2 Work related travel**

All internal meetings will be held electronically. The only travel required will be to essential client meetings or site works. In all cases for site visits our teams should refer to the following document:

#### **Appendix 1**

Company vehicles should be used by one individual at any one time. Vehicles will ideally be assigned only to one individual. High touch areas of the vehicle should be cleaned before and after use. Team members operating a vehicle should wash their hands before and after use and should carry hand sanitiser in the vehicle.

In the unlikely event that a team member needs to stay away from home in the present environment, it will be centrally logged. Accommodation will only be booked where a property shares its Covid Secure risk assessment.

### **7.3 Communication and Training**

We are actively engaging with our teams. Weekly communications are sent from the CEO to the whole business. Monthly all business updates are held via video conferencing. We have increased our employee forum to meet every two weeks, with discussion focused on our Covid-19 approach.

While the majority of our team will remain home working, this 'Covid Secure' document will be shared with all via our learning management platform; LinkedIn Learning. Our office locations have very clear signage to detail ways of working for those that attend. Any attendance will be managed by exception by our BCP steering group.

For any individual approved to return to office working, robust follow up by a line manager will take place on the understanding of our agreed office working practices.

We will clearly communicate our approach externally via our website. Any suppliers due to attend site will be asked to review our guide in advance.

Supporting our teams through this challenging time is important. We are taking additional steps to engage the wider business with a series of work related and social activities, particularly as we have moved the large majority of our workforce to home working.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

#### **8. Inbound and outbound goods**

Our reception areas are controlled by a buzzer to make staff aware of a potential delivery.

Deliveries should be left by the delivery operative at the office door.

The member of staff receiving the delivery should wear gloves.

Any deliveries of goods or merchandise into offices should be robustly cleaned prior to opening or use. This includes any packaging. Team members that open packages should wash their hands immediately after opening.

## **Appendix**

### **Appendix 1 – SOP site works during Coronavirus**



PP SOP Site Works  
During Coronavirus V

### **Appendix 2 – Site seating plans (social distancing enabled)**

#### **Birmingham**



40 St Pauls Square  
COVID-19 Seating Pla

#### **Twickenham**



TWI-011.pdf



TWI-012.pdf

#### **Guildford**



Guildford social  
distance layout.pdf

#### **Huddersfield**



COVID-19 Safe  
Working Plan Layout1

