

# Coronavirus (Covid-19) checklist for businesses April 2021

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021 and associated regulations, set out the latest Covid restrictions in particular businesses. Some of the rules on what you can and cannot do, changed on 12 April 2021, as part of the Spring Roadmap 2021. However, many restrictions remain in place. It is important that we all follow the government guidelines to limit the spread of coronavirus. Where workplaces are open, precautions need to be taken to reduce risks to both the workers and the public. This checklist will help you to put in place measures in your workplace to keep both employees and customers safe.

**Where you are unable to introduce measures to control the risk from coronavirus and to be 'Covid Secure' you will need to consider closing your business.**

<b>Employee safety</b>	Done?
<p>You must carry out a suitable &amp; sufficient <b>risk assessment</b> to identify the main risks of Covid-19 in your workplace and control measures needed to manage the risk. Where you have fewer than 5 employees or, are self-employed then you do not need to write down the significant findings of your risk assessment. HSE have a template to help you do this. Employers have a duty to consult with employees on health and safety matters.</p>	
<p>Businesses and workplaces should encourage their employees to work at home if they can and to minimise the number of journeys they make, where possible. Where staff are required to be at work, <b>social distancing is still very important</b>. They should stay 2 metres apart from anyone who is not in their household or support bubble where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings) if they cannot stay 2 metres apart.</p> <p>You must assess the steps needed to reduce the risk of transmission between staff and any customers who may be in the premises. You must put these steps in place.</p> <p>Social distancing applies to all parts of a business, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, changing rooms, shared vehicles and similar settings.</p>	
<p><b>Fitness to work</b> -To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues daily to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating. Try to enable workers to work from home while self -isolating if this is appropriate.</p>	
<p><b>Identify employees who are at higher risk of infection or clinically extremely vulnerable</b>, and ensure you are protecting them as far as possible. The higher-risk groups include those who are older males; have a high body mass index (BMI); have health conditions such as diabetes and / or are from some Black, Asian or minority ethnicity (BAME) The clinically extremely vulnerable are no longer advised to shield. However, you should continue to follow the <a href="#">guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable</a> and are advised to continue taking extra precautions to protect themselves by keeping the number of social interactions low and limit the amount of time in settings where it is difficult to maintain social distancing. Note that the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until 30 September 2021.</p>	
<p>Try to maintain dedicated work teams (cohorting, fixed teams or partnering) so each person works with only a few others.</p>	

Provide handwashing stations with soap, water and a hygienic means to dry hands - encourage staff to use them. All staff to wash their hands regularly using soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, before/after using shared equipment and prior to eating. Provide hand sanitising stations in multiple locations in addition to washrooms especially at entranceways. Workers should cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue, then dispose of the tissue in a bin and immediately wash their hands. Anyone with a persistent cough should not be at work.	
Communicate with staff on a regular basis to remind them to follow social distancing advice and wash their hands regularly.	
Where possible use contact-less, digital, and remote transfers of material rather than paper format, such as using e-forms, emails and e-banking.	
Allocate workspaces to employees that are at least 2 metres apart or 1m+ with mitigations, where 2m is not viable, these can be marked out with tape. Equipment and fittings could be re-arranged to accommodate social distancing. Further mitigating actions include: – further 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)	
Increase the <b>ventilation</b> within the enclosed work areas by opening doors and windows as frequently as you can and by turning on ventilation systems that draw fresh air in. Maximise fresh air but minimise recirculated air in enclosed work areas.	
Increase the frequency of <b>cleaning and disinfection</b> . Attention to be given to shared equipment and hand contact surfaces including work surfaces, tables, chairs, switches, door handles, push plates on doors, toilets, hand towel dispensers, taps etc. Check that you are using sanitisers that comply with BS EN 1276 and that staff are adhering to the correct contact time and dilution rates.	
<b>Coronavirus Testing</b> - Rapid lateral flow testing is now available free to anybody without symptoms. You can get your tests from pharmacies, testing sites, and some employers. Testing twice a week will help make sure you don't have COVID-19, reducing the risk to those around you. If you have symptoms you should continue to <a href="#">get a PCR test</a> .	
<b>Public safety</b>	
Remind customers and staff to wear face coverings, where they are required, for example, through use of signage.	
Businesses, particularly in the hospitality & tourism sector should not intentionally facilitate gatherings between a greater number of people than is permitted; and should take steps to ensure customer compliance with the rules on social contact.	
Introduce telephone, email and internet ordering to limit public access to the premises.	
Provide a delivery service to the public to limit access to the premises.	
If a click and collect service is offered, provide a designated collection time.	

Display a sign/poster at the entrance to remind customers not to enter the premises if they have symptoms.	
Provide sanitiser with an alcohol content of at least 60% for customers/staff to clean the basket/trolley handle and to sanitise hands.	
<p>Where the public access the premises, introduce control measures to implement the social distancing guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff may need to act as stewards to advise customers on social distancing. Calculating the maximum number of customers that can reasonably follow social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m+ with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable) within the store and any outdoor selling areas. Work out total floorspace as well as likely pinch points and busy areas.</li> <li>• Set clear limits on the safe number of customers in the premises, overall and in any congestion areas, for example doorways between outside and inside spaces and toilets.</li> <li>• Encouraging customers to use hand sanitiser or handwashing facilities as they enter the premises. Use signage where necessary.</li> <li>• Suspend or reduce customer services that cannot be undertaken without contravening social distancing guidelines.</li> <li>• Introduce queue management or one-way flow, where possible.</li> <li>• Public toilets, portable toilets and toilets inside premises should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission</li> </ul>	
<p>Customers should not be directly in front of the till operator without a control measure. Options to control risk include:</p> <p>Provide a 'sneeze screen' barrier to protect both customers and the till operative. Alternatively, create an exclusion zone around the till area with a customer notice 'Please stand behind the line while being served'</p>	
Avoid playing loud music that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult.	
Encourage contactless payments. Place a sign at the till 'Please use contactless payment if you are able to do so.'	
Frequent cleaning and disinfection of shared customer touch points including handheld checkout devices, keypads at check out, fridge/freezer handles, escalator and staircase handrails, on site ATMs etc.	
To support <b>NHS Test &amp; Trace</b> , certain specified businesses & venues must display the official NHS QR code poster. If this applies to your business, ask every customer or visitor aged 16 and over to check in to your venue or provide their <b>contact details</b> . This can be done quickly and easily using the NHS COVID-19 app to scan in the NHS QR code poster. Have a system in place to ensure that you can collect that information from your customers and visitors who do not have a smartphone or do not want to use the NHS COVID-19 app. You must keep this data for 21 days and provide it to NHS Test and Trace if it is needed. Remember to keep a clear record of employees on duty each shift.	

Further information is available on the following websites:

**Businesses & Venues** [Closing certain businesses and venues in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/closing-certain-businesses-and-venues-in-england)

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

**Self-isolation** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

**Shielding & Clinically Vulnerable** [Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Protect vulnerable workers - Working safely during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

**Guidance for pregnant women** <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

**Coronavirus FAQ's:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

**Guidance for employers & businesses** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

**Worker Support** [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Work and financial support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Guidance for food businesses** [COVID-19: guidance for food businesses - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Guidance on food delivery and takeaway** <https://www.cieh.org/policy/coronavirus-covid-19/resources/>

**Guidance on cleaning in businesses** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

**Ventilation** [Ventilation and air conditioning during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

**NHS Test and Trace** [Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**NHS QR Code** [Create a coronavirus NHS QR code for your venue - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Face Coverings** [Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Covid Secure poster** [Staying COVID-secure notice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Job Retention Scheme** [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Coronavirus Testing** [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Covid Workplace Outbreak notifications** <http://www.durham.gov.uk/covid19controlplan>

**Covid Vaccination Programme** [COVID-19 vaccination programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Helping Workplaces reopen safely** [Youtube: Helping workplaces reopen safely - Covid-19](#)

**Better Business for All** <https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/scheme/business-support/better-business-for-all-regulatory-advice/>

## Contact details:

Please contact Durham County Council or HSE if you need further advice:

- **Community Protection, Neighbourhoods and Climate, Durham County Council**, Annand House, Meadowfield, Durham DH7 8RS  
Telephone: 03000 260000, or Email: [ehcp@durham.gov.uk](mailto:ehcp@durham.gov.uk) or by the 'Do -it-online' system <https://doitonline.durham.gov.uk/>
- **Health & Safety Executive (HSE) COVID-19 enquiries**  
Telephone: 0300 790 6787 or [Make a working safely enquiry · Customer Self-Service \(microsoftcrmportals.com\)](#)