

Imperium Law Solicitors Limited COVID-19: COVID Secure Risk Assessment

This Risk Assessment forms part of Imperium Law's COVID-19 Business Continuity Planning. It is based upon and should be read in conjunction with the advice provided by Public Health England, Public Health Wales and Health Protection Scotland, which provides the most up to date advice from the UK Government on what everyone should do following the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and how our statutory obligations need to be adapted to fit the current pandemic.

The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 impose a duty on us to ensure our workplace is safe. The COVID-19 pandemic involves the transmission of an infectious disease which has to be considered in line with The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.

We expect all colleagues to follow the advice from the UK Government on Social Distancing and support the national effort to protect citizens and colleagues.

As at 11th May 2020 the current Coronavirus Guidance on Restrictions from the Government is "**Stay Alert**" which now means that:

"We can all help control the virus if we all stay alert. This means you must:

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- wash your hands regularly

Self-isolate if you or anyone in your household has symptoms."

This Risk Assessment will remain under review as and when further guidance is provided.

Assessment Date: 22 June 2020

Re-assessment: 17th July 2020

Next Review Date(s): 1st August 2020 or sooner should this be considered required by either the Company or new Government Guidance.

Location Office: Imperium Law Solicitors Limited, Wesley Chapel, 22 Sunderland Street, Macclesfield, SK11 6JL.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls Required	Additional Controls	Action by who?	Action by when?	Complete
PEOPLE	Staff	<p>We are adhering to the Stay Alert restrictions and guidance provided by the Government to avoid the risk of infection. This includes office configuration, social distancing, visual reminders, ventilation and increased hygiene measures.</p> <p>To ensure that the office configuration complies with the current social distancing restrictions, some members of staff will work from home as and when required.</p> <p>All staff should be reminded of their duties to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others affected by their acts or omissions at work under Section 7 of The Health and Safety at Work Act.</p>	<p>All staff should be expected to read and acknowledge understanding of and adherence to this risk assessment and the Health and Safety in the Workplace Policy, failing which disciplinary action may be taken.</p> <p>Staff have access to the use of Teams and mobile phone applications enabling them to use the Company phone system.</p> <p>Staff should avoid the use of public transport, using their own vehicles or where possible walking to work. Staff should not share vehicles where suitable distancing cannot be achieved.</p> <p>Staff will be required to declare on an ongoing basis compliance to the Stay Alert Guidance and immediately notify the HR Director of any breach of the rules by themselves or another they have come into contact with.</p> <p>Staff will be required to certify to the Company to the best of their knowledge their fitness for role. They will proactively disclose any changes in their health condition in relation to coronavirus symptoms before attending the office by following the Absence Reporting Procedure for additional guidance.</p> <p>Staff will notify the Company if any member of their household or member of their close family with whom they or a member of their household come into contact with works with or is likely to come into contact with COVID-19 as part of their occupation e.g. nurses, doctors, care workers etc.</p>			

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			Staff at increased risk of infection as a result of the above or any personal circumstances placing them at increased risk of infection should be asked to continue to work from home. In the event they require access to the office they should make arrangements for the same through the HR Director who should arrange for additional controls to be put in place to minimise the risk to all staff.			
PEOPLE	Vulnerable Groups – Staff Members (Elderly, Pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions)	<p>All staff in this category should work from home.</p> <p>In the event a staff member in a vulnerable group feels it is necessary to attend the office they must contact the HR Director to discuss obtaining permission and, if granted, making safe arrangements for the same.</p>	HR Director to risk assess to avoid attendance and identify whether staff within the office can complete the part of work that requires office attendance. In the event that a suitable alternative staff member cannot complete that part of the work the HR Director will arrange for attendance to be supported using enhanced social distancing rules to minimise the risk.			
PEOPLE	Vulnerable Groups – Staff Members in close contact with (Elderly, Pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions)	<p>All staff in this category should work from home.</p> <p>In the event a staff member in contact with a vulnerable group member feels it is necessary to attend the office they must contact the HR Director to discuss obtaining permission and, if granted, making safe arrangements for the same.</p>	HR Director to risk assess to avoid attendance and identify whether staff within the office can complete the part of work that requires office attendance. In the event that a suitable alternative staff member cannot complete that part of the work the HR Director will arrange for attendance to be supported using enhanced social distancing rules to minimise the risk.			

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PEOPLE	Cleaners	<p>The office cleaner is permitted to enter the premises for the purposes of cleaning.</p> <p>To minimise the risk the office cleaner is an allocated individual as opposed to use of a general agency providing staff on rotation.</p> <p>All staff are requested to leave their workspace tidy and clean and ensure they have cleaned any surfaces, crockery and cutlery they have used to avoid the risk of excessive workload on cleaning staff.</p>	<p>Operational times for cleaning are earlier in the morning to avoid contact with Staff.</p> <p>Rigorous checks should be carried out by Line Managers to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed to ensure the cleaners' time is maximised on essential infection control.</p>			
PEOPLE	Visitors	<p>Visitors are not presently permitted to the office for any reason save for Emergency Service personnel.</p> <p>The office door is locked and therefore permission can only be granted by the serviced reception area via an audio door entry system.</p>				
PEOPLE	Delivery Drivers	<p>The office door is locked and therefore permission can only be granted by the serviced reception area via an audio door entry system.</p> <p>Deliveries are requested to be left in the downstairs reception area of the building for our safe, socially distanced collection.</p>	<p>All non-essential purchases for delivery are prohibited.</p> <p>Essential purchases for delivery are planned in advance to identify where transactions can be either avoided or amalgamated.</p> <p>Deliveries should be moved to an isolated space within the office and not opened for a period of 72 hours after delivery.</p> <p>Gloves, wipes and hand gel are also available for staff.</p>			

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PEOPLE	Anyone else who physically comes in contact with you in relation to your business	The office is rented. If the Landlord (Cheshire Peaks & Plains Housing Trust Ltd) needs to attend the office, this will be organised at a time to minimise risk i.e. when the office is closed.	Risk Assessments and Policies in respect of coronavirus will be shared and mutually agreed between any parties who need to come in to contact with us in relation to our business.			
INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19</p> <p>If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough, a high temperature, loss or change to their sense of taste or smell, in the workplace they should be sent home immediately, self-isolate for a period of 7 days and are advised to follow the stay at home guidance and obtain a test.</p> <p>Staff are required to inform the HR Director of the results of their test.</p> <p>Line Managers should maintain regular contact with staff members during this time.</p> <p>If advised that a member of staff or public has developed COVID-19 and were recently on our premises the management team of the workplace should contact the Public Health Authority to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and should take advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken.</p> <p>https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/</p>	<p>Internal communication channels and cascading of messages through Line Managers will be carried out regularly to reassure and support employees in a fast-changing situation.</p> <p>Line Managers will offer support to staff who are affected by coronavirus or have a family member affected.</p> <p>Staff should also be asked to stay at home if they are taking simple medications such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin which may mask the symptoms of infection.</p>			

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		<p>Continue to follow advice for self-isolation: If you have symptoms of coronavirus, self-isolate for 7 days.</p> <p>After 7 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if you do not have a high temperature, you can stop self-isolating • if you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal <p>You do not need to keep self-isolating if you just have a cough after 7 days. A cough can last for weeks after the infection has gone.</p> <p>If you live with someone who has symptoms: If you live with someone who has symptoms, self-isolate for 14 days from the day their symptoms started.</p> <p>This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear.</p> <p>If more than 1 person at home has symptoms, self-isolate for 14 days from the day the first person started having symptoms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you get symptoms while self-isolating – you should self-isolate for 7 days from when your symptoms started, even if it means you're self-isolating for longer than 14 days. • If you do not get symptoms while self-isolating – you can stop self-isolating after 14 days. 				

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<p>INFECTION CONTROL</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>HAND WASHING</p> <p>Staff should wash their hands, on entry to and exit of the building, as well as regularly during the day.</p> <p>Staff should ensure they do not use the facilities in the kitchen for handwashing but use the bathrooms provided.</p> <p>Staff should be reminded of the hand washing guidance. https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/</p> <p>Staff should dry their hands with disposable paper towels. https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/research-and-innovation/paper-towels-much-more-effective-at-removing-viruses-than-hand-dryers-17-04-2020/</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to protect the skin by applying emollient cream regularly. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/emollients/</p> <p>Hand washing facilities with soap and water are available and gel sanitisers are located across the office and in communal areas for ease of staff access and in compliance with The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.</p>	<p>Staff should be reminded regularly to wash their hands for 20 seconds with water and soap and be aware of the importance of proper drying with disposable towels. Staff should also be reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – Follow “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it” and avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues should be made available throughout the workplace.</p> <p>Staff should be encouraged to report any problems and carry out skin checks as part of a skin surveillance programme. https://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/professional/health-surveillance.htm</p> <p>Signs are placed within the office to remind staff to wash their hands.</p>			

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INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>CLEANING</p> <p>Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly particularly in areas of high use such as door handles, light switches, reception area using appropriate cleaning products and methods.</p> <p>Gloves to be worn when emptying bins, and hands washed thoroughly with additional use of hand sanitiser after handling waste.</p>	<p>Rigorous checks should be carried out by Line Managers to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed.</p> <p>Staff must sanitise their hands before and after use of any communal equipment such as photocopiers.</p>			
INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>SOCIAL DISTANCING</p> <p>Social Distancing is in place reducing the number of persons in any work area to comply with the 2-metre (6.5 foot) gap recommended by the Public Health Agency. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing</p> <p>Management should take steps to review work schedules including start & finish times/shift patterns, working from home etc. to reduce number of workers on site at any one time. Also relocating workers to other tasks.</p> <p>Conference calls to be used instead of face to face meetings.</p> <p>Social distancing also to be adhered to in communal areas with restricted access.</p> <p>Staff should operate working on a side to side basis as far as is reasonably practicable as opposed to face to face working. Where there is face to face working, social distancing rules remain, with the addition of protection by privacy barriers.</p>	<p>Staff to be reminded daily of the importance of social distancing both in the workplace and outside of it.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded if close contact is unavoidable to keep it less than 15 minutes.</p> <p>Staff to be arranged to have at least one empty desk space between them.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded to navigate the office to adhere to this.</p> <p>Management checks to ensure this is adhered to.</p> <p>Management to ensure that the office configuration enables social distancing i.e. no face to face working, at least one empty desk between side by side workers, no direct back to back working.</p> <p>Management should coordinate use of key equipment, such as printers, to reduce contact. Staff are allocated to a specific printer and are reminded to maintain social distancing when using the same. Only one person will be permitted at a printer at any one time.</p>			

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		https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely	Where staff are assigned to specific tasks, management should avoid rotation to reduce the risk of creating cross contamination.			
INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>HEALTH SURVEILLANCE</p> <p>Coronavirus testing is available to anyone with symptoms and how to obtain a test can be found at https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/</p> <p>Further guidance can be found on the Government's website in relation to track and trace. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works</p>	<p>Staff should be tested if they have symptoms and if offered a test for any reason should not unreasonably refuse to be tested.</p> <p>Staff should immediately inform Management if they have symptoms and have requested a test. They should also then follow the isolation guidance.</p>			
INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>USE OF FACILITIES INCLUDING COMMUNAL FACILITIES</p> <p>Staff should adhere to Social Distancing Rules with respect to use of the facilities.</p> <p>Staff should bring in pre-prepared meals and eat at their desks where possible.</p>	Staff should navigate the office adhering to social distancing rules.			

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INFECTION CONTROL	Staff	<p>PPE</p> <p>Where a risk of infection is identified despite having applied all feasible safety measures then PPE must be used.</p> <p>Where Risk Assessment identifies wearing of gloves as a requirement of the job, an adequate supply of these should be provided. Staff should be instructed on how to remove gloves carefully to reduce contamination and how to dispose of them safely.</p> <p>PPE is not currently recommended outside of clinical and care environments.</p>	<p>Staff to be reminded that wearing of gloves is not a substitute for good hand washing.</p>			
GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	Staff	<p>MENTAL HEALTH</p> <p>Management should promote mental health & wellbeing awareness to staff during the coronavirus outbreak and should offer whatever support they can to help.</p> <p>Reference: https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/ https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/ www.hseni.gov.uk/stress</p> <p>Remote staff are in regular and periodic contact with their Line Managers.</p>	<p>Regular and internal communication channels and cascading of messages through Line Managers should be carried out regularly to reassure and support employees in a fast-changing situation.</p> <p>Line Managers should offer support to staff who are affected by coronavirus or has a family member affected.</p> <p>Open door policy for those who need additional support.</p> <p>Signposting Services document prepared to assist staff in obtaining any support required.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to engage with HR where needed.</p>			

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GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	Staff	ADEQUATE REST Staff should be reminded of the importance of taking adequate rest breaks.	Line Managers to ensure adequate rest breaks are being taken and engage with staff over wellbeing.			
FIRE SAFETY	Staff	All areas are within reasonable access of emergency exits and located employees can hear the alarm and are suitably covered by any fire wardens. Evacuation procedure reviewed to ensure that there are sufficient fire wardens and that muster points will allow safe social distancing.				
FIRST AID	Staff	The number of first aiders is adequate to meet number of personnel returns to the premises.	First aiders to be given information from the Resuscitation Council. https://www.resus.org.uk/covid-19-resources/covid-19-resources-general-public/resuscitation-council-uk-statement-covid-19			