

- **Section Title**

Working Safely during Covid-19 in other people's homes

- **Introduction to the Review Process**

This guidance document is one of a number of documents covering different work environments. Many businesses operate in multiple work environments. For example a factory might also have office staff and people operating vehicles. To guide employers and employees through the documents, they will be accompanied by an introduction explaining how the guidance can be used to keep everyone safe in their workplace. This will explain how to follow the guidance if your business operates in multiple work environments.

Please review this document in its entirety. Having reviewed all the sections please return to the top of this page and start answering the questions in the right hand pane of the site.

We are looking for as much feedback as possible at this stage. If there is a \* next to the field this is mandatory - you will need to answer the question before you can submit your review.

Having completed all the mandatory and the optional questions you want to answer please click the "Submit Review" button. After that feel free to close the browser.

If you do not click the "Submit Review" button any answers you have added will NOT be saved.

If you need to make amendments to your review, after having clicked 'Submit Review', you may make these changes directly to the same form and then clicking 'Update Review' to save those changes.

**If you are providing feedback for multiple documents:** when you are ready to move on to your next review, go to the top of the page and click on the white 'x' symbol in a white circle (if you hover your mouse over the symbol will say 'go back to the task overview'). In this window you will find your remaining 'Incomplete tasks'. If you need to make amendments to any previously completed tasks, change the filter at the top left to 'All tasks' and select the document you would like to make changes to and follow the same process to 'Update Review' and save changes.

We would like to thank you for your input to this important process.

- **Image**

[zoom\\_in](#)



- **Please review the following content**

## ***Guidance Document Begins Here***

### **Introduction**

This document is to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the Covid-19 pandemic, keeping as many people as possible 2 metres apart from those they do not live with. We hope it gives you a practical framework to think about what you need to do to continue, or restart, operations during the Covid-19 pandemic. We understand how important it is to work safely and support your employees' health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Government is clear that workers will not be forced into an unsafe workplace.

This document has been prepared by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) with input from firms, unions and industry bodies and in consultation with Public Health England (PHE) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

We expect that this document will be updated over time. This version is up to date as of [date of publication]. You can check for updates at [www.gov.uk/covid19/workingsafely](http://www.gov.uk/covid19/workingsafely). If you have any feedback for us that we should include in the next version, please email [workingsafely@beis.gov.uk](mailto:workingsafely@beis.gov.uk).

This document is one of a set of documents about how to work safely in different types of workplace. This one is designed to be relevant for people who provide services in, and to, people's homes (whether employed or self-employed) as well as employers of these individuals (which may include households). It will also be relevant to agencies who work with these individuals.

## How to use this guidance

This document sets out guidance across the main areas you need to follow to work safely.

It gives practical considerations of how this can be applied within the **blue boxes**.

Each business will need to translate this into the specific actions it needs to take depending on the nature of their business (i.e. the size and type of business, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated) using this document as a guide.

To help you decide which actions to take, you should carry out an appropriate Covid-19 risk assessment, just as you would for other Health and Safety related obligations. This risk assessment should be done in consultation with unions or employees.

## What do we mean by “working in, visiting or delivering to homes”?

We acknowledge that this is a complex environment due to the varied employment relationships, including the self-employed, employers and agencies. This guidance applies to those working in, visiting or delivering to home environments. These include, but are not limited to, people working in the following areas:

- In home workers – such as repair services, wellbeing or lifestyle services, cleaners, cooks and surveyors (this is not an exhaustive list).
- To home services – such as delivery drivers momentarily at the door.

This guidance does not directly apply to nannies who spend all their time with one household, or to their employers.

# 1. Risk assessment

**Objective:** That all employers and self-employed people carry out a risk assessment.

You should make sure that the risk assessment for your business addresses the risks of Covid-19, using this guidance to inform your decisions and control measures. If you have fewer than five employees, you don't have to write anything down. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need.

Employers have a duty to consult employees on health and safety. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the work and how you will manage risks from Covid-19. Your employees are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to work well. Involving them in making decisions shows that you take their health and safety seriously. In a small business, you might choose to consult your workers directly. Larger businesses may consult through a health and safety representative, chosen by your employees or selected by a trade union. As an employer, you cannot decide who the representative will be.

At its most effective, full involvement of your workers creates a culture where relationships between employers and employees are based on collaboration, trust and joint problem solving. As is normal practice, employees should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer.

Where the Enforcing Authority, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or your Local Authority, identifies employers who are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation and guidance to control public health risks, they will consider taking a range of actions to improve control of workplace risks. For example, this would cover employers not taking appropriate action to socially distance or to ensure workers in the shielded category can follow the NHS advice to self-isolate for the period specified. The actions HSE can take include the provision of specific advice to employers through to issuing enforcement notices to help secure improvements.

Employers and employees should always work together to resolve issues. If concerns still cannot be resolved, employees can raise them with HSE using an online form at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm>.

***What we expect employers to consider:***

- Constructively engaging with employees when carrying out a risk assessment.
- Ensuring the results of any assessment are visible and communicated to employees.
- Ensuring that the actions taken as the result of the assessment do not disproportionately impact those with disabilities and consider how to support those with disabilities to comply with social distancing.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- No work should be carried out in a household which is isolating because one or more family members has symptoms or where an individual has been advised to shield - unless it is to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household.
- When working in a household where somebody is vulnerable (but has not been asked to shield), for example the home of someone over 70, prior arrangements should be made with vulnerable people to avoid any face-to-face contact – for example, when answering the door. You should be particularly strict about handwashing and respiratory hygiene.
- Staying updated with the latest guidance and considering how it can be applied to your work. This can include:
  - Washing your hands more often than usual for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose.

- Reducing the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue and throw the tissue in a bin immediately, then wash your hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- Maintain social distance as far as possible.
- Communicating with households prior to any visit to discuss how the work will be carried out to minimise risk for all parties.

## 2. Who should go to work

**Objective:** That everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home.

*It is recognised that for providers of in-home services, it is often not possible to work from home.*

### ***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Finding digital or remote alternatives to physical, in-home work where possible such as video or phone consultations.
- Discussing working environment and practices with householders and clients in advance to confirm how the work will be carried out, if a physical visit is needed.
- Employers and agencies should keep in touch with employees (who they might usually meet with face-to-face) on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.

**Example: video consultation to understand if a physical visit is needed**

## 2.1 Protecting people who are at higher risk

**Objective:** To protect vulnerable individuals.

- Shielded extremely vulnerable individuals (see definition in Appendix) must not work outside the home.
- Non-shielded, but still vulnerable individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix) have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home whenever possible, either in their current role or in an alternative role.
- If vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available roles.
- Employers should offer support to their workers, particularly around wellbeing and mental health.

### ***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Whenever possible, vulnerable workers should consider, or be considered, for roles where they can work from home.
- If this poses a risk to operations, moving vulnerable workers into lower risk activities where they have the highest chance of remaining 2m away from others.
- Providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include advice or telephone support.

## 2.2 People who need to self-isolate

**Objective:** To make sure 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.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.
- See current guidance on [employees](#) and [employers](#) relating to statutory sick pay due to Covid-19.
- See [current guidance](#) on people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

## 3. Social distancing for work in the home

**Objective:** To help people to maintain 2m social distancing where possible, including while arriving at, and departing from, work, while in work and when travelling between sites.

- It will not always be possible to keep a distance of 2m. In these circumstances both employers and workers must do everything they reasonably can to reduce risk. Examples of how to do this are set out below.
- Social distancing applies to all elements of your work, not just the main activity, but also time you spend in doorways, corridors and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.

### 3.1 Coming to and leaving a home for work

**Objective:** To maintain social distancing on arrival and departure, and to enable handwashing on arrival.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Consider travelling to sites alone using your own transport.
- If workers have no option but to travel together (for example, delivery teams), the following should be encouraged:

- Journeys should be with the same individuals and limited in the number of people travelling per vehicle.
- Good ventilation (for example, keeping windows open) and passengers facing away from one another to reduce risk of transmission.
- Vehicles regularly cleaned using gloves and standard cleaning products, with emphasis on handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces.
- Employers or agencies should consider matching workers to households local to them to minimise transportation.
- Wash hands on arrival and maintain social distancing when entering the home.

**Example: Maintaining social distancing when entering the home**

## 3.2 Moving around when working in a home

**Objective:** To maintain social distancing as far as possible while performing work in the home.

It is recognised that for providers of some in-home services, it will not be possible to maintain physical distance from customers.

- If it isn't possible to maintain social distancing while working in the home then extra attention needs to be paid to equipment, cleaning and hygiene to reduce risk.
- Working materials, such as tools or domestic appliances, should be assigned to an individual and not shared if possible. If they need to be shared, they should be shared by the smallest possible number of people.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Discussing with households ahead of a visit to ask that a 2m distance is kept from those working, if possible.
- Asking that households leave all internal doors open to minimise contact with door handles.
- Identifying busy areas across the household where people travel to, from or through, for example, stairs and corridors, and consider minimising movement within these areas.
- Where possible, limiting the time spent in close proximity (less than 2m) to no more than 15 minutes.
- Bringing your own food and drink to households and consider having breaks outside.
- Limiting the number of workers within a confined space to maintain social distancing.
- Using a consistent pairing system if people have to work in close proximity. For example, during two-person assembly or maintenance.
- Allocating the same workers to a household where jobs are repetitive. Employers and agencies should consider having the same individuals allocated to a household where jobs are repetitive in nature.

### 3.3 Appointments in the home

**Objective:** To reduce transmission due to face-to-face appointments and maintain social distancing if physical appointments are necessary.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Using remote working tools, to avoid in-person appointments.
- Avoiding transmission during appointments, for example from sharing pens and other objects.
- Only absolutely necessary participants should attend the appointment.
- Where a face-to-face conversation is needed, maintaining a 2m distance where possible.

## 3.4 Accidents, security and other incidents

**Objective:** To prioritise safety during incidents.

- In an emergency (for example, an accident, fire or break-in), people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe.
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing hands.

## 4. Interacting with householders

### 4.1 Providing and explaining available guidance

**Objective:** To make sure people understand what they need to do to maintain safety.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Employers and agencies need to consider the information they provide to their in-home workers.
- Communicating with households prior to arrival to ensure the household understands the social distancing and hygiene measures that should be followed once work has commenced.

## 5. Cleaning and sanitising the work area

### 5.1 Keeping the work area clean

**Objective:** To keep work areas in a home clean and prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly.
- Arranging methods of safely disposing waste with the householder.
- Removing all waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift and at the end of a job.

**Example: sanitising a boiler before and after repair**

## 5.2 Hygiene

**Objective:** To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.

***Considerations for workers in the home:***

- Washing your hands more often than usual for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose.
- Reducing the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hands. Throw the tissue in a bin immediately, then wash your hands.
- Cleaning and disinfecting regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- If handwashing facilities are not accessible, you could consider bringing portable hand sanitiser, if available.

**Example: handwashing frequently**

## 5.3 Handling goods, merchandise and other materials

**Objective:** To reduce transmission through contact with objects that come into or are removed from the home.

### *Considerations for workers in the home:*

- Ensuring social distancing and hygiene measures are followed when supplies or tools are needed to be delivered to a home (for example, building supplies).
- Collecting materials in bulk to reduce the frequency of needing to visit shops to buy or collect materials.
- Removing waste in bulk if possible.

## 6. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE and facemasks - guidance to follow.

## 7. Workforce management – Guidance for employers and agencies

## 7.1 Team working

**Objective:** To change the way work is organised to create distinct groups and reduce the number of contacts each worker has.

### *Considerations for workers in the home:*

- Where multiple workers are in a home, creating fixed teams of workers who carry out their duties in those teams, and minimising contact between each team.
- Identifying areas where people need to hand things to each other (such as shared tools and domestic appliances) and find ways to remove direct contact (for example by using drop-off points or transfer zones).
- Allocating the same worker to the same household each time there is a visit (for example, the same cleaner each time).

## 7.2 Work-related travel

### 7.2.1 Cars, accommodation and visits

**Objective:** To avoid unnecessary work-related travel and keep workers safe when they do need to travel between homes.

### *Considerations for workers in the home:*

- Follow the social distancing guidelines outlined in Section 2.1 – ‘Coming to and leaving a home for work’.
- Where workers need to move between different homes and locations to complete their work, social distancing and hygiene advice should be considered, especially before entering other homes.
- Where workers are required to stay away from their residence, making sure any overnight accommodation meets social distancing guidelines.

## 7.3 Communications and Training

### 7.3.1 Returning to Work

**Objective:** To make sure all workers understand Covid-19 related safety procedures.

***Considerations for employers:***

- Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working amongst your employees.
- Engaging with workers through existing communication routes and worker representatives to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.

### 7.3.2 Ongoing communications

**Objective:** To make sure all workers are kept up to date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated.

***Considerations for employers:***

- Ongoing engagement with the workforce, (including through Unions, Councils or representative groups) to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments.
- Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published [guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus \(Covid-19\)](#).
- Using simple, clear messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups for which English may not be their first language.

- Communicating approaches and operational procedures to households to help their adoption before work commences.

## 8. Deliveries to the home

**Objective:** To maintain social distancing and avoid surface transmission when goods enter and leave a home.

### *Considerations for workers in the home:*

- Minimising contact during deliveries wherever possible.
- Where possible and safe, having single workers load or unload vehicles.
- Where possible, using the same pairs of people for loads where more than one is needed.
- Minimising the contact during delivery, for example by calling to inform of your arrival rather than ringing the doorbell.
- Minimising the contact during payments and exchange of documentation, for example using electronic payment methods and electronically signed and exchanged documents.

**Example: contact free delivery**

## Where to obtain further guidance

## Coronavirus (Covid-19): guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

## Covid-19: guidance for employees, employers and businesses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

## Covid-19: guidance for tradespeople and working in people's homes

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#tradespeople-and-working-in-peoples-homes>

# Appendix

## Definitions

People who are shielding	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/if-youre-at-very-high-risk-from-coronavirus/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/if-youre-at-very-high-risk-from-coronavirus/</a>
Respiratory Hygiene	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control</a>
Vulnerable people	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/</a>