



Institution
of Occupational
Safety and Health

Workplace hygiene

While some employees have settled into working from home, key workers and skeleton staff across the UK are still in their workplaces, with business as usual.

That is why IOSH has developed a seven-step workplace hygiene guide, along with a caution/care checklist, to ensure that you and your staff are safeguarded as you work behind the scenes to keep your business or organisation operational during this challenging time.



1

Assess

Understand where there is potential for the virus to spread and consider where working environments and activities may need to be restricted or reduced.



2

Minimise

Exposure can be minimised by considering essential staffing requirements. For instance, how can you restrict or contain activities and locations or workspaces to essential levels, while still adhering to guidance on social distancing?

How you can best minimise exposure through enhanced workplace hygiene

| Consider | Examples | Measures | Caution/care points |
|---|---|---|---|
| Workstations Hard surfaces and other tools | Desks, tables, computers (screen, keyboard and mouse) Telephones, work tools and other regularly handled tools, equipment, machinery controls and panels Window openers, blinds | Wipe regularly with disinfectant | Equipment usage by others (shared or multi-use) Appropriate disinfectant – type, application, inhalation or contact health risks Availability or stock of suitable disinfectant – substitution could lead to increased harm |
| Transit areas Corridors, stairs, escalators and lifts | Handrails, door handles and plates, control panels | As above | As above |
| Communal areas Rest rooms, canteens, meeting rooms and prayer rooms | As above | As above | Canteens – food hygiene and handling rules apply Use disposable plates and cutlery |
| Shared facilities Small business and shared buildings | Multi-tenant spaces | Agree collective arrangements and preventative measures | Maintain cohesive effort and vigilance on changed measures |
| General (internal) workplace | Air conditioning Air circulation and movement Ventilation | Check filter efficiency and effectiveness | Avoid use of re-circulated air and closed units |

3



Educate and communicate

Communication during this period is key. It is vital that all staff members, including agency and locums, are kept updated with the latest advice and guidance. This should include how to report symptoms to a manager and how to monitor your health and wellbeing.

4



Define

Define the required standards, rules and behavioural expectations: workplace and personal hygiene; distancing and personal contact; and operational flexibility (for example, allowing skeleton staff to start later or finish earlier).

5



Monitor

To ensure adherence to defined standards, rules and expectations, the following should be considered:

- **Leadership** – managing remote staff, ensuring adherence to (enhanced) health and hygiene controls and strict consistency of application.

Responsiveness to changes in circumstances – consider timeliness, consistency and clarity of messaging and communications.

6



Review

During this time, as government rulings change, your working environment will also need to be reviewed constantly, with the safety and health of all staff being the priority.

The following should be reviewed continuously:

- Being vigilant to changes in health of staff (and/or families)
- Keeping informed. Awareness of external threats: partners/customers/clients

7



Plan ahead

Develop a plan of what to do if someone becomes ill with suspected Covid-19 at your workplace.

The plan should cover putting the sick person in a room or area where they are isolated from others in the workplace, limiting the number of people who have contact with the sick person and contacting the local health authorities.

For more information about workplace hygiene in the healthcare sector, please see: Advice for healthcare workers.

For more information visit
www.iosh.com/coronavirus-workplace-hygiene