

# **SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES – COVID-19**

## **TRUST OFFICE STAFF AND VISITORS SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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Please note versions will be updated regularly and will be available on the [data library](#) as advice changes, please ensure you referring to correct current version

Printed versions are 'Uncontrolled'

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## **INTRODUCTION**

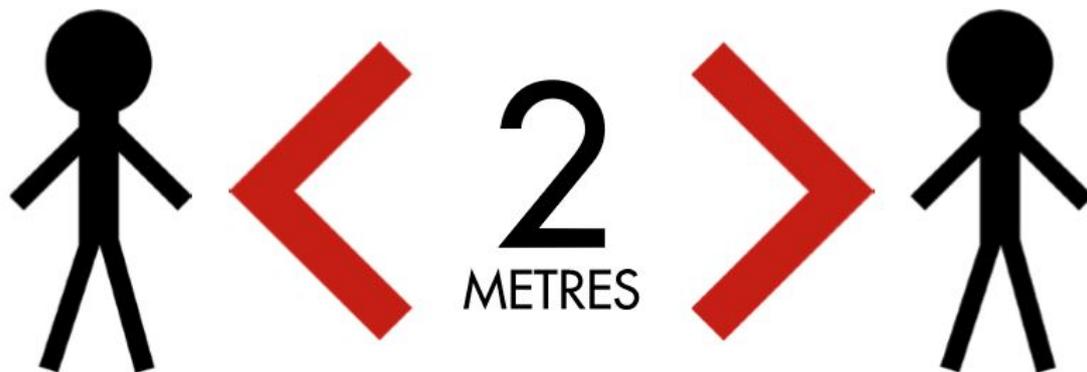
Milestones Trust need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. These Safe Operating Procedures are aimed at protecting workers, their colleagues, their families and the general population. These are exceptional circumstances and Milestones Trust must comply with the latest Government advice on Coronavirus at all times.

This guidance is intended to introduce consistent measures and procedures to be adopted at Trust Office and when visiting services. These principles are in line with the UK Government recommendations on social distancing and other measures.

The health and safety requirements of any trust office work activity must not be compromised at this time. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely due to a lack of social distancing being implemented or without other effective measures being applied i.e. the use of PPE, it should not take place.

These guidelines should empower all departments and areas to overlay the principles to their respective office areas and operations in a risk based approach, which will maintain a safe working environment. Social Distancing and Good Hand Hygiene should remain the mainstay of any approaches, with a risk-based approach of other measures where this cannot be achieved.

These guidelines will be updated regularly as government advice changes. This may include regional lockdowns or the reinstatement of national lockdown.



## **VISION & KEY PRINCIPLES**

### Vision

To protect the safety and wellbeing of our staff and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Key principles

1. To Safeguard everyone's health and wellbeing
2. To ensure we follow government and medical advice

## **RISK AND SELF-ISOLATION**

The Trust are currently taking a cautious approach to opening Trust Office to more staff.

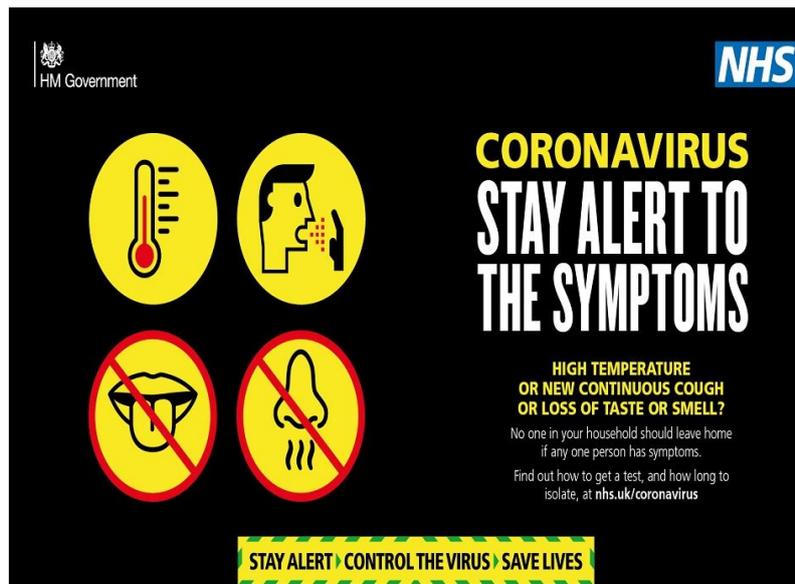
Anyone who meets one of the following criteria should not come to work:

- Has a high temperature or a new persistent cough or loss of taste and smell - follow the guidance on self-isolation and stay at home for 10 days from when you first develop symptoms
- Is a vulnerable person (by virtue of their age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or are pregnant)
- Is living with someone who is in self-isolation with symptoms of coronavirus

[NHS advice on coronavirus \(Covid-19\)](#)

[Government guidance and support on coronavirus \(Covid-19\)](#)

All staff must sign in to a log book on arrival at Trust Office and sign out on departure. One log book will be kept by each department. In the event of someone who has worked at Trust Office contracting Covid-19, this will enable us to identify members of staff they may have come into contact with.



## **PROCEDURE IF A STAFF MEMBER FALLS ILL AT WORK**

If an individual develops a high temperature, a persistent cough or loses their sense of taste or smell while at work, they should:

- Return home immediately
- Avoid touching anything
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- Arrange to get tested for Coronavirus and not return to work at trust office until test results are known. If well enough continue to work at home
- Inform your line manager once you return home

They must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and testing not return to work at Trust Office until their period of self-isolation has been completed. Refer to current NHS guidance at time.

Where a person has been confirmed to have Covid-19, the office/unit must be closed and the manager and workers in that area informed that the office will remain closed until a deep clean sanitisation process has been completed by an external cleaning company, usually within 72 hours.

[NHS Guidance on self-isolation](#)

If you receive a positive test, you should complete a self-isolation note from the NHS 111 website and send this to [payrollmail@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:payrollmail@milestonetrust.org.uk)

[See our full guidance on testing and pay](#)

## **PROCEDURE IF A MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS SYMPTOMS OR TESTS POSITIVE**

You should self-isolate if you live with someone who has symptoms, is waiting for a test result or has tested positive. Do not come to Trust Office. You'll usually need to self-isolate for 14 days.

## **WORKING AT TRUST OFFICE**

When working at your computer, a face covering is not required. A face covering is required at all other times, including:

- Turning away from your computer to speak to someone whilst maintaining social distance.
- At all times when moving around the office.
- Anytime you leave your chair for any reason.
- At all other times, including entering and exiting the office and going to and from the car park.

## **TRUST OFFICE ACCESS AND TRAVEL TO WORK**

Staff working at Trust Office should have completed the Trust Office working risk assessment and have reviewed this with their manager.

Wherever possible, staff should travel to Trust Office alone, using their own transport unless they are from the same household. Consider other means of transport to avoid public transport if practicable e.g. cycling.

Staff teams need to rotate the days they work in the office so that an outbreak doesn't stop essential daily Trust functions.

All supervisory staff need to ensure that they can recognise symptoms of Covid-19 in team members and know what actions to take if a person is suspected of having the virus.

## **WORKING AT HOME**

Please complete the Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist / self-assessment provided by the Health and Safety Executive, linked to below:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf>

If required, please then contact Remi Makulec with any questions regarding the self-assessment or to arrange a virtual display screen equipment (DSE) assessment of your home working office / area / set up: [Remim@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:Remim@milestonetrust.org.uk)

Please ensure you have Zoom capabilities on your work computer / laptop / mobile phone.

Please ensure you have access to the remote server and contact the IT help desk on [IThelpdesk@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:IThelpdesk@milestonetrust.org.uk) if you have technical / connectivity issues.

Please ensure you take regular breaks.

## **VISITORS TO TRUST OFFICE**

Make all visitors aware of safe operating procedures when visiting Trust Office. Meeting rooms must be booked by Trust Office staff through Reception only and the host is responsible for attending to the participants, as well as following the cleaning regimes outlined.

Trust Office staff need to convey to their visitors that all visits must be pre-arranged e.g. for training, occupational health appointments, to collect PPE / other items, to drop off paperwork.

When visitors arrive, they must report to Reception, while observing social distancing.

If visitors must come into the offices (e.g. contractors for compliance testing etc.), this must be planned in advance in line with these procedures.

Visitors who come into Trust Office must sign in at Reception on arrival and on departure.

Safe Operating Procedures – Covid-19 7 Share Milestones SOP COVID -19 procedures and risk assessment with external contractors and the cleaners who visit the site regularly.

Agree processes for delivery drivers and logistics, for unloading and collecting goods and materials etc.

Consider staggered work start and finish times to reduce congestion.

Refer to agreed cleaning schedules to clean common contact surfaces.

One-way systems should be used for pinch points and high-traffic areas. Pinch points such as corridors and landings will have priority rules assigned. British road signs will be used to visually indicate this.

## **MEETINGS**

- Meetings should take place via Zoom or other Video conference facilities wherever possible. There should be a clear justification for why a meeting needs to be held face to face.
- Only absolutely necessary meeting participants should attend and reduce numbers to maintain social distancing – use Zoom where possible.
- Everyone in the meeting should wear a mask or face covering at all times.
- Everyone in the meeting should be stood up and maintain social distancing at all times.
- Rooms should be well ventilated / windows opened to allow fresh air circulation.
- Consider holding meetings in open areas where possible.
- Staff must adhere to the maximum room capacities as indicated on meeting room and office doors.
- Please be mindful when entering and exiting the room that you maintain 2 metres social distancing. *For example if you are the first to arrive take the seat furthest from the door and if the person seated furthest from the door needs to leave the room, the person nearest the door needs to step out of the room first.*

## **WHEN VISITING SERVICES**

Staff should complete the [visiting services risk assessment](#) prior to visiting services for scheduled or unscheduled / emergency visits.

Consider – what are the risks if you visit a service, the risks if you don't, what reasonable adjustments can you make to achieve the desired outcome, is an onsite visit absolutely necessary?

You will not be allowed to enter services if you have a high temperature, so you are encouraged to check your temperature before you leave. Thermometers are available at Trust Office for your use.

Take your own pen to sign visitors' book.

Take your own refillable drinks bottle.

Ensure you have the correct PPE before leaving to visit a service.

Safe Operating Procedures – Covid-19 8 Scheduled visits – On the day ensure that it is still safe for you to visit a service prior to a scheduled visit.

Unscheduled and emergency visits - call the service to understand what the current risks are for visitors.

Each department needs its own risk assessments in place for visiting services – what are and aren't essential visits?

## **LUNCH AND EATING ARRANGEMENTS**

Trust Office staff are encouraged to bring lunch into work with them or go home for lunch if they live close enough to do so.

If local shops are accessed please follow hand washing and social distancing guidelines.

Trust Office staff are encouraged to bring in refillable drinking bottles from home.

Staff are advised to use the same mug when in the office. They should wash this and keep it on their desk.

Staff are advised to bring in a set of cutlery from home, which they should use, wash and keep on their desks.

Workers should be careful to maintain social distancing whilst eating and avoid all contact with others i.e. when using the courtyard benches.

All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up.

All washing up should be done by the person who used the items that need to be cleaned and not left for someone else to do.

## **MANAGING STAFF DURING THE PANDEMIC, TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE**

Managers need training and consistency to be able to manage staff back into the workplace.

Workers who have been furloughed or working from home ('WFH') for a considerable period of time may have issues such as:

- Bereavement
- Sick family member/friend
- Emotional disconnection with their workplace and/or colleagues
- Feelings of isolation
- De-motivation
- Fear of leaving the 'safe' home environment
- Childcare
- Impaired relationships
- Domestic abuse
- Financial hardship
- Becoming accustomed to being paid for not working

It is natural that employees will have anxieties about a return to the workplace, such as:

- Will I get infected at work or during my commute?
- Will I put my family at risk?

- Will the return to work trigger a second wave of infections?
- Will I no longer enjoy my job?
- How secure is my job/income?
- How secure is my employer?

Upon returning to work, employees might exhibit one or more of the following behaviours:

- Anxiety
- Denial of clear evidence that times have really changed
- Low productivity/performance issues
- Recurrence of previous mental health issues
- Novel mental health issues triggered by changed circumstances
- Increased incidence of sick leave
- Insomnia, leading to fatigue

By necessity, staff welfare will consume more resources than previously and it will be particularly important that management practice compassionate and consistent leadership to support staff transitioning back to working at Trust Office and for services to feel comfortable about permitting visitors to the service.

- Make time to ask each of your staff how they are doing.
- Listen fully to their responses.
- Is their body language congruent with their words?
- If they express how they are feeling, acknowledge this in a way that demonstrates you have heard and understood.
- Emphasise to staff that it is natural and normal to have concerns.
- Emphasise the importance of mental and physical wellbeing by embedding discussion of it into meetings and communications.
- Ensure staff know where they can access further help for emotional issues such as the [Mental Health At Work](#) website or the Samaritans listening service (accessible free on 116 123). Headspace has made available some [free mental health resources](#) for workers.
- Be vigilant for signs of domestic abuse.
- Try to encourage staff to get sufficient sleep.
- Encourage staff to try exercise and/or mindfulness techniques to reduce anxiety.
- Ensure staff receive only clear, timely and accurate information.
- Remember that management, HR staff, Mental Health First Aiders and those working from home need support too.

## **LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF**



Milestones Trust have brought together a number of resources to assist with wellbeing. These can be found at:

[Care Workers Charity \(hardship loans\)](#)

[The RISE aspect of BHSF](#) (replaced old EAP)  
(login code 201881)

Call 0800 285 1538 for advice and support, including counselling and financial advice) on a range of matters – available from day 1 to all employees and casual workers.

[BHSF Cash Plan](#)

If registered you can claim online or by calling 0800 622 552 (not much can be claimed for at the moment as dentists and opticians etc. are closed but claims can be made for any hospital stays) – available to contracted employees on completion of probation.

[Employee Benefits](#)

Available from day 1 to all contracted employees.

Coronavirus helpline - [coronavirus@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:coronavirus@milestonetrust.org.uk) or call 0117 982 5399.

## **HAND WASHING**

What you can expect:

- Soap and fresh water is readily available and kept topped up at all times.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided where hand washing facilities are unavailable. This will be signposted.
- Suitable and sufficient rubbish bins will be provided for hand towels with daily removal and disposal.



## **CLEANING**

Enhanced cleaning procedures should be in place across the workplace, particularly in communal areas and at high touch points including taps, cooking and washing facilities.

Please clean your work area with antibacterial wipes at the start and end of each working day.

You will be responsible for sanitising bathroom facilities after you have used them and for checking and reporting on low stock levels of soap, paper towels, toilet paper and antibacterial wipes.

Toilet facilities will also be cleaned twice per day by the cleaners.

You should ensure that toilet and kitchen areas are kept clear and tidy, for example by washing up and clearing away any kitchenware you use, so that cleaners are able to complete a deep clean without obstruction.

Clear cleaning signage will be displayed in each meeting room, bathroom / toilet and kitchen area.

The following should be cleaned after each use:

- Toilet flushes, taps and soap dispensers
- Door handles and push plates
- Hand rails on staircases and corridors
- Equipment controls
- Food preparation and eating surfaces
- Telephone equipment
- Key boards, photocopiers and other office equipment

Waste bins will be emptied at the end of each day by the cleaners.

Sanitise the inside of trust vehicles used to deliver PPE to services before and after each use.

Office spaces will be closed and a deep clean / sanitisation process will be completed before the office is reopened, where a person has been confirmed COVID-19. We will try to provide alternative working space on site in the meantime. If none are available staff will work from home until their office reopens.

**AGREEMENT (TO BE SIGNED)**

All staff based at Trust Office should sign the statement below and return this to Tracy Robbins, Administrative Manager (Operations), at [tracy@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:tracy@milestonetrust.org.uk)

I can confirm that I have read the 'Trust Office staff and visitors safe operating procedures during Covid-19 Pandemic' document and I agree to adhere to the instructions contained therein.

**Signature:** .....

**Full name:** .....

**Date:** .....