



HM Government

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer transport – guidance for operators

**Safer working principles and risk assessment for transport operators
and organisations**

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Introduction

This guide will help organisations, agencies and others (such as self-employed transport providers) understand how to provide safer workplaces and services for themselves, their workers and passengers across all modes of private and public transport. It outlines measures to assess and address the risks of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the transport sector across England.

Each transport provider will need to translate the principles and examples in this guidance into specific actions. It must be considered alongside legal duties and other guidance produced by the government and the relevant transport regulator for your mode. Transport providers should remain mindful of their obligations under both health and safety and employment legislation. The integrated nature of the UK's public transport system makes it important that transport providers try to co-ordinate their planning and their actions with other providers.



1. Risk assessment

A risk assessment is about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace and the service you provide. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have addressed all necessary points. Review your risk assessments regularly to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate under changing circumstances.

We recommend that your risk assessment identifies risks resulting from coronavirus and that you use this guide to ensure that your risk assessment addresses the risks of coronavirus. It will help inform your decisions and control measures. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) also has guidance on how a coronavirus risk assessment can be undertaken at www.gov.uk/workingsafely

All existing non-coronavirus related health and safety requirements continue to apply. The Health and Safety Executive and other transport regulators can help you comply with health and safety legislation.

Employers have a duty to consult employees on health and safety. Workers should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer. Employees should be encouraged to identify, speak up and feedback on risks and control measures.

We recommend you consider the following when conducting a coronavirus risk assessment:

- Risks to workers, passengers, customers and the public, along with the control measures required.
- The impact of control measures and whether they result in additional, different risks or non-compliance with other requirements (for example health and safety or equalities legislation).
- Applying the hierarchy of controls set out in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Consultation with workers, or bodies representing workers, and the public.
- The visibility of the results of any risk assessment.
- Service providers have duties to ensure individuals with protected characteristics, for example disabled people, the elderly and pregnant women, are able to access transport networks. Individuals should be supported to comply with social distancing. All equality and discrimination law continues to apply. Organisations need to ensure that the actions taken as a result of the assessment do not disproportionately impact those with protected characteristics.



2. Who should be at work

If people can, they should work from home

When deciding who can work from home, organisations could consider:

- Who is essential to be on site; for example, office workers should work from home if possible.
- The minimum number of people needed in vehicles, on site and/or in the office to operate safely and effectively.
- The wellbeing of people working from home and how to help them stay connected.
- Keeping in touch with off-site workers on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
- Providing equipment to enable working from home safely and effectively.
- Looking at what roles and tasks can be done from home and supporting workers to do this where possible, for example, administrative tasks or customer communications.
- Reallocating tasks between workers, to increase the opportunity for home working.
- Regularly reviewing how different working arrangements are impacting workers, and how to improve the arrangements.
- Let workers know in advance if they are required to travel or not.
- Whether support workers are needed to make their networks accessible (for example to operate ramps or lifts) and consider categorising these workers as 'essential'.



2. Who should be at work

Protecting people who are at higher risk

- Consider the guidance on [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) and [clinically vulnerable people](#) at work.
- Employers should offer support to their workers, particularly around wellbeing and mental health.

Organisations could consider:

- Re-deploying clinically vulnerable people into roles where they can work from home.
- If clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they and their employer should consider the level of risk, both on their journey to work and in line with the wider risk assessment of their working situation, as set out in the [guidance for employers](#).
- If re-deployment would mean not having enough people on-site to run the operations, move vulnerable workers into lower risk activities where they have the highest chance of remaining 2 metres away from others, where possible.
- Providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include guidance or telephone support for example.



2. Who should be at work

People who need to self-isolate

Workers who have [symptoms of coronavirus](#) or workers living in a [household with someone showing symptoms of coronavirus](#) should self-isolate and stay at home.

Organisations should:

- Enable people to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate. See current guidance for [employees](#) and [employers](#) relating to statutory sick pay due to coronavirus.
- Ensure that individuals stay at home for 7 days from when symptoms started. After 7 days if there is no high temperature there is no need to continue to self-isolate. If there is still a high temperature, self-isolate until temperature returns to normal. If living with others and the individual is the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then they must stay at home for 7 days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill.
- Encourage workers to apply for a coronavirus test.
- Ensure there are processes in place if someone attending the workplace shows symptoms or is infected.

There is currently no requirement to self-isolate if you have been in proximity with someone showing coronavirus symptoms in the workplace and have been following social distancing measures. If a worker's [symptoms match those of coronavirus](#), encourage them to apply for a [coronavirus test](#).



3. Social distancing and face coverings

Passengers and people working on the transport network should keep their distance from people outside their household, recognising that this will not always be possible. The risk of infection increases the closer you are to another person with the virus and the amount of time you spend in close contact. You are very unlikely to be infected from walking past another person. Public Health England (PHE) recommends trying to [keep 2 metres away from people, where possible](#), as a precaution. However, this is not a rule and the science is complex. The key thing is to not be too close to people for more than a short amount of time, as much as you can.

Employers should advise staff and passengers on ways of working to keep their distance from other people as much as possible. There are situations where this may not be possible, for example when boarding or alighting, during security checks, on busier services, busier times of day, when walking through interchanges and when undertaking maintenance work that requires two people for the task. Where social distancing is not possible try to minimise the time spent within 2 metres of others, and keep groups of workers in teams that are as small as possible (“cohorting”). For example, keeping maintenance crews working together, rather than mixing crew members on different shifts.

Organisations could consider:

- Creating and agreeing a single, clear approach to social distancing for all workers and passengers.
- Agreeing and maintaining clear rules for workers and passengers that meet social distancing guidelines, for example:
 - Clear rules for interacting with passengers, receiving goods, and testing equipment.
 - Support individual workers who choose to use face coverings in situations where social distancing is not possible.
- Organising the workspace and how people work in a single space to follow social distancing guidelines, such as:
 - Separating workspaces 2 metres apart from one another, where possible.
 - Use of screens or barriers.
 - Eliminating face-to-face seating, for example, shift to ‘bench’ style.
 - Repositioning workspaces to allow for optimal ventilation.
 - Reducing occupancy of group interaction spaces, including spaces shared with other organisations.
- Adjustments for those with specific needs or protected characteristics, for example disabled people, the elderly and pregnant women. Consider groups of people who process information differently or who may not be able to distance from others.



3. Social distancing and face coverings

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect against coronavirus outside of clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case.

Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so. When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

There are some circumstances when wearing a face covering may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure. The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not yet developed symptoms. This is most relevant for short periods indoors in crowded areas.

Government guidance is for passengers, if they can, to wear a face covering if they need to use public transport.

A face covering is not the same as the surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment. These should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings, like those exposed to dust hazards.

Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by the law. If workers choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash hands before putting them on and taking them off. Use the [guidance on face coverings](#).

If workers choose to use face coverings, you should support them in using face coverings safely. For example:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it in your usual waste.
- Practice social distancing wherever possible.



4. Workforce planning

Protecting workers arriving at and leaving the workplace

When arriving and leaving the workplace, there may be occasions when workers are in the same space or are using entrances and exits at the same time. You should consider opportunities to reduce risk in these situations.

Organisations could consider:

- Staggering arrival and departure times at work where possible to reduce crowding on routes to and from the workplace.
- Reducing queues, for example by having more entry points to the workplace.
- Providing more storage for workers for clothes and bags.
- Managing queues, for example through floor markings, signs and introducing one-way flow at entry and exit points, considering the impact on public spaces, and working collaboratively with other operators and local authorities.
- Hand sanitation at building entry/exit points and not using touch-based security devices (such as keypads).
- Reviewing workplace access points and entry requirements (for example deactivating turnstiles requiring pass checks in favour of showing a pass to security personnel at a distance). Organisations need to make sure that alternative checks provide the same level of security.
- Limiting passengers in business vehicles (for example, work minibuses), leaving seats empty.
- Collaborating with other organisations that share the premises to minimise people on site.
- Assigning fixed groups of workers to the same transportation routes where sole travel is not possible.
- Providing additional safe facilities for runners/walkers/cyclists as well as alternative means of transport such as coaches.



4. Workforce planning

Protecting workers in the workplace

Where workers are unable to work from home, you should be taking steps to reduce transmission from face-to-face interaction and enable social distancing in the workplace.

Organisations could consider:

- Making workforce travel plans in advance of workers returning to work.
- As far as possible, where workers are split into teams or shift groups, fixing these teams or shift groups so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people.
- Where shift patterns are not already in place, consider introducing these to enable more workers to work during a 24-hour period while having as few workers as possible on-site at any one time.
- Identifying areas where people must pass things directly to each other (for example documents, spare parts, cargo, raw materials) or share tools/equipment, and look for ways to remove direct contact through use of drop-off points or transfer zones.
- Using remote working tools to avoid meetings with lots of people.
- If meetings are necessary, keeping all attendees 2 metres apart, ensure they do not share objects, such as pens and paper, and have hand sanitiser accessible.
- Using digital means to communicate shift patterns.
- Staggering break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or canteens.
- Designating outside areas as common areas if safe to do so.
- Creating additional space from other parts of the worksite or building freed up by remote working.
- Using protective screening for workers in reception or similar areas.
- Using packaged meals or similar to avoid opening canteens.
- Reconfiguring seating and tables to optimise spacing and reduce face-to-face situations.



4. Workforce planning

Organisations could consider:

- Encouraging workers to stay on-site during working hours.
- Using floor tape or paint to mark areas to help workers keep to a 2 metre distance.
- Avoiding use of hot desks where possible. Otherwise cleaning workstations and shared equipment between different occupants.
- Limiting use of high-touch items and shared office equipment (for example, printers, whiteboards).
- Only essential meeting participants should attend.
- Providing hand sanitiser in workspaces.
- Reducing job and location rotation.
- Updating first aid training.



5. Queues and protecting passenger flows

Protecting passenger flow

To protect passengers and workers on the transport network, it is essential, as far as possible, to enable social distancing. These measures should cover different types of vehicles, car parks, service areas, airports, station concourses and platforms as well as considering how people act in different circumstances (for example consider wet weather, indoor, outdoor, security procedures). Transport operators are also advised to consider and mitigate the security implications of any temporary interventions to support social distancing.

Particular attention should be given to queues that may occur, including at interchanges and busy times of day, or when there are unanticipated delays. It is important that passengers can queue safely (observing social distancing where possible) and that workers stay safe while passengers queue.

Organisations could consider:

Communications:

- Displaying messages, signs and making announcements to discourage non-essential trips and that where possible people should work from home.
- Promoting other active travel modes (for example walking, cycling) or other demand management techniques.
- Communicating with passengers through social media and websites to help passengers prepare for their journeys and know what to expect.

Planning:

- Anyone that does need to travel to work can use public transport if they need to, but they should be very strongly encouraged to use other forms of transport where possible.
- Undertaking joint planning with other transport organisations at transport interchanges to ensure aligned approaches.
- Identifying areas where there is increased risk of congestion or crowding due to reduced capacity because of social distancing requirements and identifying mitigations with other operators and local authorities. Following [guidance on public places](#) and considering arrangements that other shops and business may need to implement for their circumstances and how these plans interact.



5. Queues and protecting passenger flows

Protecting passenger flow (continued)

- Identifying in advance areas where queues may occur. In these and surrounding areas, consider physical infrastructure, passenger signage, road safety signage, communications and other controls to achieve safe queuing. For example, operators could introduce floor markings, signs and one-way flow at entry and exit points.
- Providing guidance for workers assisting people with protected characteristics, for example disabled people, the elderly and pregnant women.
- For security searches, PHE recommends that passengers be asked if they have a new, continuous cough or a high temperature prior to the search. PHE recommend that staff consider wearing gloves for each search and wash their hands as frequently as possible.

Crowd management:

- Consider whether queues can be moved to locations with more space for safe queues. Liaise as appropriate with other bodies (such as other transport operators, landlords and local authorities) to [safely manage queues and any impact on public spaces](#). Consider how to provide passengers and services users with information on the service.
- If services, concourses or interchanges become too crowded, or queues become too long, operators should consider the full range of operational responses available, recognising the knock-on effects on other transport modes in making these decisions.
- Use social media, apps and other digital methods to alert passengers before they leave home, and to help passengers stay away or disperse until there is sufficient capacity available.



5. Queues and protecting passenger flows

Protecting passenger flow (continued)

Social distancing in vehicles and at service areas, stations, stops, ports and airports:

- Rearranging, limiting or removing seating to try and ensure social distancing is observed and that it can be cleaned regularly using a rota or some other tracker. This may include:
 - Blocking off seats that are in close proximity to a driver or other workers and passengers.
 - Removing face-to-face seating.
 - Maximising separation for example by sitting in back left hand seat of a car.
- Using floor tape, signs or paint in passenger areas to help people keep 2 metres apart, where appropriate.
- Using screens to create a physical barrier between people where appropriate, such as in ticket offices.
- Introducing more one-way flow through areas and vehicles.
- Revising maximum occupancy for lifts and ways of operating lifts.
- Making arrangements for monitoring compliance to assist with further planning (for example appointment of a social distancing marshal).
- Keeping in mind particular needs of workers and passengers who have protected characteristics, for example disabled people, the elderly and pregnant women.



6. Emergency incidents

Emergency procedures

Ensure that your emergency procedures are followed during an emergency or situation requiring an evacuation. You should consider how to maintain social distancing in these situations, recognising that people may not always be able to stay 2 metres apart. Review and update existing queuing, crowd management and emergency plans and the situations when these are instigated.

What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus in a transport setting

If anyone becomes unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus in a transport setting they should be sent home and advised to follow the [stay at home guidance](#).

If they need clinical advice, they should go online to [NHS 111](#) (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. They should not visit a GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or hospital.

There is currently no requirement to self-isolate if you have been in proximity with someone showing coronavirus symptoms in the workplace and have been following social distancing measures. Workers should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

It is not necessary to close the transport setting or send any staff home.



7. Cleaning

Touch points (for example buttons to open doors, hand rails) across the transport network should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning. Organisations should follow guidance on [cleaning and waste disposal](#) and implement cleaning protocols to limit coronavirus transmission and consider who will carry out the cleaning activity.

Cleaning before increasing capacity or re-opening

Organisations should ensure that any site or location that has been closed or kept partially open during the coronavirus outbreak, is assessed and appropriate steps taken to prepare for restart or ongoing operation.

Organisations could consider:

- Conducting a working environment assessment for all sites that have been closed, before restarting work.
- Carrying out cleaning procedures, providing hand sanitiser, adjusting ventilation before restarting work.
- Using Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems and/or opening windows and doors to encourage ventilation, where possible and safe to do so.
- Defining and communicating consistent procedures for standard and deep cleaning.

Keeping public and private areas and modes of transport clean

Keep public and private areas and vehicles clean and prevent the transmission of coronavirus as a result of touching contaminated surfaces.

Organisations could consider:

- Identifying higher risk areas such as areas that are touched more regularly.
- Supplying standard cleaning products for regular cleaning and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements for used cleaning products.
- Cleaning regularly-touched objects and surfaces (like door handles, handrails and ticket machines) more often than usual using standard cleaning products.
- Clearing workspaces, removing and appropriately disposing of waste and removing belongings from the work area at the end of each shift.



7. Cleaning

Keeping public and private areas and modes of transport clean (continued)

- Cleaning all workstations, shared vehicles, hand tools, controls, machinery and equipment after use and between each shift and user.
- Encouraging a reduction in paper-based processes and replacing these with digital forms of communication where possible.
- Encouraging workers to wash hands before boarding vehicles.
- Retaining sufficient quantities of hand sanitiser / wipes within vehicles to enable workers to clean hands after each delivery / drop-off.
- Using wipes to clean fuel pumps before and after use.
- Cleaning vehicle keys before and after handling.
- Regular cleaning of work areas consistent with published guidance.

Hygiene – handwashing, sanitation facilities, toilets and showers

To help workers and passengers maintain good hygiene, organisations could consider:

- Use signs and messages to build awareness of good handwashing technique and other hygiene behaviours for example around coughing and sneezing.
- Providing paper towels in hand washing facilities.
- Sufficient provision of hand sanitiser onsite in addition to washrooms, and for those working away from hand washing facilities.
- Configuration of toilet and shower facilities to ensure they are kept clean, with social distancing where possible and with best practice handwashing followed between each use.
- Enhanced cleaning for facilities that are heavily used.
- Keeping showers and changing rooms closed until clear use and cleaning guidance is set.
- Minimising use of portable toilets.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection and disposal.



Organisations should consider how to increase ventilation and air flow. Where possible, transport operators and businesses should ensure that a fresh air supply is consistently flowing through vehicles, carriages, transport hubs and office buildings.

To achieve this, organisations could consider:

- Air conditioning. Most air conditioning systems do not need adjustment, however where systems serve multiple buildings or you are unsure, advice could be sought from HVAC engineers.
- Fresh ventilation systems can operate as normal, but recirculating air systems may require adjustments to increase fresh air flow.
- High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration.
- Opening doors and windows where possible and safe to do so.

Transport operators should keep workers and passengers informed of the latest coronavirus related safety procedures. Organisations should share the government's most recent guidance to all workers and organise training sessions on how to work or interact safely with colleagues and the public. Operators and businesses should carefully consider the best ways to share advice on how to travel safely and social distancing guidelines to passengers.

For workers, organisations could consider:

- Engaging with workers through unions, work councils and other workers' bodies to quickly explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
- Let workers know in advance if they are required to travel or not, ensuring where possible workers continue to work at home.
- Clear and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of how ways of working are applied.
- Communication and training materials on new procedures. Some of these may need to be delivered online to maintain social distancing between workers.
- Using posters and announcements to remind workers to wash their hands often and follow general hygiene advice.
- Awareness and focus on the [importance of mental health at times of uncertainty](#)
- The use of visual and digital communications (for example whiteboards, signs, websites, intranets, emails) to explain changes to schedules, breakdowns, materials shortages without the need for face-to-face communications.

8. Ventilation

9. Communications and training



9. Communications and training

For passengers and travellers, organisations could consider:

- Communicating with passengers through social media and websites to help passengers prepare for their journeys and what to expect.
- Providing passengers with information on timetables, expected journey times, expected capacity (accounting for social distancing), delays and changes to normal routes.
- Using posters and announcements to remind travellers and passengers to wash their hands often and follow general hygiene advice.
- Promoting online ticket purchases.
- Signs and announcements to help passengers understand what they need to do to travel safely and maintain social distancing when entering or exiting a site or vehicle, in consultation with other operators and local authorities for public highways and thoroughfares.
- Information on provision and any changes to assistance services for those with protected characteristics, for example disabled people, the elderly and pregnant women, and how they can continue to access transport in a safe way.
- The use of simple, clear and accessible messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups whose first language may not be English or where alternative formats may be required.
- Providing clear information to the public on how this guidance is being implemented.



10. International

Organisations should consider this guidance when operating services arriving into or departing from the UK and adhere to legal requirements and guidance set by foreign governments when operating in other countries. When operating in the UK, consideration should also be given to any guidance issued by the devolved governments of the UK.



Where to obtain further guidance

COVID-19: what you need to do

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

COVID-19: guidance for employees, employers and businesses

www.gov.uk/workingsafely

COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

COVID-19: transport and travel guidance

www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance

Appendix

Definitions

Clinically extremely vulnerable	Clinically extremely vulnerable people will have received a letter telling them they are in this group, or will have been told by their GP. Guidance on who is in this group can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19
Clinically vulnerable people	Clinically vulnerable people are: those aged 70 or over; and, those aged under 70 with one or more of the underlying health conditions listed in the 'clinically vulnerable' section here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others



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