

Covid-19 risk assessment and safe working practices (19 July 2021)

1. What are the hazards?

- The spread of Covid-19 throughout the premises.
- A staff member or client becoming infected with Covid-19 through an external meeting.

2. Who might be harmed?

- Staff
- Clients
- Cleaners
- Contractors
- Anyone entering the premises

3. Mitigation of risks

A. Hand washing

- Hand washing facilities with soap and water in place in all kitchens and toilets.
- Sanitiser available where hand washing is impractical, sanitiser stations set up next to all external doors to allow people to sanitise on entry to the building and when leaving.
- Sanitiser and disinfectant wipes provided to all staff conducting external appointments.
- Paper towels used instead of reusable hand towels.
- Signage displayed in kitchens and WC's as well as high volume areas to remind people to wash hands thoroughly.
- Tissues also available throughout the buildings, staff encouraged to Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.

B. Cleaning

- Imperial Square premises cleaned daily, all toilets and kitchens thoroughly disinfected daily.
- All touch surfaces such as door handles, keypads and light switches disinfected daily.
- Deep clean carried out each Saturday including wiping down all desks with disinfectant as well as communal areas and kitchens and toilets.
- Staff provided with disinfectant spray and wipes to clean equipment where necessary. Where equipment is shared i.e. photocopiers it should be wiped down before and after use.

C. Social distancing

- The number of staff in the office is being carefully monitored to ensure all staff are able to maintain social distancing and can feel comfortable at their workstation and in communal areas.
- Staff who don't currently work in the office should liaise with their HOD and the Office Manager before returning to the office to ensure there is adequate space to accommodate them.
- All staff reminded to social distance by at least 1 metre plus with signage throughout the buildings.
- Mirrors located on tight corners to allow staff to check whether the corridor is clear.
- Separate zones created for different staff members to eliminate/reduce the need for sharing facilities and equipment.

- Staff advised to use kitchen facilities one at a time.
- Staff able to communicate via teams or internal telephone system.
- Designated external transfer point set up next to the back door of 28 & 29 Imperial Square to allow documents to be picked up/dropped off with minimal contact.
- Post boxes set up in lobby of each building to ensure staff do not need to travel between buildings unless essential.

D. Wearing of PPE

- Staff are not required to wear a mask when moving around the communal areas of the buildings or in their own offices. Anyone entering the premises for meetings or to drop off documents will be asked to wear a mask or face covering. Staff meeting clients for meetings are recommended to also wear a mask or face covering when greeting their clients, it is at the discretion of the staff member whether masks may be removed once in the meeting room.
- Staff should make clients aware that they are required to wear a mask or face covering inside the buildings when arranging the appointment.
- Anyone exempt from wearing a mask does not need to wear a mask within the building however we would ask that they observe social distancing and other good hygiene practices such as hand sanitising.
- Gloves will be made available to anyone who needs them for work purposes.
- Where staff are conducting home visits for Will signings etc the use of gloves is advised in conjunction with hand washing/sanitising.
- Staff are reminded that the wearing of gloves is not a substitute for good hand washing.

E. Symptoms of Covid-19

- If a member of staff or someone in their household or bubble is displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 they should not come into the office.
- If advised that a member of staff or public has developed Covid-19 and were recently on our premises (including where a member of staff has visited other work place premises such as domestic premises), we will contact the Public Health Authority to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and will take advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken.

F. Transport

- To reduce the use of public transport, whilst the majority of staff are working from home, staff working in the office are welcome to use the car parks behind the buildings.

G. Meetings

- Clients may be seen in the meeting rooms from 19 July 2021. It is recommended that where possible, meetings are carried out using the outdoor rear shelter of 29 or remotely via Teams or phone.
- Where necessary to sign documents, staff may travel to a client's property and witness signatures etc. Gloves and disinfectant wipes are available and should be used on such visits to protect both staff members and clients.

- Staff should not enter the client property but witness signatures outside of the premises (weather permitting) at a distance of at least 1 metre plus. Alternatively staff can witness signatures through a window if this is preferable.
- All clients should be notified that they should not come to the office if they or anyone in their household or bubble tests positive or displays symptoms of Covid 19 .
- Clients should not come to the office without an appointment unless they are simply dropping off or returning documents. Clients without an appointment will not be seen in the office.

H. Deliveries

- No personal deliveries to the office
- Post is sorted, scanned and distributed by the office manager or office assistant. Hand sanitiser is used after handling any external documents.

I. Physical + mental health

- Some staff may find working from home or in the office difficult due to the pandemic or be anxious about the pandemic and its effects.
- Heads of department should be in regular contact with all members of their department to check on their well-being.
- Any staff member who needs additional support should contact their line manager in the first instance and arrangements can be made for professional support.
- Rob Nunn and Robert Spratt are trained first aiders for the buildings at Imperial Square.

This risk assessment is reviewed weekly.