

COVID-19 Social distancing and Hygiene advice for small retailers.

As a business operator you must take all reasonable steps to ensure that your staff, customers, delivery people and any other persons using your premises are not exposed to the virus and controls are in place to control the spread of the virus.

The Covid-19 virus is HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS and can survive for up to 3 days on surfaces such as packaging, money and skin. Infection can result from person to person spread by coughing and the inhalation of infected droplets or by either contaminating a surface or touching a contaminated surface. Hands can then transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.

A requirement of health and safety legislation is to assess the likelihood of the above persons on your premises being at risk of infection and identifying the control measures required to minimise or eliminate the risk.

The following controls should be considered:

Good Hygienic Practices

- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds using soap and warm water
- Wear PPE such as gloves for handling packaging and money etc
- Do not touch your face
- De-contaminate surfaces regularly, wash the surface then disinfect it. Use alcohol wipes if you have them, if not use a sanitiser (spray onto the surface and wipe, spray again and leave for 5 mins).
- Clothing - Employees should wear a clean uniform which they ideally change into when they arrive at work and take off before leaving work or be provided with an apron. Bear in mind that the virus may survive on clothing for up to 3 days.

Social distancing

In line with government advice, persons must be 2 metres apart (6ft). This is to reduce the transfer of the virus from an infected person to another person (sometimes people have the virus and feel well so they don't realise they are infected). In order to maintain this rule, you must make sure that staff and customers (and delivery personnel) are kept apart. The following are ways to adhere to this:

Limit the number of people in the shop

Consider implementing home delivery with telephone orders and payments to avoid contact with people. If this is not possible only essential products should be offered for sale and if the shopping area is too small or narrow to allow social distancing, then only one customer can be in that space at any one time. If the space is large enough to allow social distancing, you can allow more. It is recommended that you have no more than one customer in each aisle and you ensure a one-way system operates through the shop. Ideally, mark the floor.

Floor marking

To help customers to keep their distance, mark lines on the floor 2m apart, starting at the till, ideally using hazard tape.

Stewarding

At busy times a member of staff should advise customers of the restrictions and restrict the numbers of people accessing the premises at any one time. This also includes employees - numbers should be minimal.

Entrance and Exits

If you have 2 doors, one should be the entrance and one for the exit. If you only have one shop door, the customer leaving the shop MUST be 2m away from the waiting queue so ensure the waiting queue is a safe distance away. Customers should not be permitted to queue where this may cause unnecessary risk to other persons e.g. across the doors of domestic properties / footpaths etc

Restocking of Shelves

When staff are restocking shelves, a 2m distance must be respected. In order to comply with this requirement, you can close off the aisle or put up barriers around the worker or briefly close the shop.

Hand hygiene for customers

Provide hand sanitiser for customers to use before entering the shop. We recommend that customers sanitise their hands again as they leave the shop and you should provide sanitiser at the counter for their use.

It is good practice to sanitise basket handles and trolley handles each time before they are used by the next customer. If practicable to do so sanitiser and disposable paper should be provided and that a member of staff is allocated for this role to ensure that the customers' hands are not contaminated by a previous customer via the handle. The same member of staff will be responsible for limiting the number of people in the shop.

Paying at the till

In order to maintain to social distancing between customers and employees is to install a sneeze screen. It needs to be wide enough and high enough to be effective. It is suggested that you put a barrier at the counter with a gap to pass through money. An alternative may be to create an exclusion zone around the till area with a customer notice "Please stand behind the line while being served".

Taking money and giving change

Contactless payments should be encouraged or if orders can be taken over the phone then payment should also be taken.

Management

Ensure all employees are aware of the procedures and supervise them. You should write this down and use it to train your staff.

Review your cleaning schedule to include the disinfection of all hand-contact surfaces such as the till cover, trolley / basket handles, shopping container at till (used by customers to place their shopping in when paying), the dish at till (used to give change), door handles of shop door and toilet door and push plates on doors, toilet area, wash hand basin, taps and dispensers (soap and paper towels), card machines.

Check with all employees daily they are symptom free and have not been in contact with any person showing symptoms.

Food Premises

Specific advice for food businesses has been produced by the Environmental Health Food Team and the document Covid-19 Advice for Food Businesses may be found on the Council's website.

This information is not exhaustive, and more detailed information can be found on the council's Website at;

[health-and-safety-advice-for-businesses-during-the-coronavirus-covid19-outbreak](#)

Further guidance on making workplaces safer and for specific business types is also available using the following links;

https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Covid-19-Working-Through-This-Together_0.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topic/covid-19-advice-and-guidance-places-work>

If you require further information, please contact Environmental Health on 0300 013 3333.