

Introduction

In preparation for the risk of a large-scale epidemic and the impact this may have on our staff, business, and continuity of services to our customers, this policy has been prepared to support the planning of our emergency preparedness and response, the communication of requirements to our staff, and external communication to our key stakeholders.

Further information and the latest guidance on the COVID-19 virus is to be referenced from official sources including:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-covid-19>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk>
- <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

Training & Awareness

All employees are to be sent the following training video link, to ensure company-wide awareness:

- <https://www.ihasco.co.uk/free-coronavirus-awareness-video>

Posters are to be displayed in the workplace:

- <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5e35b25740f0b609169cb52a/coronavirus-public-info-poster-2.pdf>

Prevention & Hygiene

As general guidance, to protect yourself and others:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

Additional hand sanitisers and tissues will be made available as necessary around the office facility.

When working in the office the proximity to others is to be minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable, by reviewing desk layout and seating.

Returning Travellers

Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people immediately if you (or household members / other close contacts) have travelled to the UK from any of the high-risk areas notified by the government.

As this is subject to frequent change, the latest information on the internet must be referenced:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/>

Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do next.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Do NOT come into work – inform the office by telephone.

Site Visits & Travel

Where employees are required to visit customer's premises, there will currently be no restrictions on continuing with activities in line with government guidance, unless we are informed of a local outbreak in which case the site activity will be immediately suspended and an emergency telephone/web meeting held with the client to ascertain the containment action that is being taken.

In the event of public transport services being suspended, this is likely to have little impact on our operations with company/private vehicles being the primary source of travel. Staff should contact the office if this may pose an issue in getting to work.

Service Disruption

Should we be unable to deliver our contractual obligations due to quarantine requirements outside of our control, this will be documented with each client in writing, and an individual action plan created. Where this may result in a breach of legal requirements for our customers, or create other health and safety risks, these activities will be prioritised.

Business Meetings & Conferences

External visitors and company meetings are to be restricted to what is strictly necessary. Where possible these meetings are to be postponed until the epidemic is under control.

The attendance at conferences and larger public gatherings is to be avoided.

All international travel is to be subject to an individual risk assessment to justify and reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable. Travel to high risk areas is suspended until further notice.

Office Outbreak

In the event of a confirmed case involving a member of staff who has recently been in the office, or has interacted with other members of staff, an emergency meeting of Director's will be held (remotely if prudent) to consider closure of the office.

Should this be implemented, all staff will be notified by telephone.

In preparedness for closure the following steps have been taken:

- Staff contact details have been reviewed and are verified as current
- Remote access/VPN capacity has been reviewed, to support additional workers at home
- Laptop computers have been prepared, to support working at home (in line with existing Information Security policy requirements)
- Telephone diversion capability has been reviewed

During this period, unless unwell, it will be necessary to work from home (if possible) using company supplied equipment to maintain services to our clients.

Post may need to be diverted/delayed, and the Director's will be responsible for reviewing and managing this requirement during this time.

An external service will be contracted to undertake deep cleaning prior to reoccupation. This will require a minimum of 72 hours isolation prior to entry and the methods outlined by the government will be followed:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Any person who is infected, or is at higher risk of having potentially been infected, will be required to commence self-isolation for 14 days.

Self-Isolation

The office should be notified immediately by telephone if you have commenced a period of self-isolation.

The guidance from the NHS on what this means is to be followed:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

Do not ask colleagues to come to your home and discuss work matters – this should be done remotely.

Pay

Should you be able to work from home, remote access will be established for you, and this will be at full pay as normal.

Should you be well, but unable to work due to mandatory office closure, pay will be reviewed in line with government policies and relevant support arrangements.

Should you be unwell, and unable to work, this will be in line with the company's standard sick pay policy. Statutory Sick Pay will be available from day one.

Should you be well, but unable to work due to self-isolation, then a discussion will be held at this time, with the option to take annual leave considered.

Vulnerable Workers

Workers who have pre-existing conditions which may place them at higher risk are requested to notify management, if not already aware. This may include: Weakened Immune System, Asthma, Pregnancy etc.

Any worker who is considered to be at higher risk will be excluded from client meetings, event attendance and travel where possible.

Time Off for Dependants

Please refer to the Employee Handbook for existing arrangements.

If you are assisting a dependant with a known/suspected case of Coronavirus, then you must also commit to a period of self-isolation to protect your colleagues.

Signed (on behalf of Topcoat Construction Limited (T/A TCL Group):



Stephen Purdy
Director

Date: March 2020