

## **Construction Scotland**

### **Working on site during the COVID-19 pandemic: Construction Guidance Advance addendum no. 1: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

#### **Introduction**

In view of the current resurgence of Covid-19 infections and the identification of a new strain of COVID-19 that is more transmissible, Construction Scotland has reviewed its Site Operating Guidance and has identified a number of areas where additional measures now seem appropriate for construction businesses to take.

These measures will be incorporated in a revision of the Guidance but, in view of the urgency of the situation, we have decided to publish a summary of the principles as an Advance addendum, to be read in conjunction with the existing Guidance document.

#### **Review of site arrangements for adequacy**

All existing site arrangements should be reviewed for adequacy, including physical distancing, hygiene, face-covering and ventilation measures. Are the measures in place still appropriate for the site population and the nature of the work environment? Can the measures adopted be enhanced/improved? Is additional monitoring resource required?

#### **Re-induction and reiteration of measures**

All office and site arrangements to be re-briefed to staff and operatives, along with suppliers and other stakeholders whose attendance at site is essential to delivery of the project, taking note of the following enhanced measures:

#### **Toolbox talks and other briefings**

Whilst toolbox talks and daily briefings are essential tools for communicating measures and gaining feedback from site staff and operatives, it is becoming increasingly apparent that transmission risk increases in conditions where people gather in enclosed spaces and speak loudly to one another. For this reason, briefings (such as toolbox talks) should be given on-line wherever possible. If this is not possible, then they should be given outdoors, to small groups, in a physically distanced manner, whilst wearing face-coverings.

If outdoor briefings are not possible, then briefings should be carried out in a well-ventilated space and all those present must maintain physical distancing and wear face-coverings. Hand hygiene should be maintained, and the briefing be as short as possible.

#### **Vehicle Sharing**

Car and vehicle-sharing is proving to be a high-risk situation for virus transmission. Companies should require all staff to travel to work individually using their own transport,

wherever possible. Companies should provide information on local parking arrangements and consider the potential need for increased facilities.

Car or vehicle sharing between members of the same or extended households is acceptable.

Employers should generally not require their staff to share company vehicles in carrying out their work duties. This may mean taking multiple vehicles to a work site. Any exception must be supported by a situation-specific risk assessment undertaken using ALARP principles and including the known risk of transmission in vehicles.

The practice of workers eating together in a car or van at lunchtime should be banned. Mobile welfare units must maintain physical distancing, hand hygiene and ventilation in accordance with guidelines.

### Working from home

In accordance with Scottish Government regulations, all work that **can** be done at home **must** be done at home. This applies as much to individual site offices as to head and regional offices. All employers should assess the minimum need for work to be done in office locations and make arrangements, including providing equipment where reasonable, to enable work to be done at home.

### Ventilation

It is clear that increased ventilation can have an impact on reducing the risk of transmission and Employers should continue to consider ways to increase the ventilation in any indoors space in which people have to work – whether in offices or facilities under construction. Ventilation can be provided simply by opening windows or doors or by mechanical means.

Reference should be made to Scottish Government guidance on ventilation for further information on how this can be used to help reduce the risk of transmission.

### Face-coverings

The Construction Scotland Guidance requires all Employers to carry out task specific risk assessments and provide appropriate PPE (including RPE) if any workers are required to carry out operations at less than 2 metre physical distance.

Legislation introduced by the Scottish Government also requires the wearing of face-coverings in canteens (unless seated or eating/drinking) and in indoor communal areas such as passageways, stairs, lifts, staff rooms, training rooms, changing rooms or entrances, unless there are measures in place to *“keep that person separated from any other person by a partition or a distance of at least 2m”*.

The increased risk of infection now being reported, the possibility of accidentally breaching social distancing measures that are not physical, and the risks from aerosol transmission in

enclosed spaces occupied for extended periods means it is now appropriate to extend the wearing of face-coverings to anyone:

- moving around all indoor and outdoor spaces between task / activity locations.
- working together in any internal space which is not well ventilated (either naturally or mechanically) for protracted periods of over an hour.
- working together in an internal space which is not well ventilated (either naturally or mechanically) for any period where raised voices or physical exertion is required

All regardless of social distancing measures and subject to the exemptions listed in the regulations

### **Cleaning**

Regular cleaning of common use touchpoints such as door handles, handrails, taps, etc, ongoing throughout the working day, should continue to form part of the protective measures being implemented on sites and in offices during this period.

### **Updating of the Site operating Guidance**

The Site Operating Guidance will be updated, where necessary, to reflect the enhanced guidance contained in this advance addendum.

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