**POST COVID 19 PLANNING**

**5 STEPS**

1. Plan and communicate
2. Prepare your premises
3. Social distancing
4. Control access
5. Hygiene and cleaning

**Plan and Communicate**

Some colleagues may be nervous about returning to work so it is important to plan as much as possible then communicate those plans effectively with your team to reduce their anxieties and reassure them that they are returning to a safe working environment.

If you have more than 5 employees you should produce a risk assessment. If you have more than 50 employees then this should be published on your website.

Don’t rush people into coming back to the workplace – continue to encourage remote working where possible.

Keep a regular dialogue going with your team members and encourage them to share their views on reopening

Create clear return to work policies and procedures

Set clear expectations on the action required if a team member feels unwell

You need to understand specific needs – people with underlying health issues, people who are shielding because of their vulnerable family members and those who are pregnant should remain working from home.

If you have staff on furlough, you need to consider who comes back and when, giving them plenty of notice so they can plan for this date accordingly.

Are there alternative ways of commuting to avoid your team members using public transport?

Consider shift work or break down functions in ways that can improve social distancing within the work environment.

Provide regular reassurance and clear guidance as the situation evolves.

**Prepare Premises**

Deep cleaning of your site before the return to work begins

Liaise with your landlords and other people who may share your premises

Legionella checks on pipework following a period of unoccupancy

Check that all equipment is running safely

Setting up screens/barriers in public facing work environments

First aid – who will fulfill that role if the person who normally does is still on furlough or is self isolating

**Social distancing**

This is likely to remain a key part of the Government’s guidance for some time to come. This is something that needs to be considered in your own context. It could include:

Reducing the number of people on site at one time by home working or split shifts

Altering office layouts so colleagues are spaced out and not facing each other

Continuing use of technology like Zoom/Microsoft Teams for staff meetings

Staggering the use of kitchen facilities

Removing tables/chairs from kitchen areas so people aren’t tempted to linger there

Don’t use hot desking if at all possible

Encourage use of external areas for breaks if there are any

**Access Control**

If open to public then have queuing system with the 2 metre distance markings on the floor

Have an appointments system

Have clear signage to advise visitors of what is expected from them

Remove unnecessary items of furniture from public areas to enable social distancing to be enforced

Install screens where appropriate

Reduce occupancy numbers in lifts if these have to be used to reach your working environment

**Hygiene and cleaning**

Good hygiene and cleaning practices are the most important tool to prevent the spread of Covid-19

Put up signage in your premises to remind people of correct hand washing procedures etc

Add hand gel stations at strategic points around your premises

Supply disinfectants or wipes around work areas, especially in shared spaces and next to shared devices like printers, scanners and the like

Implement a clean and clear desk policy ie desk left clear and wiped clean each night

Designate an isolation room to isolate any colleague who identifies symptoms while at work

Keep the ongoing cleaning regime at your premises under review

Insurers would generally be asking their policyholders to follow the government’s advice and all policies have a built-in assumption that the policyholder takes reasonable care to prevent any loss, injury or damage but ultimately if a charity was somehow found liable for an employee/volunteer/service user contracting the virus then the liability sections of their policy would respond to this accordingly. As I mentioned in the Zoom chats last week, it is reassuring to know that the insurer is there to defend any claims as otherwise it would cost a large amount in legal fees.

Useful web resources:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-the-charity-sector>

<https://www.aviva.co.uk/risksolutions/covid-19/>

<https://www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/returning-to-work-after-lockdown/>

Please also see the attached risk management document from PIB, which my notes above are a summary of.