



Pubs operational advice and risk assessment

The British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) and UKHospitality have developed the below guidelines to assist pubs in risk assessing their businesses, as we look towards the hospitality, leisure and tourism sector gradually re-opening venues, in order to play our part in the national economic recovery.

Pub businesses have been operating successfully to high standards within the existing requirements of Health & Safety in the workplace, food hygiene and licensing conditions. In particular, existing licensing conditions ensure our pubs operate a professional, managed and safe environment for the consumption of alcohol. Overall, we feel pubs will be well equipped to successfully implement operational protocols in their business, based on the below advice.

The Government's COVID-19 Secure guidelines set out the standards to make your business COVID-19 safe. These can be found here:

- [Pubs, bars and restaurants](#)

To do this, you need to complete an individual risk assessment for your premises and work activities outlining how you are meeting these guidelines and implementing them in your business to keep your staff and customers safe. An example risk assessment can be found at annex 1.

The sectoral advice in this section is a collation of good practice to inform **your** robust risk assessment and changes to **your** premises and operating plans, as each hospitality business is different.

Registration systems

The Government guidelines state: “the opening up of the economy following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. You should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. Many businesses that take bookings already have systems for recording their customers and visitors – including restaurants, hotels, and hair salons. If you do not already do this, you should do so to help fight the virus. We will work with industry and relevant bodies to design this system in line with data protection legislation, and set out details shortly.”

Staff return and fitness to work

It is recommended that businesses should carry out a return to work conversation, with staff. HSE has [guidance](#) on talking to employees about Covid-19. This should be carried out for all staff returning to work in the work environment, to ensure staff safety. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home. Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role. If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to socially distance from others. If they have to spend time closer than the social distance to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

You should also provide support for workers around mental health and wellbeing.

People who need to self-isolate

The current advice is that individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace program. Enable workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate. See current guidance for employers and employees relating to statutory sick pay due to coronavirus. See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

Hygiene

Good hygiene is vital to the reduction of transmission. All handwashing to always be in line with Government guidelines regarding method and length of washing. All staff should wash their hands when arriving at work, as well as before handling or eating food, or after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing, or going to the toilet.

Communications to staff should remind everyone to wash their hands or use a suitable hand gel at the start of every shift. Hand sanitiser could also be placed in multiple locations in addition to washrooms.

Advice for staff to take home

A general commitment to hygiene should be regularly communicated to staff, including transmission threats outside of the workplace, infection and quarantine guidelines, and actions to reduce risk of infection in the home.

Staff protection

All Government advice should be adhered to with regard to protection of staff from COVID-19 and actions to limit risk of transmission. This will include developing cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures and maintaining social distancing, where possible. Below are some suggested control measures to consider as part of your risk assessment and development of risk management procedures. Please note this list is not exhaustive.

The most important thing is to remember the routes of transmission, and to work out what actions are most effective in **your** business.

- Heightened cleaning and disinfection to disinfect all frequently touched areas in staff areas such as tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines, etc.
- For staff break areas/canteens, stagger timings so that groups of staff have slots to come for their meals to reduce gathering.
- Encourage staff to take 'grab and go' lunches, buying food to be consumed away from crowded spaces.
- In office/admin areas, many people could be sharing the phone, keyboard, mouse, and the desk. If these items are shared, they should be cleaned using your usual cleaning products before being used, and cleaning products should be made available for this purpose.
- Make sure that the social distancing rule applies at lunch or smoking / vaping breaks
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. There is more control if laundry is carried out in-house or professionally, rather than staff taking it home.

Protective equipment

The Government advises that when managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE (beyond what you usually wear) is not beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

The Government advises that unless you are in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, your risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is extremely limited. Government guidance can be found here - [More information on PPE and face coverings.](#)

Waste disposal

Contact your waste contractor to advise them of any changes in your procedures, such as increased frequency of collections. Consider additional litter bins on your premises to encourage customers to dispose of their own waste, such as takeaway containers or wrappers. This will reduce the need for staff to touch items that have been left or touched by customers, as well as reducing littering on and around your premises.

Training

Training should be given to ensure that all staff understand the new risks, and should include details on social distancing requirements, routes of transmission and the importance of hand washing and surface disinfection at key times. All staff should be instructed about not coming to work if they have a high temperature, new continuous cough or the loss of taste or smell. They should stay at home for seven days (or for as long as prevailing guidance dictates).

Staff protection

- As every pub business is different, a risk assessment needs to be developed that takes account of the specific characteristics of the premises, reviewed and communicated to all staff, as part of the overall operational risk assessment for the specific business. Advice to consider for your business is listed below.

- Staff serving customers or taking payments should be protected and wherever possible staff should maintain social distancing. Where maintaining the distance is not possible, other mitigating measures should be considered.
- Implementation of measures best suited to the business and to protect staff and customers will be informed by the risks posed by the main routes of transmission.
- More frequent cleaning regimes should be implemented, in particular to disinfect all high throughput areas and frequently touched surfaces such as bar tops, tables, chairs, counters tills, card machines etc.
- For staff break areas, stagger timings so that staff have specific slots to come for their meals/break to reduce bunching up.
- Avoid as far as possible any need for sharing equipment i.e. phone, keyboard, pen, mouse and desk in the pub back office.
- Where this is impossible, all shared equipment should be cleaned before use as advised by Government guidelines.
- Maintain social distance rules when taking deliveries and where possible use digital forms of delivery verification.
- Advise that social distancing rules are applied at meal breaks, or smoking / vaping breaks
- For staff to protect others - Always sneeze or cough into a tissue and which should be placed into the bin immediately afterwards. If a tissue is not available you should sneeze or cough into the crook of your arm. In all cases, wash your hands or use an alcohol sanitising gel immediately after coughing or sneezing
- For cleaning contaminated surfaces in the pub, use disinfectants and sanitisers that are effective against bacteria as well as cold and flu viruses, as recommended by Government advice which can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- Continue to remind staff that if they have a high temperature and/or a new, continuous cough they should not come to work and follow the latest self-isolating guidance (currently 7 days self-isolation). Advise checking staff temperatures as part of your overall risk assessment and operational plan.

- Continue to remind staff that if they live with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus they should not come to work and should self-isolate (currently for 14 days).

Advice to staff working in pub kitchens

- Cleaning regimes for kitchens should reflect the need to reduce risk from COVID-19 as well as maintaining all expectations relevant to a food business regarding hygiene. Recognising that cleaning measures are already stringent in kitchen areas, consider the need for additional cleaning and disinfection measures.
- You could include guidance regarding the number of people allowed in the chilled stores or dry stores at one time, keeping to social distancing requirements, or the changing rooms / staff toilet areas.
- Handwashing of glassware etc. should be avoided where possible with glassware washed separately from plates and cutlery.
- Use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them by hand using detergent and warm water and dry them thoroughly, using a separate tea towel
- Where handwashing is necessary, staff should wear rubber gloves and use suitable products for cleaning and sanitation.
- During rinsing processes, advise temperatures above 60°C are reached, as disinfection of crockery and glasses requires this.
- Cloths and sponges etc used for cleaning should be changed daily and similarly used materials disposed of safely on a daily basis. Tea towels used for drying should be changed on a daily basis and washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely.

Customer protection - Public bar operations

We recognise that the bar area(s) in pubs will be a challenging area to operate under social distancing requirements.

- Please refer to the government guidance on pubs and restaurants <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb96e8e86650c278b077616/Keeping-workers-and-customers-safe-during-covid-19-restaurants-pubs-bars-takeaways-230620.pdf>

Cellar

As well as operational issues such as working in the cellar, your risk assessment will need to consider the various preparations that will need to be made in advance of opening; curtailment of furlough and potentially any relaxation of social distancing to support these activities:

- Cellar/stock clearance
- Equipment safety and operational assessments
- Cleaning and hygiene measures
- Stock delivery, replacement equipment and delivery of dispense gases etc.

Wash hands before entering the cellar. Normal practices for cellar maintenance should be followed and where possible by one person. If more than one person is required ensure that Government guidance on social distancing is being followed. Please see current Government guidance on deliveries [here](#).

Outdoor areas

Although easier to manage if a large outdoor area, there is a danger of groups forming. Review current government guidance and consider the below as part of your risk assessment:

- Regular patrol of outside areas
- Restrictions that may be required for children's play areas.

Pubs with rooms

For guidance on dealing with accommodation, please refer to the [Government advice here](#).