Working Safely during Covid -19 in Tourism & Hospitality Businesses

Version 5.2
18 December 2020

tourism
northernireland

Department for the
Economy

Contents

SECTION 1: SCOPE, RISK ASSESSMENT AND USING THE GUIDANCE

1.1 Introduction

Northern Ireland is currently experiencing a public health emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, it is critical that businesses ensure that they understand the risks that COVID-19 poses to their staff, customers and any visitors and take all reasonable steps to ensure everyone is kept as safe as possible.

This document is designed to help tourism and hospitality businesses. It should be read in conjunction with sectoral specific guidance listed within, and considered and applied in line with regulations set out under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and official guidance. The NI Executive's Guide to the Coronavirus Restrictions is a helpful tool to explain the regulations.

Please be aware that you must adhere to the opening dates and restrictions related to your business. Further information about business reopening timelines can be found at: www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-timeline-ni-businesses-reopening.

This guidance document has been prepared by the Department for the Economy in partnership with Tourism NI. It has been informed by the NI Tourism Recovery Working Group and consultation with Public Health Agency (PHA), the Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI), key Executive Departments, District Councils and has been shared with trade unions.

It takes account of UK Government guidance developed by the Department for Culture, Music and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with the Visitor Economy Working Group. It has been prepared to reflect NI public health and safety requirements and legislation. It also takes into consideration best practice outlined within the 'COVID-19 Working Through this Together Guidance' produced by the NI Engagement Forum: www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-workplace-safety-guidance-and-priority-sector-list

Businesses and trade bodies should review their material regularly against the latest NI Executive guidance to ensure it is compliant with core requirements.

The document is updated on a regular basis to reflect changes to regulations and best practise guidance advice. This version is up to date as of 11/12/2020. You can check for updates at: https://covid19.tourismni.com/businesssupport

1.2 What businesses this guidance covers

Objective: To clarify what types of business are covered in this guidance document.

This document is designed for all businesses across the tourism and hospitality sector in Northern Ireland. This includes, for example:

- Premises concerned with the service of food and drink (e.g. cafes, restaurants, bars)
- Premises that offer accommodation, food and drink and may also host events (e.g. hotels and some event venues)
- Premises that host events only (without accommodation)
- Venues primarily offering accommodation with or without food service (e.g. guest houses, bed and breakfasts, self-catering, hostels and caravan parks), and
- Venues that are primarily visitor attractions (e.g. museums, galleries, parks, funfairs).

1.3 How to use this guidance

Objective: To explain to business owners or managers how to use the guidance

This document sets out guidance focussed around the risks posed by COVID-19 and how to ensure that the premises to which it applies work as safely as possible by putting controls in place to either eliminate those risks entirely or, at the very least, reduce those risks.

While this document provides general guidance, Tourism NI will also publish a summary of the latest amends to regulations to help businesses stay up-to-date with any changes to legislation, for example restrictions to opening hours or party size. The two documents will be published side by side and should be read together.

Each business will need to use this guidance to determine the specific controls it should implement depending on the nature of their business, including the size and type of the business; and how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated.

The following gives a guide for businesses as to what each section of the document deals with and assist businesses determining which parts they should refer.

Section	Business Type
1: Scope, risk assessment and using this guidance	All businesses.
2: Reducing transmission risks	All businesses.
3: Customer and/or visitor safety	Businesses need to decide which headings within the section apply to them based on their premises and what they offer. For example, if the venue does not provide overnight guest accommodation then this heading will not apply. If the venue does not have any food or drink service (e.g. self-catering accommodation) then the sections that deal with service will not apply, etc.
4: Staff safety	Any businesses that employ staff, whether part time or full time, need to refer to this section.
5: Managing events at a venue	Any businesses that host events e.g. hotels, event venues etc. Events could include meetings, functions, weddings etc.
6: General cleaning and hygiene	All businesses.
7: Workforce management	Any businesses that employ staff.
8: Overarching safety and security arrangements	This section is relevant for any businesses that envisage queueing at their premises and/or normally provide door security.
9: Handling goods	Any businesses that either receive or dispatch goods should refer to this section.
10: This section provides the links to specific industry sectoral guidance	As appropriate.

It is vital to stress that a site-by-site approach is essential and the risk assessment for each premises will be unique. Therefore, this guidance should be used to translate to whatever areas are relevant to your business and any measures that are taken should fit appropriately with any operational needs.

This guidance does not supersede or replace any legal obligations relating, for example, to health and safety, wider public health requirements, noise issues, employment matters or duties under equalities legislation. It is important that as a business or an employer you continue to comply with your existing statutory obligations, including those relating to individuals with protected characteristics.

This guidance is non-statutory in status, meaning that it is not a legal document. However, it does aim to set out what the current legal requirements in relation to COVID-19 are for the businesses to which it applies.

Where there are legal requirements these may be highlighted in **_bold italics_** for emphasis*.* There are additional controls proposed that will all also assist with compliance. Bearing in mind an employer's legal responsibilities in relation to health and safety, businesses should carefully consider the applicability of the controls set out.

To help you decide which actions to take, **_you must carry out an appropriate risk assessment, at a business and site level_**, just as you would for other health and safety related hazards. This risk assessment must be done in consultation with unions or workers.

When considering how to apply this guidance, do not forget to take into account agency workers, contractors and other people, as well as your employees. We know many people are also keen to return to or contribute to volunteering. Organisations have a duty of care to volunteers to ensure as far as reasonably practicable that they are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This guidance is equally applicable to volunteers and, when it comes to health and safety, they should be afforded the same level of protection as employees and the self-employed.

In many instances in the tourism and hospitality sector, premises are let out to third party contractors and operators for specific usage. In such cases, whilst the premises remain under the direct control of the owner, the actual event or function is under the control of the event planner/organiser and they too have a role to play.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the relevant guidance provided throughout the document and delivered in line with legislation https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-accompany-health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-no-2-regulations-northern-ireland-2020 and any restrictions on operations: www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-timeline-ni-businesses-reopening.

1.4   Regulation and enforcement

Objective: To outline who the enforcement authorities are, what powers they have and what the penalties for non-compliance are.

1.4.1   Who regulates?

For the purposes of clarity, the enforcing authorities in respect of any of the emergency legislation relating to COVID-19 are the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Local Councils, via Authorised Officers which could include Environmental Health Officers (EHOs), Building Control Officers (BCOs) or other officers appropriately authorised by the Council.

1.4.2   Enforcement approach

Where the relevant enforcing authority identifies businesses that are not taking action to comply with the relevant public health legislation and guidance to control public health risks and risks to employees, they will consider taking a range of actions to improve control of risks. For example, this could cover businesses exceeding the maximum numbers determined for the premises; not adequately managing the legal requirement for table service only; permitting tables outside the household or bubble restrictions or any other contravention of legal requirements. The actions the enforcing authority can take include the provision of specific advice to employers through to issuing enforcement notices, including fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to help secure improvements.

It is not only employers that could face enforcement action. Customers or visitors who fail to comply with legal requirements whilst at hospitality venues could also face enforcement action. This could include, for example, failing to remain seated whilst eating and/or drinking, engaging in prohibited behaviours such as dancing; or failing to follow clear social distancing requirements.

1.4.3   Penalties and fines

On 8th October 2020, the NI Executive announced increases to penalties as follows:

1.   Fines on conviction of up to £10,000 on Employers/Business Owners for: -

- Failure to close a business as require
- Failure to observe early closing requirements
- Not implementing measures to maintain social distancing

2.   Fixed Penalty Notices - £200 on each offence for customers and/or visitors who fail to follow mandatory controls

1.5   About COVID-19

Objective: To explain the basic scientific evidence around COVID-19

COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) is an infectious disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus not previously seen in humans. It belongs to the same family of viruses (coronaviruses) as the virus that causes SARS, but is not the same virus.

How does COVID-19 Spread?

The disease spreads primarily from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or speaks. These droplets are relatively heavy, do not travel far and quickly sink to the ground. That is the key reason why social distancing is determined at 2m as the evidence suggests the droplets do not travel further than that. It is of course also the reason why the 2m rule is so important.

People can catch COVID-19 either:

Directly	Direct contact with an infected person through respiratory droplets generated by breathing, sneezing or coughing.
Indirectly	By touching surfaces (e.g. tables, doorknobs and handrails) that an infected person has coughed or sneezed on.

Whether the transmission is direct or indirect, infection occurs when the virus is either inhaled or absorbed through a mucous membrane (eyes, nose or mouth).

In the case of indirect transmission through contaminated surfaces it is still not known how long the virus survives on these surfaces, although current information suggests the virus may survive for 48-72 hours under normal circumstances. This is an important consideration in thinking about cleaning schedules and frequencies.

It is important to remember that infected persons can be asymptomatic (i.e. they may not display any typical symptoms), so someone can appear entirely well yet still be transmitting the disease.

1.6   Understanding and managing risk

Objective: To enable all business owners to understand risk.

COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks. **As a business owner, you have a legal responsibility to protect workers, customers and others from risks to their health and safety.** This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to either eliminate them or, if they cannot be eliminated, reduce the likelihood of the risk as much as you can through using controls.

There are three important definitions/concepts that are central to both understanding risk as well as putting systems in place to manage risk.

Hazard	Any source of potential harm. In the case of COVID-19 this is, put simply, contracting the illness as a result of exposure to infection.
Risk	The chance or likelihood that a person will be harmed if exposed to an identified hazard. Again, in the case of COVID-19 this means the chance or likelihood that someone will be infected.
Control	An action or measure that reduces the risk (i.e. reduces the likelihood).

In the case of COVID-19, the risk is essentially that someone - whether a staff member, customer, or other visitor - becomes infected with the virus. Therefore, with the exception of either closing the business or ensuring staff work from home (which is impossible in the types of premises covered by this guidance) as a business owner you cannot completely eliminate the risk. You must therefore minimise, the risk, as far as is reasonably possible.

That is why you are legally obliged to carry out a Risk Assessment, using this guidance to help inform your control measures. A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace and making a record of the significant findings.

1.6.1   Covid 19 Risk Assessment and Controls explained

Objective: to eliminate or reduce risks by carrying out a COVID-19 risk assessment and implementing effective controls.

Employers have a duty to ensure that the business is as safe as possible for everyone - staff, customers and other visitors. In the context of COVID-19, **this means undertaking a Risk Assessment and then thinking through and implementing all possible controls as to reduce the risk as far as is possible.**

There is a useful template that you can use to base your risk assessment around at. www.hseni.gov.uk/publications/example-covid-19-risk-assessment-template

As can be seen from this template and from Section 1.7, eliminating or reducing risk (s) is all about effective controls. As with any infectious disease, there is a hierarchy of controls as set out by the World Health Organisation. Whilst these include testing and tracing, those controls are government-led (although businesses have responsibilities to assist with tracing as set out in Section 3.6). For businesses, controls can be grouped under three broad categories, which reflect the ways in which the disease is transmitted and reduce the risk of such transmission.

These are as follows:

A: **Controls that reduce the risk of Direct transmission. Examples include:**

- Reducing person to person contact
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
- Adequate social distancing for everyone (staff, customers and visitors).

- Use of face coverings.
- Use of physical barriers to reduce droplet spread, for example screens.
- Reconfiguring work areas and/or customer seating to ensure no face-to-face orientation.
- Controlling noise levels to ensure that customers and/or visitors do not have to raise their voices.
- Ensuring adequate ventilation throughout the premises.

B: Controls that reduce the risk of Indirect transmission. Examples include:

- Regular and effective handwashing.
- Adequate cleaning and disinfection of all areas.
- Use of PPE (gloves or other barriers).
- Adequate laundry arrangements.

Finally, there are some controls that reduce the risk of both direct and indirect transmission because these controls either reduce the number of people present at the venue, or make sure possible carriers do not visit.

C: Controls that reduce the risk of both direct and indirect transmission. Examples include:

- Workers and customers who feel unwell staying at home and not visiting the venue.
- Employees who can work from home doing so.
- Controlling the number of people present at the venue at any one time (staff and/or customers)

Throughout the remaining sections of this document, further details of controls broadly outlined above are provided in relation to all the aspects of businesses to which this guidance is designed to apply.

Those responsible for completing the COVID-19 Risk Assessment should use this document to assist them in identifying all the reasonable controls that are appropriate for their business.

1.6.2   Staff engagement in risk assessment and controls

Objective: To ensure that employers comply with their obligations to consult staff and also ensure that staff provide input to COVID-19 controls.

Employers have a duty to consult their staff on health and safety. In a small business, you might choose to consult your workers directly. Larger businesses may consult through a health and safety representative chosen by your employees or selected by a trade union. You can do this by listening and talking to them about the work and how you will manage risks from COVID-19.

The people who do the work are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to reduce those risks. Involving them in making decisions about what controls to implement shows that you take their health and safety seriously. You must consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union or, if there is not one, a representative chosen by workers. As an employer, you cannot decide who the representative will be.

At its most effective, full involvement of your workers creates a culture where relationships between employers and workers are based on collaboration, trust and joint problem solving. As is normal practice, workers should be involved in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies in partnership with the employer.

Employers and workers should always come together to resolve issues. If concerns still cannot be resolved, see below for further steps employees can take.

1.6.3 How to raise a concern if you are an employee:

- First, speak to your employer
- Contact your employee representative, if your workplace has one, and/or contact your trade union if you have one
- If agreement on a resolution cannot be reached, employees and/or their recognised trade unions or other representatives should contact their local Council or use the HSENI online form: https://www.secure.hseni.gov.uk/forms/complaint.aspx

1.7 Sharing the results of your risk assessment

Objective: To ensure that staff and customers have confidence in a businesses' COVID-19 controls.

You must share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce.

In venues where alcohol may be consumed, you must be able to demonstrate to any regulatory authority (either District Council or PSNI), that you have carried out a comprehensive COVID-19 risk assessment. In practice, they will expect to see this in writing.

We would expect all businesses to demonstrate to their workers and customers that they have properly assessed their risk and taken appropriate measures to mitigate this. You should do this by displaying a notification in a prominent place in your business and on your website, if you have one. This is useful not only in demonstrating compliance, but also to assist customer confidence.

1.8 Other considerations

Objective: To ensure that businesses consider all aspects of their activities, follow best practice and consider any additional implications of COVID-19 controls.

In your assessment, you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are vulnerable to COVID-19. The recommendations in the rest of this document are ones you should consider as you go through this process.
You could also consider any advice that has been produced specifically for your sector, for example by trade associations or trade unions. For example, guidance produced by Hospitality Ulster and the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF) has further information on many parts of the visitor economy that may help with this process.

You should consider the security implications of any changes you intend to make to your operations and practices in response to COVID-19, as any revisions may present new or altered security risks or issues with accessibility, which may need mitigation.

Whilst the risk to health from COVID-19 is at the forefront of everyone's minds, it is essential that businesses and other organisations remain cognisant of all risks that may impact their business as they look to adjust their operations, ensuring that existing risk assessments are proactively adapted to support and complement other changes.

1.9 Legal Considerations

Objective: To ensure that all legal obligations relating to COVID-19 are considered

The Opening hour restrictions currently in place and outlined at page 7 must be followed. Note that failure to do so could result in enforcement action and a potential fine of up to £10,000.

As already outlined, ***if you have not already done so, you must carry out an assessment of the risks posed by COVID-19 in your workplace as soon as possible.***

If you are currently operating, you are likely to have gone through a lot of this thinking already. We recommend that you use this document to identify any further improvements you should make.

As well as the requirement to carry out the Risk Assessment, the following additional legal requirements apply to all venues where alcohol may be consumed.

- ***You must be able to demonstrate to any regulatory authority (either District Council or PSNI), that you have carried out a comprehensive COVID-19 risk assessment. In practice, they will expect to see this in writing.***

- ***You must have assessed the maximum number of customers that your venue can accommodate at any given time after considering your social distancing controls. This should be documented in your risk assessment.***

- ***This number must be prominently displayed on the premises, for example at the entrance door or, in the case of larger venues with multiple different spaces, within each seating area both inside and outside.***

There are additional legal requirements set out in the rest of this document that all venues to which this guidance applies need to ensure are addressed.

SECTION 2: REDUCING THE RISKS OF TRANSMISSION

2.1   Use of face coverings

Objective: To explain the various types of face covering, when they should be used and why.

Droplet infection is the key way in which COVID-19 is spread. Evidence shows that wearing a face covering can significantly reduce the risk of infection to other people in close proximity to the wearer, should the wearer of the face covering have the virus. In other words, face coverings protect other people rather than the wearer. They do so by reducing the projection of droplets or aerosols.

Face masks on the other hand are the type of devices used in clinical settings and because they are completely sealed they protect both the wearer and others in close proximity. However, in hospitality settings, face masks are neither practical nor realistic and so face coverings and/or visors are the norm. The only types of PPE that are often used are face coverings (as opposed to face masks) and face visors. It is useful to clarify exactly what level of protection each of these can achieve.

2.1.1   Face coverings

Face coverings are now required in certain settings, for example in shops and on public transport. They are also required by staff and customers in certain hospitality settings (customers at all times apart from when seated at a table for the service of food and/or drink). Note that exemptions apple to those aged 12 or under and those with certain medical conditions. Further information can be found here: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-face-coverings. Face coverings primarily protect those in close proximity to the wearer of the face covering by reducing the projection of droplets and aerosols from that person whilst they are speaking.

2.1.2   Face Visors

These are primarily designed to protect the wearer's eyes from droplet or aerosol contamination. Whilst they do also reduce projection from the wearer, they are not as effective in doing so as face coverings.

2.2   Social distancing

Objective: To explain the importance of social distancing and outline the key responsibilities of both business owners and customers/visitors.

Apart from eliminating any positive cases from either the workforce or customer/visitors, **social distancing is one of the most significant and effective controls that can be put in place by businesses to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.**

Droplet infection is considered to be the main way in which the infection is transmitted and droplets are generated when people talk (cough, breathe, etc.). One of the reasons why singing and shouting are not encouraged/allowed is because this significantly increases both the amount of droplets as well as the distance they can be projected.

The current science and evidence suggests that 2m distancing must ideally be maintained at all times, including distances between tables in service settings. The current guidance is that where 2m cannot be maintained between tables mitigation should be in place.

2.3   Cleaning and disinfection

Objective: To explain the risks of infection through cross contamination and the importance of effective cleaning and hygiene practices to minimise the risk of transmission through contaminated surfaces, objects or clothing.

Definitions: Cleaning means the removal of dirt.

Disinfection means the destruction of microorganisms, including virus and in this case Coronavirus.

As outlined previously, COVID -19 can be spread through both direct contact with an asymptomatic carrier or infected persons (droplet infection) or through cross contamination from surfaces that have become contaminated. Cross contamination means the transference of the virus from where it is still active on a surface (or possibly a garment; tablecloth; napkin etc.) to a person's mouth, nose or eyes (mucous membrane).

The risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection through indirect means (cross contamination) depends on many factors, including:

- The type of surface contaminated
- The amount of virus shed from the individual
- The time the individual spent in the setting
- The time since the individual was last in the setting

Surfaces and belongings can be contaminated with COVID-19 when people who are infectious cough or sneeze or touch them. Transmission of COVID-19 can occur when someone else then touches the contaminated surface or item. The person may become infected if they touch their nose, eyes or mouth with a contaminated hand or object.
Increased frequency of cleaning of general room surfaces reduces the presence of the virus and the risk of contact. Cleaning and disinfection play a key role in reducing the risk of this second transmission mode.

There are a variety of products that can be used on surfaces to disinfect them. Some products can provide both cleaning and disinfection together. Sodium hypochlorite (bleach / chlorine) may be used at a recommended concentration of 0.1% or 1,000ppm (1 part of 5% strength household bleach to 49 parts of water). Alcohol at 70-90% can also be used for surface disinfection.

Surfaces must be cleaned with water and soap or a detergent first to remove dirt, followed by disinfection. It is important to follow clearly all instructions provided for the use of cleaning chemicals including, if stipulated, contact times (some chemicals will require to be left on surfaces for a period of time prior to washing or wiping clean).

The infection risk from a COVID-19 contaminated environment decreases over time. It is not yet clear at what point there is no risk from the virus, however, studies suggest that, in non-healthcare settings, the risk of residual infectious virus is likely to be significantly reduced after 48 hours.

2.4   Ventilation

Objective: To understand the importance of good ventilation in reducing potential viral load in indoor spaces.

There is evidence to suggest that poor ventilation in confined indoor spaces is associated with increased transmission of respiratory infections. It is important to clarify exactly what is meant by ventilation. Ventilation refers to air changes. Air change can only be achieved by opening windows and/or doors or through mechanical ventilation systems that draw fresh outdoor air into the space and extract old air. Fans or other devices used on their own, without any source of fresh outside air simply move the same air around the room. This should be avoided.

It is important to have good ventilation in order to reduce any potential concentration of virus in the air that may be present in the indoor space due to the presence of an asymptomatic carrier or alternatively a positive case that is as yet undiagnosed.

There are some simple ways to identify poorly ventilated areas:

- Look for areas where there is no mechanical ventilation or no natural ventilation, such as non-opening windows and vents, etc. (unless doors are opened very frequently).
- Check that mechanical systems provide outdoor air, temperature control or both. If a system (e.g. a local air conditioner) is recirculating only and does not have an outdoor air supply, or a separate source of outdoor air, the area is likely to be poorly ventilated.
- Identify areas that feel stuffy or smell badly.
- Use carbon dioxide (CO_2) monitors to identify the CO_2 levels to help decide if ventilation is poor. CO_2 monitors are most effective for areas that are regularly attended by the same group of people. They are less effective in areas with low numbers of people.

Natural ventilation can be provided through open windows, or through other means such as vents. However, fire doors should not be propped open.

It is important not to completely close windows and doors when the area is occupied as this can result in very low levels of ventilation.

Lower temperatures and likely windy weather conditions in the winter months will increase the natural ventilation through openings. This means you don't need to open windows and doors as wide, so partially opening them can still provide adequate ventilation while maintaining a comfortable workplace temperature. Opening higher-level windows is likely to generate fewer draughts.

Airing rooms as frequently as you can will help improve ventilation. This involves opening all doors and windows wide to maximise the ventilation in the room. It may be easier to do this when the room is unoccupied or between uses.

There is useful further information on ventilation on the Health and Safety Executive Website at https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation.htm#balancing.

2.5   Cleaning after a known case of COVID-19

The principles set down at the link below should be followed if cleaning after a known case of coronavirus: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings#left-area

Regardless of whether an individual is a suspected case or confirmed case, the management of such an individual is the same.

Individuals should follow the stay at home guidance provided by the Public Health Agency

In addition to maintaining 2m social distancing, the following should be considered for customers or employees to deal with a scenario where someone develops symptoms whilst on the premises:

- Identification of a room with private toilet and handwashing facility where a person who develops symptoms can be isolated if they are unable to vacate the venue immediately and until arrangements can be made for them to be taken home or to hospital.
- Appropriate PPE for employees who may have to supervise the ill person.
- In the case of hotel and tourist accommodation, please refer to information on Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for accommodation providers. www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-advice-for-accommodation-providers

Advice on reopening the business or part of the business following a suspected or confirmed case can be found via the above links, but in particular:

- The COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings web page provides advice on cleaning, disinfection and laundry.
- Coronavirus: Workplace safety guidelines and social distancing.
- Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19).

SECTION 3: CUSTOMER AND/OR VISITOR SAFETY

Objective: to make sure business owners as well as customers and visitors understand what they need to do to maintain safety, and minimise the risk of transmission.

3.1   Booking and prior to arrival

Objective: To ensure that, as far as possible, customers and visitors are aware of the requirements in place when they arrive at the premises

Clearly this public health emergency has resulted in significant changes to the procedures and processes venues have introduced to reduce risks as far as possible in relation to COVID-19. Customers and visitors' observance of the controls required where they are directly responsible for them is key to controlling these risks. It is vital therefore that customers and visitors have as much information before their visit to enable good compliance.

Controls that should be considered:

- Advise customers and visitors not to travel if they are unwell or experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms.
- Provide clear guidance on social distancing requirements to people both before arrival, for example on your website and in pre-arrival emails. Consider the particular needs of those with protected characteristics, such as people with visual impairments.
- Advise customers and guests of any changes to usual service and what may be expected of them during their visit.
- Inform guests about preventative measures being taken and other services they may require, for example, medical and pharmacy services available in the area or in the establishment itself.
- Inform guests that they should be prepared to remove face coverings if asked to do so by police officers and staff for the purposes of identification.
- Have clear communications for customers on what they should do if they become unwell during their visit.

3.2   Managing customer/visitor numbers in venues where alcohol may be consumed

Objective: To ensure that the maximum number of visitors on the premises, both indoors and in outside areas such as beer gardens, pavement seats, patio areas, etc. does not exceed the number(s) calculated once these areas have been reconfigured to allow for adequate social distancing of 2m or, if not feasible, at least 1m with additional controls.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***The maximum number of visitors that the venue can accommodate must be calculated.*** This should be done once the seating areas have been rearranged to apply the social distancing guidance. The calculation must be reflected in the Risk Assessment. (See Section 3.7 on Table layout).

- ***You must display the maximum number of visitors that can be seated in the venue at any given time.*** This should be displayed by the entrance, at in reception, or in a prominent position in the venue. In larger premises, this should be done within each of the seating areas.

- ***Businesses must ensure that the maximum number of visitors is never exceeded.*** For example, through advance reservations and/or allocated sitting times if feasible. Alternatively, if walk-ups are envisaged, this is likely to require designated staff to manage customers queuing outside. Any queues that form outside must be adequately socially distanced i.e. 2m.

- ***Businesses must consider noise levels both inside and outside their premises as part of their risk assessment.*** In addition to the noise that background music; televised sport; and outside queues generate and the concerns around how that might increase transmission risk, businesses should remember that they have other legal obligations relating to noise, and in particular noise nuisance.

- ***The Risk assessment must be available for inspection by enforcing authorities.*** In practice, this means that the risk assessment will have to be documented, even for smaller premises. A template you can use to complete your risk assessment can be found [here](#).

Controls that should be considered:

- Providing clear information to customers and visitors before their visit as to the capacity of the venue, booking systems and processes.
- Introducing set times for sittings.
- The importance of keeping to time where the venue operates a sittings system.
- Reminding customers who are accompanied by children that they are responsible for supervising them at all times and should follow social distancing guidelines.
- Planning for maintaining social distancing in the event of adverse weather conditions, being clear that customers cannot seek shelter indoors unless social distancing can be maintained and maximum numbers are not exceeded.

3.3   Face coverings

Objective: To ensure that business owners as well as customers and/or visitors are clear on the requirements concerning face coverings.

The importance of face coverings is set out in Section 2.1.

Controls that must be implemented

- ***Customers or visitors to any hospitality venue must wear a face covering at all times whilst on the premises.*** The only exception is when seated at a table for the purposes of eating or drinking. Businesses will be expected to actively manage this and customers/visitors will be expected to comply. Failure to do so could result in fixed penalties for either the customer/visitor and/or the business owner.

- ***Where staff come within 2m of customers or visitors then face coverings must be worn by those staff.*** This will apply for example to any staff involved in table service

Controls that should be considered

- Business owners may wish to consider having face coverings available for customers should they not possess their own on arrival.

3.4   Social distancing

Objective: To provide an overview of the requirements relating to social distancing for all venues in the hospitality sector

Controls that should be implemented:

Business owners should take reasonable measures to ensure that their staff, customers and visitors ensure with 2m social distancing requirements in order to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19. In practice this will mean pre visit information, signage, floor markings, and staff intervention/supervision if necessary.

For customers this will include:

All venues

- Whilst queuing inside or outside the premises.

In service settings (Food and drink)

- On entry and whilst walking to their table (in service settings).
- Whilst accessing buffet service (if applicable) – (see section 3.10).
- On any occasion when leaving the table e.g. rest room facilities or to use smoking shelter facilities.
- On leaving the table to exit the premises.

In accommodation settings (excluding self-catering scenarios)

- In any communal areas
- At reception desks

In visitor attractions

- At all times when inside the venue

Further details are set out in the detailed sections that follow.

3.5   Managing queues

Objective: To ensure that, as far as possible, queues are avoided and, where they are unavoidable, to manage them to ensure adequate social distancing of 2m and, if appropriate, infection controls.

There are a number of ways in which queues might form. They include outside the venue on arrival, at rest room facilities, or even at smoking shelters depending on their size. Businesses need to think through all scenarios where queues might form and put in place controls to ensure that where they do, they are managed as safely as possible with a focus on social distancing and good hand hygiene.

Controls that must be implemented in venues where alcohol may be consumed:

- ***Businesses must ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to manage any queues anywhere either outside or inside the venue.*** This will include clear signage, floor markings and if appropriate depending on size, supervision

In service settings

- ***Anyone entering the premises must be seated immediately upon entry.*** This means that queuing once <u>inside</u> the premises is not permitted. Businesses will need to think through the implications of this including how they manage bookings to try and prevent outside queues as far as possible. Controls could include operating defined table times (sittings); clear communication with customers at time of booking to prevent early arrival; providing covered outdoor waiting areas where feasible, complete with adequate social distancing; dedicated staff to manage outdoor queues.

- For food self-service or buffet service, see Section xx

Controls that should be considered:

- Restroom facilities should be operated based on an assessment of how many persons can

use the facilities at any one time at minimum risk. In considering this, businesses need to consider the number of cubicles they have; number of urinals; access and egress and whether or not they should require face coverings by visitors using the facilities to reduce droplet projection. In smaller facilities, it may be appropriate to consider only one person in the toilet facility at a time. Doors, for example in intervening lobbies etc. should be kept open as far as is possible to reduce the need for hand contact.

- Queues at toilets should be managed with at least 2m social distancing. Floor markings can assist with this.

- Clear information should be provided to visitors either at booking, and/or on arrival as to the controls they will be required to follow. In particular, where booking and/or sittings are used visitors should be advised to not arrive at the venue ahead of the agreed time.

- Ensuring any changes to entries, exit and queue management take into account reasonable adjustments for those who need them, including disabled customers. For example, maintaining pedestrian and parking access for disabled customers

- Looking at how people walk through the venue and how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between customers, for example, queue management or one-way flow, where possible.

- Using outside spaces for queueing where available and safe. For example, using some car parks and existing outdoor services areas.

- Working with neighbouring businesses and the various authorities to consider how to spread the number of people arriving throughout the day for example by staggering opening hours; this will help reduce demand on public transport at key times and avoid overcrowding.

- Working with neighbouring businesses and your district council and landlord to take into account the impact of your processes such as queues on public spaces such as high streets and public car parks.

- Using a booking system to manage customer numbers in terms of arrival and departure.

- Introducing set times for sittings.

- Managing customers to prevent queues forming both inside and outside the venue. For example, using social distancing markings, having customers queue at a safe distance for toilets and bringing payment machines to customers.

- Planning for maintaining social distancing in the event of adverse weather conditions, being clear that customers cannot seek shelter indoors unless social distancing can be maintained and maximum numbers are not exceeded.

- Working with your local authority or neighbours to provide additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks, where possible, to help customers avoid using public transport.

- Determining if schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people, for example, carrying out services at night.

3.6   Capturing customer/Visitor information for contact tracing

Objective: To ensure that, in the event of a positive confirmed case arising in a person who visited the premises, as much information as possible can be provided as quickly as possible to contact tracing teams in PHA.

There are now some specific requirements that premises need to put in place concerning the collection, retention and, if required, sharing of personal information from visitors. Specific

guidance for the hospitality industry can be found at:
www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-guidance-hospitality-industry-maintaining-records-staff-customers-and-visitors. These are summarised as follows:

Controls that must be implemented:

- *The following visitor information must be collected either in advance of the visit or on arrival:*

    o *The name and telephone number of each visitor aged 16 or over;*
    o *The date and arrival time; and*
    o *The number of persons of that household or gathering visiting the premises.*

- *The above information must be recorded and retained for at least 21 days (the first day being the date on which the visit occurred.* The information can be retained either by hard copy (paper based) or electronically.

- *The business must make this information available within 24 hours on request* by a relevant person.

3.7   Table arrangements and distancing in service areas

Objective: To make sure that all tables within a venue where food and drinks are served are arranged in such a way as to minimise the risks of transmission of the virus between visitors.

Controls that must be implemented:

- *In venues where alcohol may be consumed, seats at tables must be at least 2m from any bar used either wholly or partly for the service of food and/or drink.*

- *No table can seat more than six persons from two separate households.* Note: Children aged 12 or under are not counted within the party of six but must be from either of the two households. If a single household (not a bubble) comprises more than six persons then this is the only other circumstance in which more than six persons may be permitted.

- *In venues where alcohol may be consumed, seating at adjacent tables should be 2m apart.* If this is not achievable then any close face to face contact is limited between persons; barriers or screens are installed and maintained; personal protective equipment is used where appropriate and in such a case is made readily available.

3.8   Managing visitors inside the venue

Objective: To take all possible steps to ensure that visitors maintain adequate social distancing of 2m

In service settings, once visitors have been escorted to their table, there are some specific requirements that both they and the business must observe.

Controls that must be implemented:

- As outlined in Section 3.7, *tables of more than six persons from two households are not permitted.*

In venues where alcohol may be consumed:

- *Orders for food and/or drinks can only be taken from the table at which visitors are seated.* How this is achieved may vary from premises to premises. In a small room it may be possible for orders to be communicated directly from the table to the bar without the

20

need for table service. In other cases, table service may be necessary/more appropriate.

- **Visitors must not leave their table during their visit except to either use restroom facilities or to exit the premises (for either use of smoking areas or on departure). If they leave their table for any of these purposes a face covering must be worn.** This should be communicated on booking (where a booking system operates) and/or on arrival prior to seating. The only exception relates to premises where self-service or buffet service is in operation (see Section 3.10).

- **Visitors must remain seated at all times for the purposes of consuming either food and/or drink.** This means that standing anywhere, for example at the bar, is not allowed.

Controls that should be considered:

- Avoid using printed menus or any other physical information sheets through wall screens, menus placed on websites, and/or contactless ordering apps etc.
- Where printed menus are used, ensure that these can be disinfected or discarded.

3.9   Table service

Objective: To ensure that any risks of transmission that arise as a result of table service at the venue are minimised as far as possible.

During table service the issues that need to be considered include interaction between visitors and staff and interaction between visitors and objects at the table - for example menus, glass ware, crockery and utensils, the table itself.

Controls that must be implemented

- **Face coverings and/or visors by staff serving tables must be used when a distance of 2m from the customer cannot be maintained.**

Controls that should be implemented:

- Use contactless ordering from tables where possible.
- Minimise, as far as possible, staff interaction with visitors. For example, allocate a single member of staff to allocated tables.

3.10   Self service areas/buffets

Objective: To maintain social distancing of 2m and effective infection controls at any self-service areas or buffet service.

Controls that should be implemented:

- If food is provided on a self-service or buffet style, then visitors will be permitted to leave their table to avail of this service. However, the business should ensure that visitors maintain a distance of at least 2m when queueing. Businesses can ensure this happens through clear floor markings; clear communication with visitors on arrival and/or through booking; and if necessary dedicated staff to manage the process.

- **Customers must wear face coverings when using any buffet or self-service facility**

3.11   Entertainment and noise

Objective: To ensure that noise levels within venues where alcohol may be consumed - whether inside or outside - are maintained at levels that do not require visitors or staff to

either raise their voices above normal speaking volume or engage in other activities which increase the risk of droplet projection or close contact such as singing or dancing.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that is spread through droplet and/or aerosols. Any activity that either places people in close proximity to each other and/or increases droplets or aerosols significantly increases the risk of onward transmission. Singing, dancing, raised voices and/or shouting all increase the risk. In light of this, there have been a number of specific requirements introduced relating to entertainment and noise inside any venue to which the regulations apply (i.e. any venue where alcohol may be consumed).

Controls that must be implemented:

- **Businesses shall not permit dancing at the venue.** The exception to this is a party to a marriage or civil partnership (i.e. the couple) at an event to celebrate that marriage or civil partnership. A further exception is for professional dancers providing entertainment at a venue. The intent of the regulation is to prohibit dancing between and amongst visitors.

- **Businesses shall not permit music, whether live or recorded, for dancing.** *The exception to this dancing by the parties to a marriage or civil partnership (i.e. the couple) at an event to celebrate that marriage or civil partnership.*

- **Businesses shall not permit live music.**

- **Businesses are required, within their risk assessment, to ensure that they control the level of background noise that may be generated by either background music and/or televised sport to ensure that visitors do not have to raise their voices to talk.** These sources of noise should be controlled carefully to ensure that visitors can converse at normal speech levels. For example, this will include TVs and background recorded music.

3.12   Ventilation

Objective: To use ventilation to further reduce the risk of transmission of the virus.

There is evidence to suggest that poor ventilation in confined indoor spaces is associated with increased transmission of respiratory infections. (see section 2.4). Ventilation refers to air changes – not fans or other devices which simply move the same air around the room. Air change can only be achieved by opening windows and/or doors or through mechanical ventilation systems that draw fresh outdoor air into the space and extract old air.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Ensure good ventilation indoors. This includes restroom and toilet facilities.
- Ensure all outdoor areas, with particular regard to covered areas, have sufficient ventilation.
- Checking whether you need to service or adjust ventilation systems, for example, so that they do not automatically reduce ventilation levels due to lower than normal occupancy levels.

3.13   Outside areas

Objective: To ensure that outside areas, including smoking areas, are properly managed and do not become areas where social distancing is not observed.

Controls that must be implemented:

- **Businesses need to take steps to ensure that social distancing is maintained within smoking shelters.** This could involve introducing queuing systems along with appropriate signage and/or removal or adaptation of seating to ensure 2m social distancing.

- Any other outside areas will need to be managed to ensure that all requirements relating to social distancing and the use of face coverings by customers is followed. Outside areas are

subject to the same restrictions as those required in indoor areas.

3.14   Customer toilets

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission in customer toilets.

Restroom facilities must be operated based on an assessment of how many persons can use the facilities at any one time at minimum risk. In considering this, businesses need to consider the number of cubicles; number of urinals; and access and egress.

In smaller facilities it may be appropriate to admit one person to the toilet facilities at a time. Doors, for example in intervening lobbies, should be kept open as far as is possible to reduce the need for hand contact. Queues at toilets should be managed with at least 2m social distancing. Clear floor markings can assist with this.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Businesses need to ensure that all requirements relating to social distancing and the use of face coverings by customers is followed when they are availing of washroom facilities. In practice that will mean the use of any/all of the controls below.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Consider the use of social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one-in-one-out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
- To enable good hand hygiene, consider making hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable handwashing facilities including running water and liquid soap and suitable options for drying, with paper towels preferable to hand dryers.
- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in-line with usage. Use normal disinfectant products, paying attention to frequently touched surfaces, and consider use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
- Keep the facilities well-ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.
- Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.
- Putting up a visible cleaning schedule can keep it up-to-date and visible.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

3.15   Overnight tourist accommodation

Objective: To minimise the risk of indirect transmission in tourist accommodation.

This section is applicable for any venue that provides overnight accommodation. That would include, for example, hotels, some restaurants and/or bars, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, self-catering accommodation, hostels etc. Premises with public areas that are accessible to guests as well as the accommodation space itself need to read the relevant sections elsewhere in this guide. This will vary dependant on the type of premises. This section deals only with the actual guest accommodation (bedroom) itself.

Given that the main risk present in the guest accommodation itself is indirect transmission then the key controls come down to cleaning and hygiene.

Controls that should be implemented:

- The guest bedroom and bathroom, as with any other part of a venue, must be regularly cleaned and any touch points regularly sanitised. In practice this will mean during normal

housekeeping pay particular attention to the cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces, including hand contact surfaces.

- ***There may be restrictions in place around the number of people that can stay together. Please refer to the Health Regulations or Tourism NI's 'summary of restrictions' document.***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Remove unnecessary items from the room.
- Ensure that all laundry and waste is bagged and transported safely to avoid any cross contamination.
- Housekeeping staff should wash their hands before entering and upon leaving each guest bedroom.
- Housekeeping staff must have access to face coverings in the eventuality that they come within proximity of guests. 2m social distancing must be maintained at all times.

3.16   Spa and/or gym facilities including changing rooms and showers

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission in changing rooms and showers.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Spa, gym, changing facilities and showers in changing rooms, as with any other part of a venue, should be regularly cleaned and any touch points regularly sanitised.

Controls that should be considered:

- Where shower and changing facilities are provided, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.

3.17   Takeaway or delivery services (for premises operating these services)

Objective: To manage interactions at the venue resulting from selling food and drinks for takeaway or delivery.

The relevant preceding sections that apply to these venues, dependant on their setup and what facilities are available to customers need to be followed. So, for example a premises offering takeaway, if the customers enter the premises will need to follow the section detailing how to manage customers inside the premises. The section on queues and/or use of customer toilets needs to be followed if applicable and so on.

Controls that must be implemented

- ***Venues offering these services will need to be managed to ensure that all requirements relating to social distancing and the use of face coverings by customers are followed.***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Encouraging customers to order online, on apps or over the telephone to reduce queues and stagger pick-up times.
- Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front of house workers, delivery drivers or riders, for example, by having zones from which delivery drivers can collect packaged food items.
- Limiting access to venues for people waiting for or collecting takeaways. Using floor markings to maintain social distancing for customers queuing. Asking customers to wait outside or in their cars and encouraging contactless payments where possible.

SECTION 4: STAFF SAFETY

To keep the virus under control, it is important that people work as safely as possible. At the present time, workers who can work from home should do so. Anyone else who cannot work from home should go to their place of work.

The risk of transmission can be substantially reduced if COVID-19 guidelines are followed closely. Employers should consult with their employees to determine who can come into the workplace safely taking account of a person's journey, caring responsibilities, protected characteristics, and other individual circumstances. Extra consideration should be given to those people at higher risk.

Businesses should consider the impact of workplaces reopening on local transport and take appropriate mitigating actions (e.g. staggered start and finish times for staff). When employers consider that workers should come into their place of work, then this will need to be reflected in the COVID-19 workplace risk assessment and actions taken to manage the risks of transmission in line with this guidance.

The decision to return to the workplace should be made in meaningful consultation with workers (including through trade unions or employee representative groups where they exist). A meaningful consultation means engaging in an open conversation about returning to the workplace before any decision to return has been made.
This should include a discussion of the timing and phasing of any return and any risk mitigations that have been implemented. It is vital employers engage with workers to ensure they feel safe returning to work, and they should not force anyone into an unsafe workplace.

4.1   Avoiding risk where possible

Objective: That work that can be done from home should be done from home. There is a recognition that for many workers in the visitor economy that this will not be possible. Nobody should go to work if your business is closed under current government regulations except for certain specific exemptions.

Controls that should be considered:

- Considering who is essential to be on the premises; for example, administrative staff who do not need to be on-site should work from home if at all possible.
- Planning for the minimum number of people needed on site to operate safely and effectively.
- Monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and helping them stay connected to the rest of the workforce, through using online meeting tools, especially if the majority of their colleagues are on-site.
- Keeping in touch with any off-site workers on their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.
- Providing equipment for people to work from home safely and effectively, for example, remote access to work systems.
- To reduce the risk of an accidental breach of COVID-19 regulations, appoint a Designated Covid Officer to be on duty when the premises is open. This can be the owner or an additional duty for an existing member of staff.

4.2   Protecting staff at higher risk

Objective: To protect clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

- Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals were previously advised to shield, however this was paused on 31 July. The pause is indefinite, but it remains possible that the government will need to reactivate the guidance if the risk increases in the future.
- Employers have a 'duty of care' for staff, customers and anyone else who visits the workplace. In practice, this means taking all steps they reasonably can to support the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff.

- Further information can be found at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-pausing-shielding-extremely-vulnerable-people.
- Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions, see definition in Appendix), have been asked to stay at home as much as possible: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-vulnerable-people.
- If vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to maintain 2m social distancing. If they have to spend time in close proximity to others, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk and whether the activity should continue. If so, further controls should be implemented to reduce the risk of transmission between staff.
  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. Further information can be found at: https://www.equalityni.org/Covid19

Controls that should be implemented:

- Providing support for workers around mental health and wellbeing. This could include advice or telephone support.
- See current guidance for advice on who is in the clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable groups.

4.3 Staff who need to self-isolate

Objective: To make sure 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 contact tracing programme.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.
- See current guidance for employees and employers relating to statutory sick pay due to COVID-19.
- See current guidance for people who have symptoms and those who live with others who have symptoms.

4.4 Hand hygiene at work

Objective: Making sure that staff, customers and visitors follow good hand hygiene practices at all critical points during their visit, including entry and exit.

Hand hygiene is vital to ensure that the risk of transferring the virus from contaminated surfaces, in particular hand contact surfaces, is minimised. Soap and water is effective where that is possible. Where water supply is available, hand sanitisers with at least 70% alcohol are the most practical solutions.

Controls that should be implemented:

- All staff must be made aware of the requirements for good hand hygiene.

- Businesses should provide hand sanitation facilities at all points of entry to the inside of the premises*. This is a legal requirement for venues where alcohol may be consumed.*

Controls that should be implemented:

- In addition to the above it is strongly recommended that businesses provide additional hand sanitation facilities throughout their premises and in particular at restroom or toilet facility queuing areas; at smoking shelter areas; at service points (for staff use); and at all exits from the premises. Where there are outside areas (other than smoking shelters), these facilities should also be made available for visitors using these areas.

- Businesses should implement additional cleaning procedures, particularly focusing on any hand contact surfaces inside and outside the venue and including restroom and toilet facilities.
- Where possible, consider wedging doors open (not fire doors) to reduce the need to open them.
- Customer tables should be cleaned in between uses.

4.5   Use of face coverings by staff whilst at work

As explained in Section 2.1, face coverings can significantly reduce the risks to persons the wearer may come into close contact with. For staff in the workplace this could include both other staff members and/or customers/visitors.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All staff must be made aware of the importance of face coverings in any designated roles.***
- ***Any staff in any customer facing roles must wear a face covering unless a physical screen is used (for example behind a till).***

Controls that should be implemented:

- It is strongly advised that businesses should think about using face coverings or visors for all their staff. ***Those in any customer facing roles must wear a face covering unless a physical screen is used (for example behind a screen at a till).***
- Businesses should also remind their staff that there are other settings where face coverings are required whilst they are not at work. The full regulations can be found here: www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-wearing-face-coverings-regulations-northern-ireland-2020

4.6   Social distancing whilst in the workplace

Objective: To maintain the recommended social distancing wherever possible.

The importance of social distancing is set out is section 2.2. Social distancing applies to all parts of a premises where business is contracted, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, canteens, WCs, store rooms and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.

Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All staff must be made aware of the social distancing requirements when at work and in their specific roles.***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Staff must maintain 2m social distancing in the workplace wherever possible. If 2m cannot be achieved, then mitigation should be in place.
- Keep the activity time involved as short as possible.
- Use back-to-back or side-to-side working rather than face-to-face where possible.
- Reduce the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).

Social distancing applies to all parts of a premises where business is contracted, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, canteens, WCs, store rooms and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.

Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.

4.7   When arriving at and leaving the premises

Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible on arrival and departure, and to enable handwashing upon arrival.

Controls that must be implemented :

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Stagger arrival and departure times for staff and visitors to reduce crowding into and out of the business, taking account of the impact on those with protected characteristics.
- Providing additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks to help people walk, run, or cycle to work where possible. Limiting passengers in corporate vehicles, for example, work/business minibuses. This could include leaving seats empty.
- Where possible, have a designated staff entrance and exit.
- Reduce congestion, for example, by having several entry points.
- Use markings and introducing one-way flow at entry and exit points throughout the building, taking into account premises structure, style of operation and customer profile.
- Providing alternatives to touch-based entry systems and security devices, such as automatic door kits or swipe card entry systems.

4.8   When at workplace stations

Objective: To maintain 2m social distancing between individuals when they are at their workstations.

For people who work in one place, for example a head waiter or cashier, working areas should allow them to maintain 2m social distancing from one another as well as the public.
Working areas should be assigned to an individual as much as possible. If they need to be shared, they should be shared by the smallest possible number of people.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Review layouts and processes to allow staff to work at least 2m apart from each other.
- Use of face coverings and/or screens will reduce droplet transmission.
- Use floor tape or paint to mark areas on the floor to help staff maintain social distancing.
- Minimise contacts around transactions, for example, considering using contactless payments and encouraging online booking and pre-payment where appropriate. Use wall displays, online menus or apps to avoid paper menus.
- If using cash, provide hand sanitiser at the point of transaction.

4.9 Food preparation areas

Objective: To maintain social distancing and reduce contact where possible in kitchens and other food preparation areas.

The Food Standards Agency has provided guidance to promote best practice in food businesses to help them stay compliant with food hygiene and safety requirements and best respond to the impacts of COVID-19: www.food.gov.uk/here-to-help-food-businesses.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Allow kitchen access to as few people as possible for the running of the business.
- Reconfigure workstations to avoid face-to-face working.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
- Use of face coverings by staff.
- Provide floor marking to signal social distancing.
- Use 'one way' traffic flows to minimise contact.
- Ensure only one person at a time enters areas like walk-in pantries, fridges and freezers.
- Minimise contact at 'handover' points with other staff, such as serving staff and delivery drivers.

4.10 When selling food and/or drink

Objective: to minimise interactions with guests when selling food and drink. Refer to broader guidance on food preparation and service.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be considered:

- Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front of house workers, for example, using a designated order and food service handover area.
- Using front of house staff to serve customers purchasing food and drink, minimising the time they spend in the kitchen.
- Creating a physical barrier such as a screen, between front of house workers and guests where possible.

- Encouraging contactless orders and payments where possible.
- Encouraging guests to order room service over the telephone.
- Have clear communications for customers on what they should do if they become unwell during their visit.
- Clear procedures established regarding delivery and clearance of room service.

4.11   Workplace meetings

Objective: To reduce the risk of transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain 2m social distancing in meetings.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Use remote working tools to avoid in person meetings.
- Only necessary participants should attend meetings and should maintain 2m social distancing throughout.
- Hold meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.
- For areas where regular meetings take place, use floor signage to help people maintain social distancing.

4.12   Back of house and common areas

Objective: To maintain 2m social distancing while using common areas.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Ensure that social distancing is applied in back of house and common areas.
- Stagger break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or places to eat.
- Use safe outside areas for breaks.
- Create additional space by using other parts of the building.
- Install screens to protect staff in front of house areas or POS.
- Use social distance marking for other common areas such as toilets, showers, lockers and changing rooms and in any other areas where queues typically form.

4.13   When moving around buildings and sites

Objective: To maintain 2m social distancing as far as possible while people travel through the workplace and across sites.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***
-

Controls that should be implemented:

- Reduce movement by discouraging non-essential trips within venues and sites, for example, restricting access to some areas, encouraging use of radios, telephones or other electronic devices when sending orders from service areas to kitchens, where permitted, and cleaning them between use.
- Reduce job and location rotation, for example, assigning workers to specific floors or keeping temporary personnel dedicated to one venue.
- Introduce as much one-way flow as possible through buildings with signage that that clearly indicates the direction of flow.
- Reduce maximum occupancy for lifts, providing hand sanitiser for the operation of lifts and encouraging use of stairs wherever possible.
- Make sure that people with disabilities are able to access lifts.
- Manage use of high traffic areas including corridors, lifts and staircases to maintain social distancing. For example, asking guests and staff to walk on the left to give priority to those ascending stairs, or indicating 'passing points' where the walkway is widest.

4.14   Accidents security and other incidents

Objective: To prioritise safety during incidents.

-
- In an emergency, for example, an accident, provision of first aid, fire or break-in, people do not have to maintain social distancing if it would be unsafe.
- People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***All the essential controls from section 4.4 – 4.6 (Hand hygiene; face coverings; social distancing)***

Controls that should be implemented:

- Review your incident and emergency procedures to ensure they reflect the social distancing principles as far as possible.

4.15   Equality in the workplace

Objective: To treat everyone in your workplace equally.

Employers and service providers have duties and obligations under equality laws.

- In applying this guidance, employers should be mindful of the particular needs of different groups of workers or individuals.
- ***You must not discriminate unlawfully against or harass anyone on the grounds of age; sex; race; disability; religious or similar philosophical belief; political opinion; sexual orientation; pregnancy or maternity; marital status; or gender reassignment.***
- ***Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and those who are new or expectant mothers.***

Further information can be found at: https://www.equalityni.org/Employers-Service-Providers

Controls that should be implemented:

- Understand and take into account the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics.

- Involve workers whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk, or might make any steps you are thinking about inappropriate or challenging for them.
- Consider whether you need to put in place any particular measures or adjustments to take account of your duties under the equalities legislation.
- Make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled workers being put at a disadvantage and assessing the health and safety risks for new or expectant mothers.
- Understand and respond to the concerns of those who consider themselves at increased risk.

Make sure that the steps you take do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments.

SECTION 5: MANAGING EVENTS AND GATHERINGS

This section is relevant to any venues that host events. Events could include meetings, weddings, functions etc. Certain venues to which this guidance applies may either regularly or from time to time host certain events.

As of 11th December:

- *Up to 15 people can meet indoors, except in someone's home, in a static caravan or in a self-catering holiday home. There are a limited number of exceptions, such as a gathering in a workplace where it is not possible to work at home; educational and training purposes; and weddings, civil partnerships and funerals. See NI Direct for information about these exceptions.*

- *Up to 15 people can meet outdoors, with social distancing of at least 2m, as well as good hand and respiratory hygiene practices. The limit for outdoor gatherings does not apply to events and gatherings where that gathering has a recognised person responsible for organising or operating the gathering, however a maximum number limit of 500 applies.*

- *Saving the exceptions mentioned above, other forms of events, gatherings or collective entertainment for more than 15 people are not permitted.*

The events detailed in this section are permitted under certain circumstances; when an organised, responsible person:

a) *has carried out a risk assessment which meets the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, whether or not that person is subject to those Regulations; and*

b) *takes all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus, including implementing the preventive and protective measures identified in the risk assessment, and*

c) *complies with any relevant guidance issued by a Northern Ireland Department.*

Event organisers are responsible for ensuring that regulations and guidance are followed in all aspects of the event, from travel to the event, access and egress, queuing, and any movement around the event, and should ensure guidance in this document is followed.

5.1   Weddings and Civil Partnership celebrations

Objective: To reduce the risks associated with some of the unique aspects of the celebration of weddings and civil partnerships at venues where alcohol may be consumed.

The Northern Ireland Executive has provided specific guidance for marriages, civil partnerships or other celebratory events. This document was first published on 10 July and is currently under review following amendments to regulations.
www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-marriages-civil-partnerships-or-other-celebratory-events

In addition to that guidance and the previous detailed guidance in this document relating to visitors the following requirements apply to weddings or civil partnership celebrations.

Controls that must be implemented:

- *The total numbers of participants permitted must be determined through a thorough risk assessment of the venue ensuring 2m social distancing between parties at all times.*

- Parties to the wedding or civil partnership (i.e. the couple) are permitted to dance as part of the reception proceedings. The music for this dance can be provided either live or in recorded format. ***However, no other participants in the celebration other than the couple are allowed to dance. Nor is music, whether live or recorded, allowed for the purposes of dancing other than the couple.***

- ***Regarding weddings and civil partnerships, the table size at such functions can be up to, but no larger than, 10 persons***. NOTE: this does not apply to the "top" table at which the party to the wedding or civil partnership (i.e. the couple) is seated. As with tables at other venues, this number excludes any children under 12. Whilst there is no requirement other than the maximum permitted number and no legal restriction on household numbers, if tables can be organised as far as possible in households and or bubbles, this would significantly reduce transmission risk. Likewise, good social distancing between participants at the same table would further reduce this risk.

All previous mandatory requirements, including those on risk assessment, apply to these types of events.

5.2   Business and leisure events

Objective: To provide information on business and leisure events.

This section covers business events, meetings, conferences, exhibitions, trade fairs and consumer shows (organised events) taking place in convention and exhibition centres or conference halls and some indoor meeting venues.

As of 11 December 2020, conference halls and conference facilities must remain closed. The latest information on the restrictions can be found at: www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-northern-ireland-regulations-2020

- **Meetings and Conferences:** The Meetings Industry Association has produced guidance specifically for conferences and meetings venues, which is also wrapped into the wider UKHospitality, NIHF and Hospitality Ulster guidance - *COVID-19 advice and risk assessments for hospitality businesses (Northern Ireland).*
- **Exhibition, Trade Fairs and Consumer Shows:** The Association of Event Organisers has published guidance specifically for exhibition, trade fairs and consumer shows to reopen.
- **Outdoor Events:** Guidance relating to outdoor events has been prepared by the Events Industry Forum.

You should consider the relevant sections of workplace guidance published by the UK Government and NI Executive Departments as well as relevant sectoral guidance on Pubs and Restaurants and the UKHospitality guidance, NIHF and Hospitality Ulster for catering requirements.

5.3   Other gatherings

Objective: To manage interactions at gatherings.

This section is designed for venues that are permitted to be open and to cover the organisation and delivery of permitted gatherings. Example could include business meetings etc.

The limits on the numbers of persons permitted at indoor and outdoor gatherings in private homes do not apply to a gathering in certain commercial settings where that gathering has a recognised person responsible for organising and operating the gathering and it is organised or operated for cultural, entertainment, recreational, outdoor sports, social, community, educational, work, legal, religious or political purposes.

Controls that must be implemented:

The person responsible when organising or operating the gathering must:

a) *Comply with all restrictions in place at the time.*

b) *Have carried out a [risk assessment](#) which meets the requirements of the [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000](#), whether or not that person is subject to those Regulations; and*

c) *Take all reasonable measures to limit the risk of transmission of the coronavirus, including implementing the preventive and protective measures identified in the risk assessment and*

d) *Comply with any relevant guidance issued by a Northern Ireland Government Department.*

A person responsible for organising or operating a gathering in a venue where alcohol may be consumed must, if requested to do so by a relevant person, provide to that relevant person a copy of the risk assessment and an account of the reasonable measures taken as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event within twenty-four hours of the request.

All of the other requirements contained in section 3 of the document relating to requirements for businesses and customers/visitors relating to social distancing, hand hygiene, ventilation and cleaning would apply to these types of events. Likewise the requirement for contact tracing at 3.6

SECTION 6: GENERAL CLEANING AND HYGIENE

6.1   Cleaning the venue before reopening

Objective: To make sure that any site, premises or location that has been closed or partially operated is clean and ready to restart.

Any site or premises that has been closed for an extended period of time should of course be thoroughly cleaned before reopening to customers and visitors. However, in addition to that there are other issue to consider as detailed below.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Checking whether you need to service or adjust ventilation systems so that they do not automatically reduce ventilation levels due to lower than normal occupancy levels.
- Most air conditioning systems do not need adjustment, however where systems serve multiple buildings, or you are unsure, advice should be sought from your heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) engineers or advisers.
- Assess whether you will check and clean your water system in-house or call in an external expert. You should consider risk, cost, time and complexity of the site and whether there are any legionella risks from showerheads, hot water storage systems or air conditioning unit. Further information can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm

6.2   Keeping the venue clean: Indoor and outdoor communal areas

Objective: To minimise the risk of indirect transmission in public communal areas.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Frequent cleaning and disinfection of work areas and equipment between use with a cleaner/disinfectant known to be effective against coronavirus.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including door handles, light switches, self-service food areas.
- Considering the removal of items that are likely to be regularly touched by lots of different people (e.g. newspapers), or replacing them with single use alternatives (e.g. utensils, condiments, toiletries etc).
- If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then you refer to the specific guidance

6.3   Staff changing rooms, toilets and showers

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission in changing rooms toilets and showers.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Staff changing rooms, toilets and showers, as with any other part of a venue, should be regularly cleaned and any touch points regularly sanitised.

Controls that should be considered:

- Where shower and changing facilities are provided, setting clear use and cleaning guidance for showers, lockers and changing rooms to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
- Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.
- In staff changing areas providing lockers or other storage for come to work clothing and suitable receptacles for staff uniforms after shifts and prior to washing.

6.4   Laundry

Objective: To minimise the risk of transmission through contaminated laundry

Laundry includes staff uniforms, bedding from guest accommodation, towels, robes, napkins and tablecloths etc.

Controls that should be considered:

- Dirty laundry should be collected and transported in a suitable container so as to minimise its contact with any persons or other surfaces.
- All laundry should be washed at a minimum of 40 degrees.

6.5   Back of house areas

Objective: To minimise the risk of indirect transmission in back of house areas

Examples of back of house areas would include stores, offices, meeting rooms, staff changing rooms, waste storage areas etc.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Back of house areas as with any other part of a venue, must be regularly cleaned and any touch points regularly sanitised. This will require frequent cleaning and disinfection of work areas and equipment between use with a cleaner/disinfectant known to be effective against coronavirus and frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including door handles, light switches etc.
- Frequent cleaning and disinfection of work areas and equipment between use with a cleaner/disinfectant known to be effective against coronavirus.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including door handles, light switches etc.
- Consider can any doors be left open safely (without fire safety risks) to prevent the need to touch them.
- Ensure adequate frequency to remove waste.

SECTION 7: WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

7.1 Shift patterns and working groups

Objective: To change the way work is organised to create distinct groups and reduce the number of contacts each worker has.

Controls that should be considered:

- Where workers are split into teams or shift groups, all reasonable steps should be taken to maintain the same teams or groups so that, where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same people.
- Identifying areas where people have to directly pass things to each other and finding ways to remove direct contact such as by using drop-off points or transfer zones.
- Considering where congestion caused by people flow and 'pinch points' can be improved. Using one-way systems, staggered shifts and assigned staff mealtimes are possible ways to minimise the risk of transmission.

7.2 Work related travel

Objective: To avoid unnecessary work travel and keep people safe when they do need to travel between locations.

Controls that should be considered:

- Minimising non-essential travel - consider remote options first.
- Minimising the number of people outside a household travelling together in any one vehicle, using fixed travel partners, increasing ventilation when possible and avoiding sitting face-to-face.
- Cleaning shared vehicles between shifts or on handover.
- Where workers are required to stay away from their home, centrally logging the stay and making sure any overnight accommodation meets social distancing guidelines.
- Ensuring that delivery drivers maintain good hygiene and wash their hands regularly.
- Putting in place procedures to minimise person-to-person contact during deliveries to other sites.
- Minimising contact during payments and exchange of documentation, for example by using electronic payment methods and electronically signed and exchanged documents.

7.3 Communications and training

Objective: To make sure all workers understand COVID-19 related safety procedures.

Every workplace will look and feel substantially different. Social distancing and enhanced hygiene will change how the workplace operates. Training will be essential to building a common understanding of requirements. Suitable training methods will need to be implemented to enable effective delivery of the overarching safety measures. Communications will play an important role in ensuring employees, contractors and customers understand safety measures.

Controls that must be implemented:

- ***Staff must be provided with any training necessary to fulfil their obligations in relation to the prevention of transmission of coronavirus and in particular their obligations in respect of hand hygiene, use of face coverings and social distancing (see section 4.4 – 4.6)***

Controls that should be considered:

- Providing clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working.
- Engaging with workers and worker representatives through existing communication routes to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
- Developing communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.
- Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published guidance on the [mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19)](#)
- Ongoing engagement with workers, including through trade unions or employee representative groups, to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments.
- Communicating approaches and operational procedures with suppliers, customers or trade bodies to help their adoption and share experience.
- Using simple, clear messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups for which English may not be their first language.
- Using visual communications, for example whiteboards or signage, to explain changes to processes to ensure good communication and reduce the need for face-to-face communications.
- Providing means for customers and staff to access the latest advice regarding COVID-19 measures (from the government website) and telephone numbers of key contacts should a member of staff or a customer become ill.
- Providing guidance to staff as to how they should regularly communicate guidance to customers to ensure consistent messaging and responses.

7.4   Reporting COVID – 19 related incidents

Objective: To minimise the risks of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace and ensure compliance with The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997.

You should only make a report under RIDDOR in the following circumstances applies:

- *An accident or incident at work has, or could have, led to the release or escape of coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.*
- *A person at work (a worker) has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 attributed to an occupational exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a case of disease.*
- *A worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a work-related death due to exposure to a biological agent.*

If a member of staff develops symptoms or becomes aware that he/she may have been in contact with a confirmed or suspected case, they should inform their employer.

SECTION 8: OVERARCHING SAFETY AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

Adapting to COVID-19 measures will inevitably result in changes to operating policies, processes and procedures in all businesses. Any changes should always be considered alongside security implications.

If you have a security department or manager, they should be consulted to ensure good security is maintained as far as possible and that there are no unintended security consequences as a result of changes. This should be achieved by conducting a security risk assessment.

Specific examples of where security implications may arise are: queueing, search and screening (where this has been directed by a wider government policy on security), maintaining vigilance for potential threats, and access controls. There may be others that your organisation will need to consider.

8.1   Queue security

Objective: To maintain security whilst still ensuring adequate social distancing in queues outside the venue.

Whilst dense crowding is unlikely if social distancing is operating correctly, the revised layout of spaces may present new security risks, particularly where multiple queues are created.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Operators should as far as possible organise queuing within existing protected areas and not remove any security features or useful street furniture items without considering protective security in the round.
- If queuing is only possible outside of protected areas, then use the following controls to avoid removing or altering existing features. Routing queues behind permanent physical structures (e.g. street furniture, bollards, trolley parks and bike racks); closing off vehicle access to shared spaces; adjusting servicing and delivery times; reducing the opportunities for vehicles (including potentially hostile vehicles) to interact with pedestrians; erecting robust barriers; introducing a reduced speed limit or traffic calming measures.
- Operators should be careful to avoid sharing credible, detailed information that could risk the safety of staff and customers. In particular, this should not be included in detailed risk assessments published on public websites. Be mindful of messaging, both at the site and particularly on-line, which covers detailed information about queue locations and times, the number of people expected, and suggesting removal of security features such as street furniture, bollards etc.

8.2   Search and screening

Objective: To ensure that and necessity to conduct any physical search and/or screening adheres to social distancing measures.

To maintain effective security and deterrence, search and screening should still be conducted as appropriate and in line with the organisation's policies.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Ensure security staff are and feel safe. For example, having access to hand-washing facilities, and that they are able and confident to raise any concerns.
- The Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) has and continues to produce guidance on COVID-19 recovery: This can be accessed at https://www.cpni.gov.uk/
- The PSNI's Counter Terrorism Security Advisor would be happy to provide further advice and can be contacted at ctsa@psni.pnn.police.uk

8.3   Staff, security officers and stewarding

Objective: It is vital for staff to remain vigilant and act on potential safety and security threats.

It is advised to:

- Continue to ensure that awareness of security threats is raised alongside safety and health risks through staff briefings.
- Whilst stewards and security officers may be focused on managing people and queues for COVID-19 safety reasons, they should continue to remain vigilant for and report any suspicious activity as soon as possible.
- Ideally consider providing separate stewarding to manage the social distancing and other safety aspects to enable your security staff to focus on their core responsibilities to keep the site safe from threats.
- Ensure there is a good communication system in place to inform people of any incident. Carry out a short exercise or test to check procedures and equipment for this are working correctly.

8.4   Restricted entry points

Objective: To ensure that restricted access entry points, such as those facilitated by keypad, biometrics and/or pass remain fully in operation and not deactivated.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Pin pads and biometrics should be highlighted as "touch points" and cleaned regularly.
- Hand sanitisation facilities should be provided at any such facility where the user is required to touch buttons or screens.
- Access control (staff) proximity cards will work up to 10cm from the reader. Staff can be informed that there is no need to physically touch the card on the reader.

SECTION 9: HANDLING GOODS

9.1 Inbound and outbound goods

Objective: To maintain social distancing and avoid surface transmission when goods enter and leave the site, especially in high volume situations, for example, distribution centres, despatch areas.

Controls that should be considered:

- Revising pick-up and drop-off collection points, procedures, signage and markings.
- Minimising unnecessary contact at security, yard and warehouse. For example, non-contact deliveries.
- Considering methods to reduce frequency of deliveries, for example by ordering larger quantities less often. Adjusting the way things are brought into the venue and put away to create space for social distancing.
- Introducing cleaning procedures for goods and merchandise entering the premises, as well as shared equipment.
- Creating one-way flow of traffic in stockrooms.
- Where possible and safe, having single workers load or unload vehicles.
- Where possible, using the same pairs of people for loads where more than one is needed.
- Enabling drivers to access welfare facilities when required, consistent with other guidance.
- Encouraging drivers to stay in their vehicles where this does not compromise their safety and existing safe working practice, such as preventing drive-aways.
- Adjusting put-away and replenishment rules to create space for social distancing. Where social distancing cannot be maintained due to venue design, sufficient mitigation strategies should be designed and implemented.

9.2 Merchandise and other materials

Objective: To reduce transmission through contact with objects in the visitor economy.

Controls that should be implemented:

- Encouraging increased handwashing and introducing more handwashing facilities for workers and customers or providing hand sanitiser where this is not practical.
- Putting in place picking-up and dropping-off collection points where possible, rather than passing goods hand-to-hand.
- Cleaning exterior and interior touchpoints in accordance to sector guidance, for example, theme park rides and attractions. Also considering the introduction of hand sanitiser stations immediately before and after customer use.
- Keeping returns separate from displayed merchandise / stock to reduce the likelihood of transmission through touch.

SECTION 10: WHERE TO OBTAIN FURTHER GUIDANCE

This list is not extensive. Links are correct as of 11/12/20, however these may change over time, and more advice will become available.

<mark>Further guidance is also being produced at UK level in relation to Events and Entertainment.</mark> This guidance will be updated with the relevant information and links when these documents become available.

UKHospitality in partnership with Hospitality Ulster, Northern Ireland Hotels Federation and a number other sectoral bodies have consolidated many parts of the visitor economy into one guidance document. It can be used in conjunction with the links below to provide further information and resources for your risk assessment.

Guidance referenced below from a trade body or association may include best practice documents, templates and more detailed sector-specific advice on certain environments. Industry bodies may also be able to provide examples or templates to enable you to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.

10.1 All businesses

Government Guidance

Given the pace of change to regulations, businesses must stay up-to-date with changes to the regulations and how they impact on their business.

- COVID-19 Regulations: www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-northern-ireland-regulations-2020.
- NI Direct: Coronavirus (COVID-19): www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19
- Support for businesses and employers during coronavirus (COVID-19): www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-support/coronavirus
- 'We're Good to Go' is the industry standard to signal that a tourism and hospitality business is working hard to follow COVID-19 guidelines. Register here: https://goodtogo.visitbritain.com/home.
- Coronavirus: Guide to making workplaces safer: https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-guide-making-workplaces-safer-and-priority-sector-list
- NI Business Info: Coronavirus updates – Support for your business: https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/campaign/coronavirus-updates-support-your-business
- COVID-19: Working Through This Together - A Practical Guide To Making Workplaces Safer: https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Covid-19-Working-Through-This-Together.pdf
- General guidance for employees during coronavirus (COVID-19): https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support
- NI Direct Safer travel guidance for public transport users, walkers, cyclists and drivers: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/safer-travel-guidance-public-transport-users-walkers-cyclists-drivers
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers

Sectoral Guidance

- UNWTO, Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism: https://www.unwto.org/news/unwto-launches-global-guidelines-to-restart-tourism

10.2 Cafes, restaurants and bars

Government Guidance

- FSA Reopening Checklist for food businesses during COVID-19: www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/reopening-checklist-for-food-businesses-during-covid-19
- Adapting restaurants and food delivery: www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/adapting-restaurants-and-food-delivery-during-covid-19
- Safe Catering: www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safe-catering
- Cleaning effectively in your business: https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/cleaning-effectively-in-your-business

Sectoral Guidance

- The Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF) provides a range of updates and guidance: www.nihf.co.uk/
- Hospitality Ulster provides updates to members: https://hospitalityulster.org/

10.3 Hotels and tourist accommodation

Government Guidance

- Hotels and Tourist Accommodation guidance and support: https://covid19.tourismni.com/businesssupport
- Guidance for marriages, civil partnerships of other celebratory events: www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-marriages-civil-partnerships-or-other-celebratory-events (*under review*)

Sectoral Guidance

- The Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF) provides a range of updates and guidance: www.nihf.co.uk/
- Hospitality Ulster provides updates to members: https://hospitalityulster.org/
- Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers: Cleaning Protocols and Sectoral Guidance: www.assc.co.uk
- British Holiday & Home Parks Association guidance: www.bhhpa.org.uk/covid19hs/
- B&B Ireland COVID Care Policy: www.bandbireland.com/landing/care-policy
- National Caravan Council: www.thencc.org.uk/
- Professional Association of Self Caterers: www.pascuk.co.uk/
- Short Term Accommodation Association: www.ukstaa.org/

10.4 Conference and meeting venues

Sectoral Guidance

- The MIA's AIM SECURE accreditation programme: https://www.mia-uk.org/AIM
- Meetings Industry Association – Roadmap to reopening and operating safely: https://www.mia-uk.org/
- The Purple Guide produced by the Events Industry Forum: www.thepurpleguide.co.uk/
- Working safely during COVID-19 in the Outdoor Event Industry, which will be published on the Events Industry Forum website: www.eventsindustryforum.co.uk
- The AEO's e-guide: www.aev.org.uk/e-guide

10.5   Visitor attractions

This is a diverse segment of the visitor economy sector covering a broad cross-section of sites, venues, activity and operation type - indoor and outdoor - and may incorporate accommodation and food offerings.

There is a range of guidance, good practice, principles and considerations developed by a range of public sector and voluntary organisations and membership or representative organisations within the UK and Ireland and globally. While not all will apply to every business, the range of material is useful to provide approaches to consider to help develop the plan that will work best for your business. Tourism Northern Ireland maintains a list of many of these examples of useful good practice, principles and considerations on its website.

Government Guidance

- Department for Communities - Culture and Heritage Destination Venues Guidance: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/covid-19-culture-and-heritage-destinations-venues-guidance-phased-return

Sectoral Guidance

- The Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF) provides a range of updates and guidance: www.nihf.co.uk/
- Hospitality Ulster provides updates to members: https://hospitalityulster.org/
- The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions (BALPPA) has produced guidance for members: www.balppa.org/
- National Museum Directors' Council Good Practice Guidelines for Reopening Museums: www.nationalmuseums.org.uk
- Visitor Safety Group: https://vscg.org/documents/uploads/covidguidance.pdf
- COVID-19 Guidance for Tour Guiding: www.itg.org.uk/news-and-events/institute-news/covid-19-guidance-forguides/
- British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums: www.biaza.org.uk
- British Canoeing: www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/
- Sport & Recreation Alliance: www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/covid-19/latest-government-guidance
- International Show Caves Association: https://www.i-s-c-a.org/clanok/218-corona-virus-and-show-caves
- Mountaineering Ireland: www.mountaineering.ie/aboutus/news/2020/
- Canoe Association Northern Ireland: www.cani.org.uk/canis-current-recommendations-for-paddlesport-activity/
- IAAPA, the Global Association for the attractions industry: www.iaapa.org/news/covid-19-resource-page
- Sport NI Funding and Support: www.sportni.net/funding-and-support/
- Guidance relating to outdoor events has been prepared by the Events Industry Forum: www.eventsindustryforum.co.uk/
- Safer public places - urban centres and green spaces: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spaces-covid-19

This publication is also available on our website at: https://covid19.tourismni.com/businesssupport

More information will be published on this website as it becomes available.
Information is available in alternative formats or languages on request.

If you have any enquires about this publication, please contact Tourism NI: info@tourismni.com