

# Working During the Coronavirus Outbreak

## WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

Coronavirus is an illness that can affect the lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called COVID-19. Respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. The virus is likely to pass from person to person in communal areas and where it is not possible to maintain safe distances between persons. This toolbox talk covers the ways to maintain your health while working on construction sites.

### Self-isolation

If you have any one of the following criteria, do not come to site.

- A high temperature or a new persistent cough.
- Are a vulnerable person—by virtue of age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or pregnancy.
- Living with someone in self-isolation or with a vulnerable person.

### Getting to work

- If possible, travel to your place of work on your own.
- If it is not possible to travel to work on your own, then your journeys should be shared with the same individuals. Do not change the occupants that share the vehicle.
- Ensure everyone has cleaned their hands with hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) prior to getting into the vehicle.
- Do not fill the vehicle; leave space in the vehicle so that distance between occupants can be maintained.
- Maintain as much ventilation as possible whilst traveling by opening the windows.
- Have disposable gloves or hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) available in the vehicle to protect/clean your hands in case you need to fill up with fuel during your journey.
- Do not make any unnecessary stops during your journey, ensure that you and your occupants travel to work with what they need.
- When arriving at site, ensure that you and all the occupants of the vehicle wash their hands for 20 seconds using hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol based) before getting out of the vehicle.
- Clean the inside of your vehicle cab including door handles, steering wheel, gear stick and indicator stalk.
- If you need to utilise public transport to get to your place of work, travel at off peak times.

### On site

- Wash your hands when you arrive on site, regularly throughout the day (*especially if you sneeze or cough and after eating or handling food*) and again when you leave site.
- Where possible, maintain at least two metres away from other workers. This includes while you are working and during breaks and mealtimes—staggered breaks will help achieve this.
- Stay on site for your breaks. Do not use local shops. Bring your own meals and refillable drinking bottles. Do not share items (*for example, cups*).
- Only hold meetings and briefings that are absolutely necessary. Ideally, these should take place outdoors, with the minimum number of people and those people should be kept at least two metres apart.
- Hand tools should not be shared between operatives if possible.
- If you are using plant on site if possible dedicate one operative per piece of plant to undertake the daily/weekly checks and to operate the machine ensuring that they clean all touch points at the start of each day, at the end of an operation and at the end of the day.

### Close working

**Close working should be avoided where possible:**

- Work requiring skin to skin contact should not be carried out.
- Where possible rearrange your tasks to maintain social distancing measures (2 m).
- Stairs should be used in preference to ladders and other multi-contact point access equipment; also consider implementing a one-way system.

Use mechanical lifting aids such as sack barrows, to reduce interface with other workers;

**Where the social distancing measures (2 m) cannot be applied:**

- Minimise the frequency and time you are within two metres of each other.
- Minimise the number of people involved in these tasks;
- Work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face.
- Regularly clean common touchpoints such as ladders, doors, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, shared tools and equipment.
- Ensure you wash or clean your hands before using and after using any equipment.

### Keep teams that have to work within 2 m:

- Together (*do not change workers within teams*).
- As small as possible.
- Away from other workers where possible.

### Where face to face working is essential to carry out a task when working within two metres:

- Keep this to an absolute minimum.
- Ensure additional supervision to monitor and manage compliance.

### Cleaning

Extra cleaning should be carried out on site, particularly in the following areas:

- Taps and washing facilities.
- Toilet flush and seats.
- Door handles and push plates.
- Handrails on staircases and corridors.
- Ladders and access equipment.
- Lift and hoist controls.
- Machinery and equipment controls.
- Food preparation and eating surfaces.

### What to do if you think you are ill

If you develop a high temperature or a persistent cough while at work, you should:

- Report this to your supervisor.
- Avoid touching anything.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin or, if you do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- Return home immediately.
- You must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until your period of self-isolation has been completed.



#### Note

These measures are necessary to minimise the risk of spread of the infection and rely on all the workforce to take responsibility of their actions and behaviours.