

**SITE WORKING**

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Updated: 05th October 2021

**INTRODUCTION**

The Construction Leadership Council has released their statement:

“Site Operating Procedure & Lifting of Restrictions from 19 July 2021”. This has been released as a result of the latest Government guidelines.

Please check <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for the most up to date detailed advice, specific info for Scotland; Wales & Northern Ireland can also be accessed from here.

**FREDERECK SAGE CO LTD HAVE MADE MINOR AMENDMENTS TO OUR POLICIES & PROCESDURES.**

**UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE WE WILL MAINTAIN:**

**√ HAND SANITISING**

**√ SOCIAL DISTANCING**

**√ WEARING FACE COVERINGS INSIDE BUILDINGS**

**IT IS NO LONGER DEEMED NECESSARY TO:**

**X CHECK AND RECORD THE TEMPERATURE OF SITE PERSONNEL & VISITORS**

**X COMPLETE A COVID-19 PERMIT TO WORK WHERE PREVIOUSLY DEEMED NECESSARY**

We need to ensure that where sites are operating during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic, we are protecting all those working on site and minimising the risk of spread of infection. These procedures are intended to achieve this in line with the Government’s recommendations on social distancing.

**THESE ARE STILL EXEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND WE MUST ALWAYS COMPLY WITH THE LATEST GOVERNMENT ADVICE.**

In addition to these procedures, the health and safety requirements of all construction tasks must not be compromised. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely due to a lack of suitability qualified personnel being available or social distancing being implemented, it MUST NOT take place.

We are aware that emergency service are also under greater pressure and may not be able to respond as quickly as usual.

Site managers should make all those on site aware of these procedures, which are aimed at protecting them, their colleagues, their families and the wider UK population.

**1. IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OR TEST POSITIVE**

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test, even if your symptoms are mild. This is because many people experience mild symptoms from COVID-19 but may still pass on the virus to others.

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

* A new continuous cough
* A high temperature
* A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

You should self-isolate at home while you get a PCR test and wait for the results. You must self-isolate if you test positive. You must self-isolate from the day your symptoms started and the next 10 full days, or from the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms and the next 10 full days. This is the law, regardless of whether you have been vaccinated. Self-isolation is important because you could pass the infection on to others, even if you do not have symptoms. You must stay at home for the full amount of time you are told to, because this is the period when the virus is most likely to be passed on to others.

**2. IF YOU ARE TOLD TO SELF-ISOLATE BY NHS TEST AND TRACE**

You must also self-isolate if you are told to do so by NHS test and trace. Find out what you should do if you live in the same household as someone who has tested positive, what you should do if you’ve come into contact with someone outside your household who has tested positive.

* **Guidance on self-isolating**

When self-isolating, follow the:

Stay at home guidance for people with suspected of confirmed COVID-19

Stay at home guidance for non-household contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19

This will help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to other members of you household and community. In both cases you must stay at home at all times and not have contact with other people. There are only very limited circumstances when you do not have to do this, such as seeking medical assistance. If you do leave your home during your period of self-isolation for a permitted reason, you should maintain social distancing, keep 2 metres apart from other people and wear a face covering where possible.

You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate, or you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate. You should visit your local authority website for information on Test and Trace Support Payments and other practical support offered in your area including help accessing food. If you require prescription medication there is a medicine delivery service available through pharmacies and dispensing GPs. You could be fined if you do not self-isolate after being told to by NHS Test and Trace.

* **Self-Isolation exemption**

You’re not required to self-isolate if you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

* You’re fully vaccinated
* You’re below the age of 18 years and 6 months
* You’ve taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
* You’re not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to let you know that you have been identified as a contact and check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. If you’re not legally required to self-isolate you will be provided with advice on testing and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19. Even if you do not have symptoms, you will be advised to get a PCR test as soon as possible.

You should not arrange to have a PCR test if you have previously received a positive PCR test result in the last 90 days, unless you develop any new symptoms of COVID-19, as it is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection.

You can find further guidance for household contacts and guidance for non-household contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19 infections.

**3. TAKE TESTS IF YOU DO NOT HAVE SYMPTOMS TO HELP MANAGE YOUR RISK**

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it. Testing regularly increases the chances of detecting COVID-19 when you are infectious but are not displaying symptoms, helping to make sure you do not spread COVID-19.

Rapid lateral flow testing continues to be available free of charge. It is particularly focused on those who are not fully vaccinated, those in education, and those in higher-risk settings such as the NHS, social care and prisons.

People may also wish to use regular rapid lateral flow testing to help manage periods of risk such as after close contact with others in a higher risk environment, or before spending prolonged time with a more vulnerable individual. You can get tests from pharmacies or online. Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test.

* **Try to stay at home if you’re feeling unwell**

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test, even if your symptoms are mild. You should self-isolate at home while you book the test and wait for the results. You must self-isolate if you test positive.

If you feel unwell but do not have COVID-19 symptoms, or your COVID-19 test is negative, you may still have an illness which could be passed on to other people. Many common illnesses, like the flu or common cold, are spread from one person to another. This can happen:

* When someone infected with an illness breathes, speaks coughs or sneezes, releasing respiratory particles which can cause infection in another person.
* Through surfaces and belongings which can also be contaminated when people who are infected with an illness cough or sneeze near them or if they touch them, the next person to touch that surface may then become infected.

Staying at home until you feel better reduces the risk that you will pass on an illness to your friends, colleagues, and others in your community. This will help reduce the burden on our health services.

* **Wash your hands regularly and cover coughs and sneezes**

Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day.

Regular hand washing is an effective way to reduce your risk of catching illnesses, including COVID-19.

It is particularly important to wash your hands:

* After coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose
* Before you eat or handle food
* After coming into contact with surfaces touched by many others, such as handles, handrails and light switches
* After coming into contact with shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms
* When you return home

Where possible, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you do need to touch your face, for example to put on or take off your face covering, wash or sanitise your hands before and after.

Coughing and sneezing increases the number of droplets and aerosols released by a person, the distance they travel and the time they stay in the air. Covering coughs and sneezes will help reduce the spread of particles carrying COVID-19 and other viruses, including those that cause coughs and colds.

* **Use the NHS COVID-19 app**

Using the NHS COVID-19 app helps stop the spread of the virus by informing you that you have been in close contact with someone who has since tested positive for COVID-19, even if you do not know each other. You can also use it to check in to venues with an NHS QR code and receive advice if there has been an outbreak. The app is free and easy to use and doing so can help you protect your loved ones and others.

The app also allows people to report symptoms and order coronavirus tests. To help protect yourself and others, download and use the latest version of the NHS COVID-19 app.

* **Limit close contact with other people**

When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, or coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the virus that causes COVID-19. These particles can be breathed in by another person.

You may choose to limit the close contact you have with people you do not usually live with. You may also choose to take a lateral flow test before being in close contact and also encourage those people you are meeting with to do so, which will help to manage periods of risk. This includes close contact in a higher risk environment, or when spending prolonged periods of time with a vulnerable individual.

These are personal choices which can help reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. It is important to consider that others may wish to continue to take a more cautious approach. We should all be considerate of this and provide the opportunity and space for others to reduce close contacts if they wish.

4. **PROCEDURE IF SOMEONE FALLS ILL**

If anyone on site develops a high temperature or a persistent cough while at work, they should:

* Return home immediately
* Avoid touching anything
* Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin

If they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow. They must then follow the guidance on self-isolation, as well as their own company procedures and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed, or they are signed as being fit to work by their doctor.

5. **TRAVEL TO SITE**

Wherever possible workers should travel to site alone using their own transport.

As Principal Contractors we may need to consider:

* Parking arrangements for additional cars and vans etc
* Providing hand & vehicle cleaning facilities at entrances and exits
* This should be soap and water wherever possible or hand sanitiser if water is not available
* Vehicles should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with emphasis on handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces
* Journeys should be shared with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time
* Good ventilation (i.e keeping the windows open) and facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission
* How someone taken ill would get home and where they could wait if required.

6. **SITE ACCESS POINTS**

* Require all workers to wash or clean their hands before entering or leaving the site
* Regularly clean common contact surfaces in the office and canteen for example: desks; laptop keyboards; door handles; pens; office equipment
* Online inductions should continue to be done
* Ideally on an individual’s own device. If sharing a device, then clean surface of screen in between uses.
* Reduce the number of people at the site briefing and around the daily signing in book.
* Delivery drivers should wash or clean their hands before unloading goods and materials.

7. **HAND WASHING**

Allow regular breaks for people to wash hands

* Additional hand washing facilities should be provided alongside those in the welfare facilities if on a large spread out site or large numbers of personnel on site.
* Ensure soap and fresh running hot water is always available, at the handwash points
* Provide hand sanitiser where hand washing facilities with soap are unavailable
* Regularly clean the hand washing facilities and check soap and sanitiser levels
* Provide enough suitable rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.
* Extra supplies of soap, hand sanitisers and paper towel may need to be ordered and should be securely stored.

8. **TOILET FACILITIES**

* Restrict the number of people using toilet facilities at any one time
* Use signs or floor markings to enforce 2m rule
* Wash hands before and after using facilities
* Enhance the cleaning regimes for toilet facilities particularly door handles, locks and toilet flush handles/buttons
* Portable toilets should be avoided wherever possible, but where in use these should be cleaned and emptied more frequently
* Provide enough suitable rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.

9. **CANTEEN AND EATING ARRANGEMENTS**

* Dedicated eating areas should be identified on site to reduce food waste contamination
* Break times should be staggered to reduce congestion and contact
* Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser should be available at the entrance of any room where people eat and should be used by workers when entering and leaving the area
* The workforce should be asked to bring pre-prepared meals and refillable drinking bottles from home. Ideally, they should also bring their own cutlery, crockery and mugs too
* Workers should sit 2 metres apart from each other whilst eating and avoid all contact
* Tables and chairs should be reconfigured to prevent face to face seating
* Shared crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. should not be used
* Drinking water should be provided with enhanced cleaning measures of the tap mechanism introduced. Personnel should use their own personal refillable water bottles. If this is not possible, then disposable cups should be.
* All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up
* All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including tables, chairs, door handles, sinks etc.

10. **CHANGING FACILITIES, SHOWERS AND DRYING ROOMS**

* Introduce staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact
* Introduce enhanced cleaning of all facilities throughout the day and at the end of each day
* Consider increasing the number of size or facilities available on site if needed
* Based on the size of each facility, determine how many people can use it at any one time to maintain a distance of two metres
* Do not store or share clothing /PPE in drying room. Use own clothing only and disposable PPE.
* Provide enough suitable rubbish bins in these areas with regular removal and disposal.

11. **AVOID CLOSE WORKING**

There will be situations where it is not possible or safe for workers to distance themselves from each other by 2 metres. In these circumstances we will adopt the following Hierarchy of Controls:

1. **ELIMINATE**

* Anyone who attends site with Covid-19 symptoms, should not travel to site of be allowed on site
* Non-essential work that requires close contact between workers should not be carried out
* Work requiring skin to skin contact should not be carried out
* Plan all other work to minimise contact between workers or to allow works by one person
* Stairs should be used in preference to lifts or hoists
* Where lifts or hoists must be used, lower their capacity to reduce congestion and contact

**Site Meetings**

* Wherever possible avoid onsite meetings, by holding conference calls or remote video conferencing. If not possible, only absolutely necessary attendees should be onsite
* Attendees should be two metres apart from each other
* Rooms should be well ventilated/windows opened to allow fresh air to circulation
* Consider holding meetings in open areas where possible

**2. REDUCE**

Where it is not possible to maintain the 2m distance rule:

* The number, time and frequency workers are within 2m of each other should be minimised
* Work side by side, rather than face to face, or ideally facing away from each other
* Regularly clean touchpoints, door handles, toilet flush buttons; hand tools etc.
* Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces
* Plant should be only used by one operator, wherever possible and the inside of vehicle cabs must be cleaned regularly
* Workers must wash their hand before and after using any plant, tools or other equipment

**3. ISOLATE**

Keep groups of workers that must work together within 2m:

* Together in the same teams, ie: do not change workers within the team
* Keep the team as small as possible
* Keep the team away from other workers where possible

**4. CONTROL**

* Minimise the time and frequency where tasks cannot be avoided within 2m. Use masks/face coverings if these tasks are face to face
* Provide additional supervision, at 2m distance, to monitor compliance
* Use Covid-19 Permit. ALL Permits to Work are to be completed and signed off by Site Manager on behalf of the person requiring the Permit after discussion with the sub-contractor

**5. PPE**

* RPE Masks are not to be used for Covid-19 protection where the 2m distance rule can be maintained
* Where it is not possible to maintain the 2m distance, point 4 above guidelines should be followed and all activities risk assessed, considering that RPE is a last resort in the hierarchy of controls
* Re-usable PPE should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers
* Single use PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused

**12. FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY SERVICE RESPONSE**

The primary responsibility to preserve life and administer first aid should be followed if required and until the emergency services attend.

* Provision of adequate first aid resources should consider site specific requirements, including high risk activities (working at height, confined spaces etc) and considering potential delays in response times from emergency services
* Emergency plans and contact details should be kept up to date

**13. CLEANING**

* Enhanced cleaning procedures should be in place across the site at least daily, particularly in communal areas and at touch points including:
* Taps and washing facilities
* Toilet flush and seats
* Door handles and push plates
* Handrails on staircases and corridors
* Lift and hoist controls
* Machinery and equipment controls
* Food preparation and eating surfaces
* Telephone equipment including mobiles
* Keyboards, computer mice, printers and other office equipment
* Rubbish collection and storage points should be emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.

**FINAL WORDS**

The measures necessary to minimise the risk of spread of Covid-19 infection rely on everyone on site and in our wider supply chain to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours.

Fredereck Sage Construction therefore encourage an open collaborative approach between workers and employers on site where any issues can be openly discussed and addressed. If anyone has any concerns please speak to the Site Manager in the first instance, and then to HR in the office.