

## SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK (SSOW)

Email: HealthandSafety@marisco-group.com



**Stay Alert:** Think about how **YOU** can make what you are doing in the workplace safer. It matters!

**Stay Safe:** **YOU** have 2 priorities: Do not contract Covid-19; and do not pass it onto others.

**Stay Employed:** If we all work together and comply with the rules, **YOU** will still have a job.

<b>Site</b>		<b>Folio Ref:</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Working with Covid-19 Safe System of Work</b>		
<b>Materials &amp; PPE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A kettle or thermos if access to the property's hot water is not available.</li> <li>2. Anti-viral wash and disposable anti-viral wipes.</li> <li>3. Soap (wash for at least 20 seconds).</li> <li>4. Surgical masks for general use and FFP3 if RAMS indicate they are necessary.</li> <li>5. Eye goggles or full-face screen guard.</li> </ol>		
<b><u>Self isolation</u></b>	<p><i><b>This is probably the most important rule that must be observed by all employees.</b></i> Our primary and over-arching concern as an employer is to make sure no one suffers harm by contracting Covid-19 at work.</p> <p>We must also work sensibly to ensure that if, or more likely when, someone is tested positive, the number of other workers lost to enforced isolation at the request of track and trace is kept to a minimum.</p> <p>The first thing we must all do is understand the official guidance on Covid-19 <a href="#">symptoms</a>. The main symptoms of coronavirus are: (1) a high temperature (this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back. You do not need to measure your temperature); (2) a new, continuous cough (this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours or if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual); and (3) a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste (this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal). Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.</p> <p>If you develop these symptoms, however mild, or you have received a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test result, then you should immediately self-isolate and stay at home for at least <b>10</b> days from when your symptoms started. If you live with others, all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for <b>14</b> days (<a href="#">Government Guidance</a>).</p> <p>If any employee knowingly continues to work with Covid-19 symptoms, or fails to observe the self-isolation rules because a member of their household has developed symptoms, and such inexcusable behaviour comes to our attention, then they will face immediate disciplinary action for gross misconduct with a view to dismissal.</p>		



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## General Precautions

Common household disinfectants such as bleach, surgical spirits and isopropyl solutions will kill Covid-19. It is essential to organise regular sterilisation of all surfaces in the workplace because [studies](#) have shown that the COVID-19 virus can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, and 24 hours on cardboard.

Any surface people touch must be cleaned regularly, which includes desks, work-tops, chairs, telephones, keyboards, mice, light switches, door-handles, stair-rails and banisters, etc. Think about tools, and what you touch in your cars and vans.

Frequent hand washing is mandatory. Unless you are using an anti-viral soap, the mechanism being relied upon to protect you against infection is the physical removal of virus-infected material from the skin on your hands. Think about how many times you have touched your face, rubbed your eyes, or taken a sip from a cup since you started reading this SSOW? When was the last time you washed your hands?

Regularly washing your hands will reduce the chance of transmitting a virus via your hands, from a contaminated surface to your eyes, nose and mouth. Try to break the habit of touching your face with your hands. It will be harder than you think.

It follows that any sinks, bowls, taps and drying areas used by many people, have the potential to become viral hot-spots that can undo the benefit of washing one's hands by immediately re-infecting you. It makes sense to make sure all washing areas are thoroughly cleaned with sterilising fluids at least twice a day.

Any dishcloths, cleaning-pads, tea-towels, and handtowels are renowned for being bacterial and viral hot-spots. Replace them with paper disposable versions.

Likewise, it is recommended all shared kitchen utensils and crockery in a communal kitchen are replaced with disposable plastic/paper versions. Staff can use personal cups, utensils, and crockery provided they are stored away from the kitchen to prevent others from using them. Washing in water at 60°C will sterilise most things.

Wear disposable latex gloves and always change them when you complete each task otherwise you are just spreading a source of potential contamination.

Avoid touching communal handrails, door handles, light switches etc, whenever you can, even when wearing gloves. The idea is to reduce cross-contaminating areas to an absolute minimum, but we appreciate there are practical limits. There is no point breaking your neck falling down some stairs in the name of avoiding Covid-19.

Remember your vehicle is an often a forgotten infective *hot zone* that based on recent inspections is rarely cleaned, let alone sterilised. Think of your steering wheel, gear shift knob, door handles, buttons and indicator stalks you touch while driving, and then transmit to your mucosae with your hands.



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Do you take your breaks in your vans? We will increase inspections and if van cabins are not kept clean and free from debris, we will take the vehicle away from you and arrange to have it deep-cleaned at the nominated driver's expense.

Avoid using communal lifts. Lift buttons are *hot zones* for bacteria and viruses.

Clean tools at the beginning and end of your shift using anti-viral wipes or solutions.

Avoid lending your tools to other workers but if you do, make sure you clean them using anti-viral wipes or solutions.

Keep the working environment well ventilated. Open windows to circulate fresh air.

When attending any client or supplier premises, evaluate the effectiveness of the precautions they are taking to reduce viral transmission and protect your safety. If the precautions are not good enough, and you cannot compensate by wearing extra PPE, politely think of an excuse to avoid entering and report back to head office.

When you can, cycle or walk to work. Take your car in preference to public transport. Do not car or van share if you can avoid it. Wear a face covering in all situations when you cannot avoid staying 2m apart as part of the social distancing rule.

We provide you with FFP3 face masks that will block viral transmissions. Providing you sterilise and maintain the mask in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions each time after use, wear it whenever *you* think it is appropriate. You must wear such PPE if the RAMS indicate they are necessary for normal working as a protection against silica and asbestos dust.

The Government's advice is not advocating wearing FFP3 masks as a precaution against Covid-19, except in the clinical treatment of known infected patients.

It would be sensible for first aiders to wear FFP3 mask, gloves and eye protection when treating a casualty. Read the latest guidance on [CPR](#).

Whether you wear a surgical mask in an office or on a site comes down to personal choice in the absence of RAM guidance. Surgical or 'face coverings' are recommended when the 2m social distancing rule cannot be met, e.g. travelling in a van when no alternative is available. Consider who stands to lose the most? Someone who wears a mask when others chose not to, or the person who contracts Covid-19 because they were too embarrassed to wear one to avoid being mocked.

### Social Distancing

Maintaining the 2m social distancing is the Government's key measure to reduce the rate of Covid-19 transmission in the population. If the 'R' value is less than one, then



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the pandemic will gradually diminish as a national problem. Of course, a low 'R' is no consolation to those who will die from a Covid-19 infection in the coming year.

Social distancing works best outdoors in the open. It is reduced in closed spaces such as rooms with poor ventilation. It is least effective in enclosed vehicles. **Remember if you can smell someone's vape or detect what they had for lunch, you have also just breathed in any infective viruses they may harbour too, including Covid-19. Too late!**

Studies suggest Covid-19 can survive as part of an aerosol hanging around in the air for someone like you to walk into for periods ranging from 25 seconds up to several hours. Survival rates depend on ambient conditions. Breezes help disperse aerosols.

You can't stay locked away at home forever. So, there is a balance to be struck. Every time you come close to another person, you run an increased risk of being infected by them if they are a Covid-19 carry. Complying with the social distancing rules in a responsible way will reduce the risk to you and your family. Follow them!

**Clinical waste:** The act of cleaning and using paper clothes will create a potential clinical waste problem. Government guidance is that all waster should be stored for at least 72 hours (to allow any infective agents contained therein to become inactive) before being disposed of at registered waste disposal centres. Any waster disposed of straightway must be declared and treated as clinical waste.

### The science

The Government in the daily news briefing have made much following the 'Science' in planning their response to Covid-19. The reader has the ultimate choice in what advice you follow to protect yourself against contracting Covid-19, but please do not practise them at work if they interfere with any of the safe working practices we ask you to observe. **That said, please talk to us if you think we can improve our approach.**

The advice below is based on medical research reviewed by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO [link](#) is provided because the best way of deciding what is the best advice to follow is to read it for yourself. The WHO report states:

- "According to current evidence, COVID-19 virus is primarily transmitted between people through respiratory droplets and contact routes."
- "Droplet transmission occurs when a person is in close contact (within 1 m) with someone who has respiratory symptoms (e.g., coughing or sneezing) and is therefore at risk of having his/her mucosae (mouth and nose) or conjunctiva (eyes) exposed to potentially infective respiratory droplets. Transmission may also occur through fomites in the immediate environment around the infected person. Therefore, transmission of the COVID-19 virus can occur by direct

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	<p>contact with infected people and indirect contact with surfaces in the immediate environment or with objects used on the infected person.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Finally, WHO continues to emphasise the utmost importance of frequent hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and environmental cleaning and disinfection, as well as the importance of maintaining physical distances and avoidance of close, unprotected contact with people with fever or respiratory symptoms.”</li> </ul> <p>The <a href="#">WHO</a> advice is consistent with <a href="#">Government</a> advice and the guidance given here.</p>
<b>Smoking &amp; Vaping</b>	<p>Smoking or vaping in any workplace, including company vehicles, was either against the law and or the Company's Policy before the Covid-19 pandemic. The higher risk of transmitting Covid-19 by smoking or vaping in the workplace will not be tolerated.</p> <p>Any person caught breaking this rule at work, or while travelling in any company vehicle, will face disciplinary action for dismissal for gross misconduct.</p> <p>The reason why is simple. The act of smoking involves breathing in particulate matter from the cigarettes, or the droplets from a vaporiser, and then exhaling them. The risk of viral transmission is therefore greatly increased because the exhalation carries a far higher density of potentially infective particulate matter, or water droplets in the case of vaping, than a normal breath.</p> <p>The increased volume of potentially infected matter will remain suspended for longer in the air and will eventually travel further and be deposited on a wider range of surfaces, all of which has the potential to infect other people as they come into contact with it.</p> <p>Employers have a legal duty to enforce safety. For that reason, with immediate effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees must not smoke or vape on any client premises, including the garden, unless a designated place has been put aside for that purpose.</li> <li>• No one must smoke or vape on the grounds of the head office, including the parking apron at Fulcrum Way. It interferes with safe access and egress.</li> <li>• Any tobacco or smoking equipment left in communal areas represent a serious source of contamination and they will be forfeited and disposed of immediately.</li> </ul>
<b>Removing soiled PPE</b>	<p>Have you ever thought about how you should safely remove the soiled PPE you are wearing? <b>Always start with the most soiled item first (normally gloves).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a plastic waste disposal bag and remove your PPE in a safe area that can itself be cleaned and decontaminated easily.</li> </ul>

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- Your gloves are the most likely heavily contaminated PPE, so remove them first.
- Next remove any outer protective overalls trying to avoid excess agitation that may contaminate your remaining garments and the surrounding area.
- Wash your hands again, before removing a mask or goggles by their straps to minimise cross-contamination. Clean these items in warm soapy water.
- Now thoroughly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or use sterile wipes.
- HSE and Government regulations require PPE contaminated waste bags to be either stored securely for 72 hours or disposed of as 'marked clinical waste'.