



Contagious Diseases Policy

Guidance SP008

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1.0 Introduction:

The Company recognise their responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974: to keep employees & others safe whilst at work. Greens Sign Makers have created this policy to help provide guidance to employees on how to keep themselves & others safe from workplace contagious diseases including the recent outbreak of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus).

1.1 What is a contagious disease

According to the HSE guidance, you must only make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to coronavirus or a contagious disease. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- a worker has been diagnosed as having the coronavirus or a contagious disease and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.
- a worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus.

The list of diseases (and their respective causative pathogens) that are notifiable is contained in the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 and subsequent amendments.

The most recent amendment to the Regulations is the Infectious Diseases (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (S.I. No. 53 of 2020). The links below outline types of diseases notifiable. All medical practitioners, including clinical directors of diagnostic laboratories, are required to notify the Medical Officer of Health (MOH)/Director of Public Health (DPH) of certain diseases. This information is used to investigate cases thus preventing spread of infection and further cases.

<https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/listofnotifiablediseases/List%20of%20Notifiable%20Diseases%20February%202020.pdf>

<https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/listofnotifiablediseases/Immediate%20preliminary%20notification%20to%20a%20MOH%2004032020.pdf>

2.0 Coronavirus Symptoms

2.1 What are the symptoms?

- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

2.2. What to do if you have these symptoms

- Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.
- You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.
- Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

2.3. How long do you stay at home?

- if you have symptoms, stay at home for 7 days
- if you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms
- If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.
- If you must stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.
- Everyone should do what they can to stop coronavirus spreading.

It is particularly important for people who:

- are 70 or over
- have a long-term condition
- are pregnant
- have a weakened immune system

3.0 Prevention and the “Hierarchy of Controls” to Reduce Risk

Elimination of the virus is extremely difficult to achieve but risks can be reduced if the following controls are implemented.

1. Avoid coming into contact with anyone else were possible.

- Social Distancing: Limiting person to person interactions
- Workspaces to be spread out as much as possible

2. Reducing time and exposure levels

- Working from home where possible
- Shift working where appropriate
- Limiting shared tools and equipment

3. Further Controls

○ **Technical Precautions**

- Ensuring your work plant and equipment remain clean and safe to use
- Sneeze Screens Installed when dealing with other people
- Additional cleaning: e.g. workstations, touch points, shared surfaces
- Hand sanitisers/Hand washing
- Hygiene Controls: Antiseptic Wipes
- Pedestrian One Way System walkways (including on stairs)

○ **Administration**

- Dealing with Employee concerns (e.g. Involving staff with their personal thoughts, giving them the opportunity to discuss any health issues of themselves or family members, not involve anyone who may have vulnerable people at their home)
- Asking if any staff have any symptoms that they immediately leave work and self-isolate
- Monitoring Controls: e.g. having a rota system for lunch and tea breaks to minimise the number of people in the canteen at any one time
- Communication
 - Toolbox talks
 - Posters
 - Risk Assessments (Touch points)

4. Review of PPE Provisions

- Ensure you have the correct PPE and RPE
 - A face fit test ensures that respiratory protective equipment (RPE) protects you

5. Personal Discipline

- Employees have a duty of care to protect themselves and others – anyone seen to be disregarding the procedures set out in this policy could be liable to disciplinary action due to a breach of Health & Safety Regulations.

4.0 Company Guidelines

4.1 To all employees

DO

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Use gloves and face masks provided
- Clean public areas (such as the canteen surfaces and door handles) before and after use
- Respect the rules around one-way systems within the building and maintaining a suitable distance from co-workers while at work
- Go home immediately if you have any symptoms of coronavirus, however mild
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus
- Only travel on public transport if you need to
- Work from home, if you can
- Avoid social activities, such as going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and cinemas
- Avoid events with large groups of people
- Use phone, [online services](#), or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services

Don't

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Do not have visitors to your home, including friends and family
- Do not come to work if you have any symptoms of coronavirus

Isolation & segregation:

Remember the main reason we are being asked to isolate as much as possible is not necessarily to prevent you from getting the virus. (You may consider yourself to be fit & healthy & getting the virus may seem to you like a minor issue) The MAIN reason for isolating & segregating is to prevent the virus from spreading.

The following precautions should be taken so far as is reasonable:

4.2 To site-based staff:

- Wash hands regularly with soap & hot water throughout the day.
- Have hand sanitiser available in each area.
- Regularly wipe surfaces of things that are often touched by people (Door handles, keyboards, IT equipment, machine control panels, tools etc.).
- If arriving at work by car please park leaving spaces between each car wherever possible.
- Try to use the same workstation & avoid hot desking or moving from area to area during the shift.
- On the shop floor, working in noisy areas can be particularly hazardous as people tend to move very close & speak face to face in very close proximity. This is exactly how the virus spreads, so be aware of this & try to stay 6 feet (2 meters) apart. Use hand signals & remove ear defenders if required for short periods to communicate.
- Only use your own PPE, don't share any item of PPE or use any that is intended for visitors.
- Don't congregate in groups for breaks or lunchtimes, use the 2-meter rule, don't share food or drink and always wash or sanitise before & after eating.
- Wherever possible bring in prepared food from home to avoid the need to prepare food in a shared area or the need to go to a shop and mix with other people outside of your working group during your lunch break.
- Lunch breaks and tea breaks will be taken on a rota system to minimise the number of people in the canteen at any one time.
- Utilise outdoor space wherever possible for breaks or meetings.
- Cleaning products will be provided in public areas such as the canteen and staff are asked to clean down surfaces and handles in those areas before and after use.
- Avoid working in groups & holding meetings as much as possible. Keep as far apart as is practical during the workday.
- When working together cannot be avoided, for example when lifting heavy materials, try to keep the time spent close together to under 15 minutes wherever possible and always try to work side-by-side or back-to-back if it is safe to do so.
- Gloves and face coverings are available but not compulsory, except in those areas where specific PPE is a requirement.
- Anyone choosing to wear a face covering should ensure they are aware of the correct method for using them safely.
- A one-way system will be in operation on the stairways – please use the stairs in the factory to come down, and the stairs near reception to go up.
- When liaising with customers and suppliers, try to ensure that all communication is done using phone or email, for meetings consider using Skype, facetime or other software to alleviate the need to travel & meet face to face.
- If face to face contact is absolutely necessary, meetings should be held in the largest rooms available, for a short a period, and be as well ventilated as possible.

- The company reserve the right to use a non-contact forehead thermometer to detect high level temperatures & refuse entry to anyone with a temperature above normal body temperature. Records of any temperatures taken will not be stored by the Company. A note will only be made in the instance that your body temperature is above the normal range and you have been sent home to self-isolate. This will be stored confidentially in your personnel file and not used for any other purpose than as a record of the start date of a period of self-isolation.
- If you begin to feel ill & have symptoms outlined above, leave work immediately & report by phone to your manager (don't walk around the site trying to find them, just go & report by phone).

4.2 To off-site staff:

- Hand sanitiser will be provided for use if soap and hot water are not easily available on site to maintain regular cleaning.
- All surfaces in vehicles should be wiped down before and after use.
- When sharing a vehicle please sit as far apart from each other as possible.
- Fixing crews shall remain as fixed pairs to minimise the number of social interactions.
- Work on site should be planned as best possible to allow fixing crews to work away from any other contractors on site, and areas could be cordoned off if safe to do so.
- Work on site should be planned as best possible to limit the number of tools touched by each person and should be wiped down before and after use.
- Wherever possible only one person should work in the basket of an access machine at any one time, where this is not possible the time should be kept to a minimum and workers should stand side-by-side or back-to-back if safe to do so.
- Access machines should be wiped down before and after use in all key areas.
- Gloves should be worn whenever re-fuelling a vehicle.
- Only use your own PPE, don't share any item of PPE
- Overnight stays away from home should be avoided if possible, but when required should be using establishments that comply to the government guidelines and any shared areas should be wiped down before and after use.
- First Aid kits should be checked at the start of each week and extra supplies taken in the van to allow for if the response of an ambulance or other medical professional is delayed due to the extra pressure they face from Coronavirus.

4.2 To staff returning from abroad

- Any staff member who has returned to the UK from abroad should self-isolate for a minimum of 7 days before declaring themselves symptom free & returning to work.
- Any symptom whatsoever should be taken as a potential case & they should stay away from the workplace & observe the guidance outlines above.

4.3 To visitors to the site

- Delivery drivers should stay in their vehicle outside of the building & not enter the site office or workshop.

- Staff to take deliveries outside & bring items in themselves if possible & practical.
- Any documents should be signed outside & the person taking delivery should sanitise hands directly after dealing with the delivery.
- Visitors/customers/meetings etc. - should be kept to a minimum & done using remote means if possible & practical.
- Any visitors should be asked if they are showing any symptoms of Coronavirus and only be let on site if they declare themselves symptom free. Any visitor who has been abroad the last two weeks must declare this and that they are symptom free.
- The company reserve the right to use a non-contact forehead thermometer to detect high level temperatures & refuse entry to anyone with a temperature above normal body temperature.
- Visitors to the main office reception should be kept to a minimum. Sanitiser should be available on the reception desk & used by visitors before & after their visit. They should be escorted to the nearest practical meeting area. Visits should be as short as possible & they should leave site directly after the meeting through the main exit.
- Meetings should be kept as short as possible, held in the largest area possible & the areas ventilated & sanitised with wipes after visits.

4.4 To visits to customer by company staff

- Current Government guidance is for UK nationals not to travel abroad at all, this should be adhered to and only the most urgent international travel will need to be sanctioned by senior management.
- The same basic rules highlighted for site-based staff should be observed by our visiting team. Being mobile means hand washing is difficult, so hand sanitiser must be used regularly, especially when returning to your vehicle after a visit.
- Gloves should be used whenever re-fuelling and all surfaces in the vehicle should be wiped down before and after use.
- Visits should be kept to the minimum practical duration (obviously, work quality & safety are still the ultimate priority).
- Staff should work away from others as much as possible, if people are looking over your shoulder, or standing around watching, ask them to leave & if possible, keep the area ventilated.
- Staff need to think about accepting drinks & snacks from any customers during the visit. Remember that not everyone is taking this virus as seriously as they should be!
- On completion of the job, the visitor should wipe surfaces, tools & equipment with sanitised wipes before returning to site.
- In all cases, if a staff member is concerned that a person (customer, visitor etc) is showing signs of the virus (outlined above) but have not declared them, they should not come into contact with them, leave the area immediately & seek advice from management.