

Business Recovery Guidance - Version 8, March 2021.

Introduction

Many small to medium-sized workplaces in Fife have been unduly affected by the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. There are concerns about business funding/grants, economics/continuity, and health, safety & wellbeing impacts on yourself & your workforce moving forward into business recovery & returning to work. In this guidance we have pulled together important information to try and make things easier for SMEs.

The Scottish Government published the [COVID-19 Routemap](#) to lift lockdown measures in 4 phases from 28th May 2020. Currently, [Phase 3 Recovery Routemap](#) is being implemented across Scotland. The Scottish Government has issued Local Protection Levels [guidance](#), which details the “can/cannot do” information, tailored to each local authority, and updated on a weekly basis. This guidance also includes a helpful [postcode checker](#) to assist you in knowing the current restrictions, where you are.

Working with our partner agencies & organisations, the Workplace Team, Health Promotion Service, Fife Health and Social Care Partnership can assist you in Fife through these challenging times – helping to aid the recovery of your business, your workers and yourself.

Many links to occupational health, safety & wellbeing advice are provided in this document but please contact us via the email details below if you have any other questions & we will try our very best to help. All of our services are FREE and CONFIDENTIAL.

For further advice email: Fife.hwl@nhs.scot

This Business Recovery Guidance document contains information on the following topics:

- COVID-19 Coronavirus
- Working Safely
- Risk Assessment
- RIDDOR
- COSHH & PPE
- Hand Washing and Sanitising
- Decontamination of the Work Environment
- Occupational Health
- Working Health Services
- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policies & Procedures
- Healthy Living
- Smoking, Alcohol & Substance Misuse
- Other Health & Safety Considerations
- Healthy Working Lives Award Programme
- Other Services

COVID-19 Coronavirus

We all need to continue to be vigilant to protect against Coronavirus. Symptoms associated with the illness include, but are not limited to, cough, fever/high temperature, anosmia (loss/alterd sense of smell or taste).

[NHS Inform](#) has helpful information including self-help guides to check Coronavirus symptoms & get advice.

Coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people & those with long term health conditions like diabetes, cancer & chronic lung disease. This is relevant to your risk assessment on how to manage the risks in your workplace.

Working Safely

Please refer regularly to: [HSE – Coronavirus \(Covid 19\): latest information and advice](#)

In most workplaces the key things to think about are:

- Risk Assessment
- Who should go to work
- Social distancing at work
- Managing your customers, visitors and contractors
- Cleaning the workplace
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings
- Workforce management
- Inbound and outbound goods

Guidance to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the Coronavirus pandemic has been issued by the Scottish Government. This guidance was produced in consultation with industry to help ensure workplaces are as safe as possible.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/sector-guidance-for-easing-lockdown/>

Scottish Government [guidance](#) has been issued for workers and employers on returning to work safely during the coronavirus pandemic (updated on 11th January 2021). Additionally, there is Sector Specific guidance available [here](#).

Separate UK Government advice is posted at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

ACAS Coronavirus (COVID-19) Advice, including associated HR advice at <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

Healthy Working Lives advice and guidance is posted at <https://covid19.healthyworkinglives.scot/>

Important: Please keep checking these sites as it is expected guidance will be updated over time.

Risk Assessment

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

You must:

- Identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus;
- Think about who could be at risk;
- Decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed;
- Act to remove the activity or situation, or if this is not possible, control the risk.

A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace.

If you have fewer than five workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment. Your risk assessment will help you decide whether you have done everything you need to.

There are Health and Safety Executive (HSE) interactive tools available to support you in risk assessment at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

You should share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce. If possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (all employers with over 50 workers are expected to do so). Below you will find a link to notice you should display in your workplace to show you have followed this guidance:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb97d30d3bf7f5d364bfbb6/staying-covid-19-secure.pdf>

RIDDOR

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has established guidance where incidents of Coronavirus will be reportable under the [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations](#).

These scenarios are:

- An unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to Coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- A worker has been diagnosed as having Coronavirus 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. This must be reported as a work-related death due to exposure to a biological agent.

COSHH & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

You should remember that biological hazards such as micro-organisms including viruses are covered under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH).

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>

Depending on your business type/duties, you and your staff may be well accustomed to wearing PPE. On return to work, ensure there is enough PPE for work duties to be carried out safely.

- Do you require PPE as part of your health and safety control measures?
- If so, is the type and size provided for your staff still available?
- If not, will you be able to source appropriate PPE that will adequately protect workers from exposures?
- If your work processes have changed do you need different PPE?
- Will staff know how to use alternative equipment and is training on its use required? Does existing PPE still fit if – especially if employees have lost or gained weight during the pandemic?

The Scottish Government has issued guidance with regards to wearing [face coverings](#) whilst out with the home environment (updated 28th January 2021).

Furthermore, [wearing face coverings whilst using public transport](#) is now mandatory.

Handwashing & Hand Sanitiser

Regular hand washing and use of hand sanitiser plays a preventative role in Coronavirus transmission. Ensure you have adequate facilities and supplies to allow for this process in your workplace.

<http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resources/hand-hygiene-wash-your-hands-of-them/>

<http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/appendices/appendix-2-best-practice-how-to-hand-rub/>

Decontamination of the Work Environment

Coronavirus transmission occurs when droplets from an infected person are ingested by another individual. To reduce the likelihood of Coronavirus spread, it is important to ensure that the work environment is regularly decontaminated. The Government link below will provide further advice on this topic:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Occupational Health

At any time, the self-employed/people working in small to medium sized businesses can develop ill health whether work-related or not.

During the Coronavirus lockdown period, an employee may have been affected by ill health due to the virus or, may have experienced new health problems/worsening of health problems which are not at all connected to the virus. Any of these scenarios may affect their work ability or capacity.

Before employees return to work, it may be worthwhile to complete a Return to Work interview with them on a one-to-one basis to establish a tailored approach to their work plans and duties.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/absence-from-work>

<https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/resources/forms-and-records/Pages/Return-to-work-form.aspx>

Employees returning to work after the Coronavirus lockdown period may not be in the same physical condition or mental state as they were previously and a period of adjustment may be required in order to return to full duties.

Keeping In Contact

Where possible, it is a good idea to seek to agree on a level of contact with employees during staff leave (including furloughing) that is acceptable to both parties. The purpose of this is to check on staff wellbeing, to avoid isolation and to update on any changes or progress regarding the work situation.

This will also allow you to plan any additional support that may be required either now, or when your organisation begins its recovery.

For people who are self-employed, networking opportunities are also available through [Business Gateway](#) and local [Chambers of Commerce](#).

Working Health Services

This programme in Scotland provides free and confidential return to work advice and health support for paid workers in small to medium companies. Persons who are in paid work can contact this service and receive specific health condition management advice – such as dealing with musculoskeletal pain, mental health issues, etc. - with the aim to help them stay at work or get back to work as soon as possible. [More details](#).

The service is available by contacting 0800 019 2211.

For an informal discussion contact: Malcolm Joss – 07771947060 Mon (PM), Wed (PM) & Fri.

Email: malcolm.joss@nhs.scot

Mental Health & Wellbeing

The Scottish Government has developed the Clear Your Head campaign to support population-wide Mental Health and Wellbeing. You may have already seen the campaign adverts on the TV, heard them through the radio or seen promotional posts on social media.

<https://clearyourhead.scot/> is the campaign website – visit this to find out what you can do to feel better whilst staying at home including tips on Keeping to Routines, Moving More, Making Time for You and Keeping in Touch with Others.

Mental health can affect people's daily life inclusive of relationships & work capabilities and can contribute to Physical Health status too. You can greatly assist those struggling with their Mental Health by engaging in compassionate conversation and signposting to further support.

The [J:ALT](#) (Just Ask Listen Talk) can help you as an employer create a mentally healthy workplace. Further support is available at:

Online Support

- [NHS Inform](#) offers a range of self help and advice regarding mental wellbeing – this can be a valuable resource for you or your staff.
- [Samaritans](#) is an online learning programme which brings their listening and wellbeing expertise into the workplace.
- <http://www.moodcafe.co.uk/mental-health-info/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing.aspx>

Includes information on how you can reduce worrying thoughts and feelings around Coronavirus or support those around you who may be worried.

Telephone Support

- Samaritans: 116 123 or email: jo@samaritans.org
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Email response time approximately 24 hours.
- Breathing Space: 0800 83 85 87
Service is open: Monday to Thursday 6pm – 2am; Friday to Monday 6pm – 6am
- SAMS cafe: 07971 892 886 or 07725 214 012 Peer support available by telephone on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays 2pm-10pm. If telephones are busy, please keep trying. (Please note: telephone numbers do not receive incoming text messages or voicemail)

The [Keeping Connected Leaflet](#) provides a directory of services which offer help and support on a range of issues that are relevant during the pandemic. These include bereavement, grief and adverse changes in life circumstances such as the deterioration of health (physical/mental health), relationship issues/breakdown, loss of income/financial security, lowered self-esteem & confidence/in work poverty.

[Please note when downloading this leaflet, it requires to be printed at A3 size]

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policies & Procedures

Policies and Procedures

The following websites offer information on mental health and well-being indicators:

- <http://www.healthscotland.scot/health-topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing/wemwbs>
- <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs>
- <https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/workplace-guidance/mental-health/Pages/mental-health.aspx>

Stress at Work/Stress Risk Assessment

As employers have a responsibility to protect staff from stress at work, a stress risk assessment - examining workplace duties – is advisable. The links below can assist you to develop or review your workplace stress risk assessments.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/risk-assessment.htm>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm>

A Stress Management package can be found at:

<https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/workplace-guidance/mental-health/Pages/stress-at-work.aspx>

Moving forward, the Workplace Team, Health Promotion, Fife Health & Social Care Partnership can help you to establish a Mental Health & Wellbeing policy, tailored to the needs of your workplace. Email us at: Fife.hwlfife@nhs.scot.

Healthy Living

Encouraging your staff to adopt and sustain healthier habits can be effective in establishing behaviour change, health improvement and improved staff morale. Healthier staff can in turn reduce absence from work. Think about establishing a “Lunchtime Walk” promoting both physical activity and communication, “Take the Stairs” to increase steps throughout the day and reduce sedentary behaviour or, review the canteen menu and encourage healthier food choices.

There are lots of resources available [online](#)

Additionally, contact the Information Resources Centre (IRC), part of Health Promotion, Fife Health and Social Care Partnership for free displays, resources, leaflets and posters tailored to your chosen health improvement focus:

<https://www.nhsfife.org/services/services-and-departments/health-promotion-service/information-and-resources-centre/>

Smoking, Alcohol, Substance Misuse

Smoking

Smoking is detrimental to health, and is a causative factor in many illnesses including, respiratory illness, heart disease and cancers. It is especially important to protect lung health during the current pandemic.

**To support staff to Stop Smoking, signpost them to free and confidential support:
Stop Smoking Services – Quit Your Way with Our Support 0800 025 3000**

You can also find guidance on developing a No Smoking Policy at:
<https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/workplace-guidance/health-improvement/Pages/smoking.aspx>

Alcohol & Drugs

Consider developing/reviewing your Alcohol & Drugs in the Workplace policy to support anyone whose habits may have become hazardous or harmful - as this may have an impact on both personal health and ability to perform safely and effectively at work including working with others, operating machinery, using hazardous substances, working at height and driving for work.

For help with policy development or alcohol & drugs advice and support:

Drug & Alcohol Project Limited 01333 422277 www.dapl.net/home	Fife Alcohol Support Service (FASS) Telephone 03451 555555 ext 446153 www.adp.org.uk
Drink Aware https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/ For information, tools and resources including a unit and calorie counter :	We Are With You www.wearewithyou.org.uk

Other Health and Safety Considerations

Home Working

There has been an increase in home working as a result of the pandemic. Employers have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers. Issues to be considered include working with DSE, Lone Working and Stress at Work. Further advice on home working is available from the [Scottish Government](#) and [HSE](#). Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) have developed their 'Staying Mentally Healthy when Working from Home' [guidance](#).

Consultation / Training

Consider additional training requirements/retraining of staff to ensure any work activities such as use and handling of equipment or machinery, hazardous substances or manual handling etc are performed safely.

This may even include re-inducting all staff in the workplace reminding them of mandatory safety arrangements and fire safety procedures. If carrying out a Return to Work Interview, then consider factoring in an Appraisal Process at the same time to agree training needs with workers.

Consider if your work is being carried out differently. Have you introduced new equipment? Have your workplace safety risks changed? Is further training required or are training certificates lapsed due to the lockdown period? You should review the following:

- Do your risk assessments need to be updated?
- Have you involved your employees regarding risk assessment, the content and any findings?
- Are trade or professional certificates still valid?
- Are your [First Aid requirements](#) still adequate?

Training Opportunities

The Fife Health Promotion Training Team provides and coordinates training to enable people working in Fife to contribute towards reducing health inequalities and improving the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Phase 1 of the training programme is about to start. We hope that practitioners from across all sectors find that many of the courses increase their knowledge, skills and confidence as they navigate their way through these challenging and uncertain times.

For Access to the Training Team website and their training team programme, click [here](#).

If your business has downsized because of Coronavirus, you may be looking to upskill some of your existing workforce. There are lots of free online training courses available through the Health Scotland Virtual Learning Environment: <https://elearning.healthscotland.com/>

Skills Development Scotland – [Skills for Growth](#) may also be able to assist with this.

Safety Equipment and Installations

As a consequence of the lockdown period, some business may find themselves with statutory inspection, testing & maintenance programmes falling behind prescribed legal timescales. The overarching legal obligation remains – to ensure that equipment is safe to use. HSE have provided guidance on this subject at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/work-equipment-coronavirus.htm>

Legionella

You should still be considering [legionella](#) management of your water systems prior to your workplace starting back up. It may be the case that whilst your business has been closed that there has been a build-up of legionella in your water systems therefore you should be taking steps to mitigate any risks to your staff or others, see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>

Healthy Working Lives Award Programme

This national programme assists and supports you in addressing staff health and wellbeing within workplace settings inclusive of Employee Wellbeing Surveys and Bronze/Silver/Gold award levels.

Click for more information on the [Healthy Working Lives Award](#) - you may find this information helpful when looking at prioritising the needs of your workers in future.

Please Note: The Healthy Working Lives (HWL) award programme is currently on hold by Public Health Scotland until 31st March 2021. We are still available to assist locally with any queries you may have in relation to the Award criteria.

Other Services

NHS Fife/Fife Health & Social Care Partnership <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/>

A website dedicated to providing Corona virus advice & updates to healthcare services in Fife. Lots of links to other resources on this site too.

NHS Inform <https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

Health and wellbeing advice can be accessed here inclusive of mental wellbeing, self care and preventative messages alongside other Corona virus support.

Healthy Working Lives <https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot>

Helpful information for businesses awaits including a section on Corona virus and resources to support managing health and safety, managing health risks, risk assessments and mental health. Additionally, there is a free and confidential helpline too: 0800 019 2211

Fife Council www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus

Fife Councils dedicated site area offering advice to businesses and employers as well as information on schools/childcare, benefits and money advice.

Fife Voluntary Action www.fva.org/pandemic.asp

Provides information and resources for voluntary organisations concerned about the Corona virus pandemic.

Business Gateway www.businessgatewayfife.com

Access advice and support including webinar sessions and funding entitlement details as well as links to other useful online resources too. Business Gateway also has an advice line: 01592 858333

Scottish Government Business Advice www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot

An online resource for Scottish businesses giving information and guidance on finances, business continuity, business rates and tax payments.

The Workplace Team, Health Promotion Service, Fife Health & Social Care Partnership

Fife.hwlfife@nhs.scot

Twitter: [@hwlfife](https://twitter.com/hwlfife)

LinkedIn: [Workplace Team, Fife Health & Social Care Partnership](#)

