Freight/Transport Sector
COVID-19 Workplace Risk Assessment

The movement of goods is critical in keeping the country going and is currently classified by the UK Government as an essential activity.

With the country experiencing a shortage of HGV drivers prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, it is now essential that measures are taken to help protect all those delivering food and goods in the UK.

To ensure companies can keep their employees safe, they should be following the Government guidelines which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-freight-transport/
covid-19-advice-for-the-freight-transport-industry

In addition to implementing these practical measures, employers should also remember to document what controls they are implementing, in the form of a risk assessment.

Whilst your Employer’s Liability cover is there to protect you in the event of a claim, risk assessments can help defend you and prove you did not breach your duty of care.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974 (HSWA), employers have a legal duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees and anybody else who might be affected by their activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 additionally state that employers must conduct a risk assessment of their activities and premises to identify these potential causes of harm and take steps to reduce the likelihood of this harm occurring.

If you employ five or more members of staff, it is a legal requirement to keep a written record of the main findings of your risk assessment. Even if you have fewer than five members of staff, it’s good practice to document your risk assessments, as this will help you to demonstrate the steps you have taken to create a safe and compliant working environment.

For more information on the carrying out of risk assessments you can visit the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment for controlling the risk of the disease spreading in your premises should look at the following areas:

- Site Control
- Site Cleaning
- Vehicle Cleaning
- Signage and Education
- Employee Behaviour – Site employees and drivers
- Procedures

Below we look at some of the measures within each of these categories that could be implemented:

SITE CONTROL

- Can you limit the number of entry and exit points to the building, without putting staff into closer proximity to each other and without blocking fire exits?
- Can you prevent visitors and contractors accessing the premises? If contractors are required on site, how are they to be controlled and what measures have they put in place?
- How do you control third party drivers required to come onto site? How do you communicate with them?
- What physical measures can be introduced to separate drivers and site personnel?
- Provide hand sanitisation points at all entrance and exit points.
- What measures can be taken to reduce the frequency of contact with door mechanisms? Can they be held open with acoustic or magnetic systems (e.g. DorGuard)?
- Can desks in the transport offices be repositioned further apart? Can employees use other parts of the building to further increase segregation?
VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT CLEANING
- Can drivers be allocated a specific vehicle? If not, are vehicles cleaned prior to and after being used by a driver? Does the driver have wipes to clean the steering wheel and other vehicle controls?
- Are keys being cleaned or wiped before changing hands?
- Are individual PDAs issued to drivers? Are they regularly cleaned?
- Are drivers provided with sprays and wipes?
- If drivers are required to use equipment such as pressure washers, torque wrenches, fuel pumps, oil dispensers etc, are these cleaned before use? Are disposable gloves available in these areas?

SITE CLEANING
- Are clocking in/out and fingerprint recognition systems cleaned thoroughly? Are they wiped down between use?
- Ensure drivers have access to welfare facilities which are regularly cleaned.
- Can the frequency of site cleaning be increased?
- Ensure all hand contact points are cleaned throughout the day including door furniture, handrails, IT equipment, desks, phones, taps, and dispensers etc.
- Are staff provided with hand sanitisers?
- Are suitable disposable bins available for tissues/hand wipes/cleaning wipes?
- Remove items from the premises which are difficult to clean with ease (e.g. rugs, mats, curtains and blinds).
- Plates and cutlery etc in the break rooms are to be cleaned immediately.

SIGNAGE AND EDUCATION
- Posters and instructions to be displayed at entry and exit points and regularly refreshed.
- Has signage been displayed in vehicles?
- Undertake daily discussions with staff to remind them of the procedures to be followed.

EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOUR
- Avoid paperwork and, if using PDAs, try and prevent the need for customers to have to touch or sign them. Can photographs be taken?
- Ensure drivers do not congregate when clocking in or out. Can their start times be staggered?
- What arrangements are in place for downloading tachograph records?
- Ensure staff are maintaining 2 metre distances from each other. Where this isn’t possible, the task should be stopped, or an alternative method established.
- Where a driver’s mate is required, ensure as much segregation as possible.
- What advice has been provided to drivers delivering to customers’ houses or businesses regarding touching doors and doorbells, greeting customers, keeping distances from them and so on?
- Where drivers are required to enter a customer’s property to deliver goods, what advice has been given to them? Do the transport office contact customers to ensure they are not self-isolating and to provide advice regarding social distancing? Could drivers be provided with information leaflets to provide to customers?
- Limit the numbers of employees permitted in break rooms.
- Have staff been provided with suitable Personal Protective Equipment including disposable nitrile gloves? Are staff aware of how PPE should be used and disposed of?
- Can internal meetings be held in an outdoor space?
- Ensure staff are not shaking hands or standing/sitting close to each other when issuing personal greetings.

PROCEDURES
- Are emergency procedures in place in case an employee becomes ill or shows symptoms?
- Are there cleaning procedures for areas that may have been infected?
- Have staff been advised of self-isolation procedures?