

Returning to Work From The Office Risk Assessment Summary



Employers are required to carry out a risk assessment for the health and safety management of their staff and others affected by the work that they do during the COVID 19 pandemic. THCH has completed a comprehensive risk assessment and consulted with all colleagues through the staff consultative group as well as with the THCH Health and Safety Forum. This document summarises what THCH has done to protect colleagues returning to work in the office and our customers and contractors who need to visit the office in accordance with published government guidelines.

Controls that have been put in place include:

Physical changes to the office: The office has had several desks removed to allow social distancing when circulating around the office. Desks have been allocated to staff more than 2m apart to reduce the spread of C19. Screens have been placed around desks close to high traffic areas such as walkways to protect colleagues who are using them. Screens have also been installed in reception and interview rooms to protect colleagues and residents from the potential spread of C19. Furniture has been removed from the reception area to facilitate social distancing in public areas. A one-way entry/exit system has been implemented to aid social distancing. Meeting rooms have had a maximum user cap placed on them and toilets have been restricted to one user at a time.

Process changes: As well as physical changes, several changes have been made to the processes used by THCH. The first is that a number of colleagues are continuing to work from home and will not return to the office until October 2020 at the earliest. Another change is the opening of the office to the public with the reception remaining closed except by appointment and then only if it's not possible to deal with the matter over the phone or email. Contractors now no longer come in to reception to collect keys and instead attend the premises via the rear of the building where additional controls have been put in place to protect contractors and colleagues. Start, finish and lunch times are being staggered with a great deal of flexibility where the service permits. The fire safety plan for the office has been updated to take account of the fact that reception is closed, and colleagues are required to check their fire exit arrangements on their return to working from the office.

Guidance and Sanitising: Sanitising stations have been installed throughout the office to allow colleagues and visitors to sanitise their hands before entering and whilst in the office. Colleagues have been provided with sanitising wipes to clean desk equipment such as mice, keyboards and work stations. Displays have been put up throughout the office reminding colleagues and guests to follow certain practices, such as sanitising, washing their hands and guidance has also been provided on how to do this. Signs have also been placed on the floors of heavy traffic areas guiding colleagues and visitors on where they can walk and stand to maintain social distancing. Meeting rooms have had notices displayed advising what times they can be used and the maximum occupancy. Meeting rooms are being used at peak lunch hours to allow staff to use them as a rest area. Break out areas have had notices placed in them advising which seats can be used to maintain social distancing.

Comprehensive guidance has been published for all colleagues so that they know about the changed working practices arising from Covid-19. Colleagues confirm that they have read this guidance at the time that an individual risk assessment (that takes account of Covid-19 specific risk factors relating to individuals) is completed with them prior to their return to working from the office.