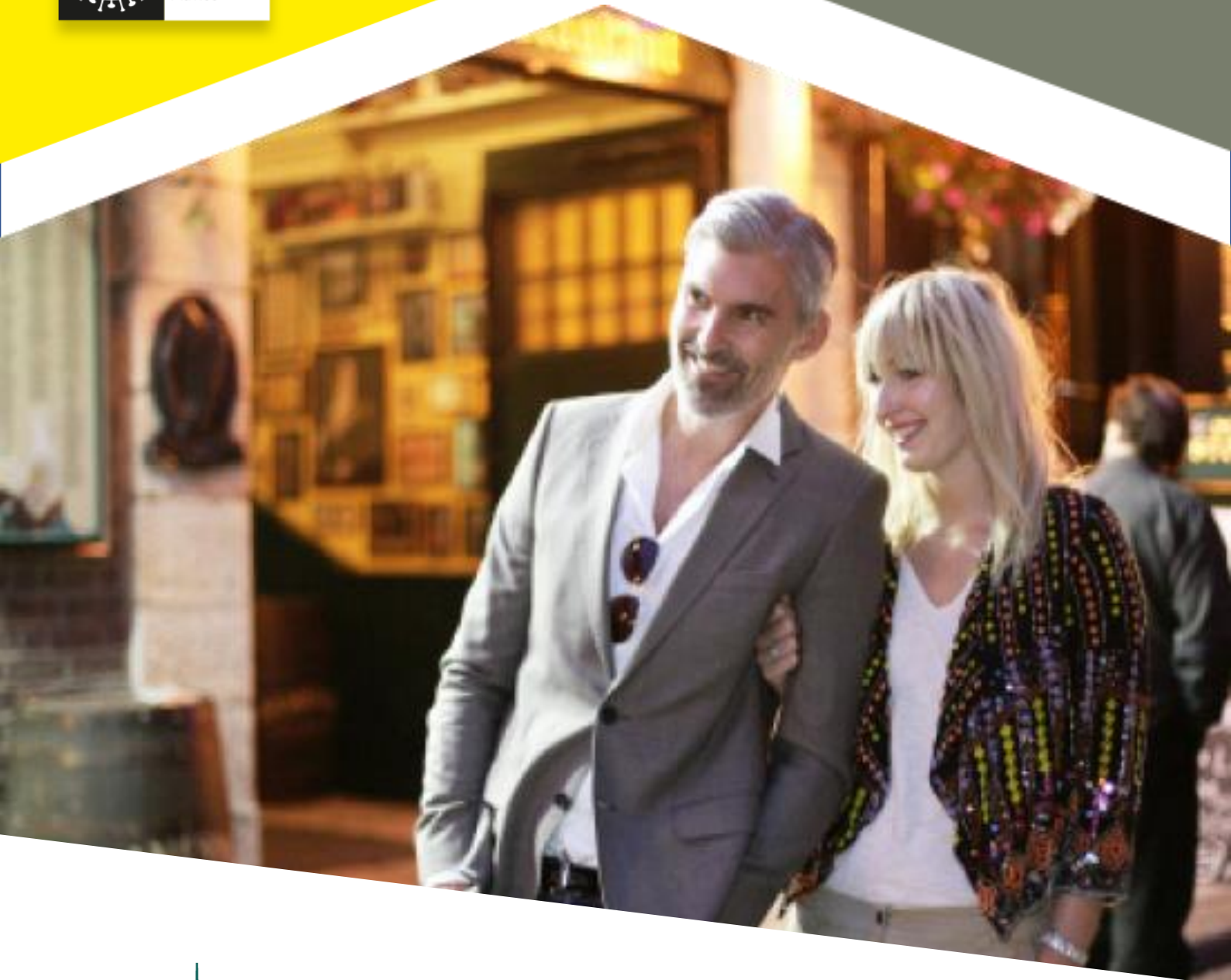


GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING

# Pubs



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
**Government of Ireland**

## Note:

This is a living document which means as Government Public Health guidelines evolve, this document will also evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. All sectoral guidelines have been developed in line with the Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business, the Work Safely Protocol and the updated Reframing the Challenge, Continuing our Recovery & Reconnecting, and based on the latest health guidance available from the Department of Health and the HSE. The links to latest guidelines will be included throughout the document.

The Tourism and Hospitality sectoral guidelines, aligned with the Work Safely Protocol, have been developed collaboratively to assist businesses to apply guidance to their operations. The guidelines are informed by the latest Government public health advice and related regulations.

## Disclaimer

The information contained within these operational re-opening guidelines can change from time to time. It must not by itself be relied upon in determining obligations or other decisions. Users of this document must independently verify any information on which they wish to rely. It is expected that all business owners and management will have familiarised themselves with the [Work Safely Protocol](#) prior to re-opening and implemented all relevant requirements.

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## Fáilte Ireland Overview Guidelines to Re-opening

It is recommended that businesses also view the [Fáilte Ireland Overview Guidelines to Re-opening](#) in addition to this sector specific guideline document, as further information relating to COVID-19 control measures, Health & Safety measures, hygiene measures, etc. are outlined.

**Revision History:**

Version	Date Changes	Changes from previous version
Guidelines for Re-Opening Pubs Effective 21 September 2020 is now combined with this document to encompass Pubs that Serve Food and Wet Pubs		
9.2	21/10/2021	Updates in line with Government Health advice.
9.1	20/09/2021	Update of Table on page 4 to reflect guidance from 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2021.
9.0	10/09/2021	Update of guidelines in line with Reframing the Challenge, Continuing our Recovery & Reconnecting
8.3	06/08/2021	Updated Government Guidance for Outdoor Events (Section 11)
8.2	29/07/2021	Update to table on Page 4 and Indoor Hospitality Food Counter Service
8.1	25/07/2021	Information update on contact tracing
8.0	23/07/2021	Updated to reflect the Health (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 2021
7.2	01/07/2021	Minor updates to the COVID-19 Resilience & Recovery 2021 (Table on page 4) relating to the recent announcements from Government.
7.1	02/06/2021	Further minor updates to the COVID-19 Resilience & Recovery 2021 (Table on page 4) & links to Work Safely Protocol.
7.0	26/05/2021	Update of information in line with Work Safely Protocol, Ventilation and other general guidance.
6.0	11/05/2021	Update of information in line with Government Public Health advice
5.4	01/03/2021	Update to the COVID-19 Resilience & Recovery 2021 – The Path Ahead.
5.3	25/01/2021	Update of information in line with Government Health advice and Ventilation (Appendix 2).
5.2	08/01/2021	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 5 and Guidance on International Travel
5.1	04/01/2021	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 5.
5.0	22/12/2020	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19.
4.3	17/12/2020	Update in line with S.I 571 of 2020 (Face Coverings In Certain Premises And Businesses) and updates to Government Public Health and Safety advice.
4.2	02/12/2020	Updates to Summary of Level 3 – Page 6
4.1	02/12/2020	Updated links
4.0	01/12/2020	Updates in line with Work Safely Protocol. Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 3 and update in line with S.I. 560 of 2020
Guidelines for Re-Opening Pubs Effective 21 September 2020 published in addition to first issue as Wet Pubs in Dublin remained closed.		
3.2	16/11/2020	Update of information relating to International Travel.
3.1	09/11/2020	Update of information relating to Face Covering (HPSC).
3.0	22/10/2020	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 for Level 5.
2.0	06/10/2020	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19
1.3	25/09/2020	Update of Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19 – clarification on restrictions for county Donegal
1.2	18/09/2020	Updated in line with Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021: Plan for Living with COVID-19.
1.1	14/09/2020	Document Published. These guidelines do not come into effect until 21st September 2020.
Guidelines for Re-Opening Pubs that Serve Food published as Wet Pubs remained closed		
1.5	02/09/2020	Addition of Regulation S.I. No. 326 of 2020
1.4	27/08/2020	Updated in line with Government Public Health advice.
1.3	06/07/2020	Updates to Appendix 1 of COVID-19: Guidance for Food Service Businesses (HPSC) V1.1.
1.2	23/06/2020	Clarification on inclusion of service personnel in NPHET guidance.
1.1	17/06/2020	Document Published

# Reframing the Challenge

## Continuing our Recovery and Reconnecting



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GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING PUBS

### New Public Health Measures

Subject to the public health situation at the time & continued protective factors.

#### Current Measures

#### Weddings

From the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, there will be no capacity restrictions for weddings.

#### Paid Tourist Accommodation

Accommodation services including hotels, B&Bs, self-catering, caravan & camping and hostels are open.

#### Gyms, Pools & Leisure Facilities

Pods of 6 for mixed immunity groups. There is no capacity limit for vaccinated groups.

#### Transport

Public transport returns to **100% capacity**.

[Face coverings must be worn](#)

#### Coach Tours

Coach Tours are permitted with **75% capacity** with protective measures

[Face coverings must be worn](#)

Multiple table bookings can be accommodated in food and beverage businesses when catering for tour groups subject to the application of other existing Infection Prevention Control measures in place for safe operation of service.

#### Domestic Travel

No Restrictions

#### Cafés, Restaurants & Pubs (including Hotel Restaurants and Bars)

Indoor hospitality can open subject to the [Guidance on Indoor Hospitality](#). Government regulations in relation to evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery should be implemented. Organised indoor events and mass gatherings\* are permitted where all patrons are immune (fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months), or accompanied minors (under 18). It is important that businesses should check photo ID when checking Proof of Immunity. There are some limited circumstances when this may not be necessary e.g. where a person is well-known to the business. Unaccompanied minors are required to present Proof of Immunity.

Outdoor Hospitality can continue to operate for customers who are unable to provide evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery.

A maximum of **15 people including no more than 10 adults** may be seated at a table.

#### Nightclubs

From the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, venues operating for the purposes of live entertainment or nightclubs are permitted to open with protective measures in place. Information available here -

[www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments-of-tourism-culture-arts-gaeltacht-sport-and-media](http://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments-of-tourism-culture-arts-gaeltacht-sport-and-media)

#### Outdoor Parks & Play Areas

**Open** with protective measures.

#### Meetings

Business events/conferences can take place once all participants show Proof of Immunity. Government regulations in relation to evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery should be implemented. Organised indoor events and mass gatherings\* are permitted where all patrons are immune (fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months), or accompanied minors (under 18). It is important that businesses should check photo ID when checking Proof of Immunity. There are some limited circumstances when this may not be necessary e.g. where a person is well-known to the business. Unaccompanied minors are required to present Proof of Immunity.

Small non-social meetings, training and educational programmes may take place when it is considered essential, for the operation of the business, that they must take place face-to-face and as a matter of urgency.

# Reframing the Challenge

## Continuing our Recovery and Reconnecting



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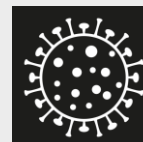
GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING PUBS

	<b>New Public Health Measures</b> Subject to the public health situation at the time & continued protective factors.
	<b>Current Measures</b>
<b>Attractions</b>	<p>Open with protective measures (for example, a maximum capacity to allow physical distancing, one-way traffic within the venue). Maximum numbers linked to the capacity, taking account of Public Health Advice.</p> <p>Outdoor amusements/theme parks/funfairs are permitted.</p> <p>Organisers of indoor and outdoor group tours should ensure that appropriate protective measures are in place, and where indoor groups have a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people, pods of 6 should apply.</p>
<b>Activities</b>	<p>Organisers of indoor and outdoor group activities should ensure that appropriate protective measures are in place, and where indoor groups have a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated people indoors, pods of 6 should apply.</p>
<b>Organised Indoor Events / Mass Gatherings</b>	<p>Organised indoor events and mass gatherings* are permitted where all patrons are immune (fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months), or accompanied minors (under 18). It is important that businesses should check photo ID when checking Proof of Immunity. There are some limited circumstances when this may not be necessary e.g. where a person is well-known to the business. Unaccompanied minors are required to present Proof of Immunity.</p> <p>Where patrons have mixed immunity status, organised indoor events / mass gatherings are not permitted.</p> <p>Multiple table bookings are allowed subject to the application of other existing infection prevention control measures for the safe operation of food and beverage services.</p>
<b>Organised Outdoor Events / Gatherings</b>	<p><b>Organised outdoor events</b> &amp; mass gatherings are permitted with appropriate protective measures.</p>

\*Indoor events and mass gatherings includes conferences, trade fairs and exhibitions and large scale business events involving external audiences, family gatherings etc.



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NOTE: These guidelines have been developed for all types of bars, public houses and gastropubs of all sizes. For example, terms such as 'Back of House' generally apply to employee facilities. Not all references will relate to individual properties. These guidelines should be applied as appropriate to your business.

These guidelines are designed to support the operations of food and beverage service within tourism businesses which include, but are not limited to restaurants, cafés, pubs, paid accommodation and attractions.



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
**Government of Ireland**

# 1. Introduction: Meeting & Overcoming the COVID-19 Challenge

## COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge for the tourism sector.

Pubs, bars and gastropubs will need to review how they work and introduce new practices and procedures to ensure everyone stays safe. As a result, Fáilte Ireland has developed operational guidelines in line with the Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI).

As part of this, Fáilte Ireland has created this set of specific guidelines to help you re-open your bar or pub. You can be reassured that these recommendations are underpinned by advice made available from the HSA, HSE, HPSC, FSAI, World Health Organisation (WHO) and other relevant bodies.

Businesses should follow the [Work Safely Protocol](#) which has been developed under the aegis of the *Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005*. Businesses are now required to review their existing advice, guidance and protocols to ensure they are in line with these updates. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the compliance body and has full powers as set out in this legislation designated in relation to the implementation of the Work Safely Protocol. Non-compliance can result in the closure of a business.

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a group/sole customer and the name and telephone number of the lead person in a group/sole customer for COVID-19 contact tracing. Details must be securely retained for 28 days and be compliant with GDPR.

### Personal Responsibility

All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.

The guidelines were developed based on the following considerations:

- **Restructuring operations**  
Tourism businesses of all types need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to ensure physical distancing and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Further information on reviewing employee practices can be found in the [Work Safely Protocol](#) e.g. consider any new additional measures for employees who are deemed high risk.
- **Putting dedicated resources in place**  
Tourism businesses should ensure that they have dedicated personnel to implement and operate a robust system that prevents the spread of COVID-19. Equally importantly, they need to put processes in place that can deal with individual and multiple cases of the disease that may occur.
- **Adapting and enhancing hygiene practices**  
Tourism businesses must adapt and implement enhanced procedures in general cleaning, storage and cleaning of equipment. In particular, they should introduce and implement touchless solutions where possible. References to HACCP in this guidance are for the purposes of food safety and not the prevention of COVID-19.
- **Ventilation**  
The proven importance of ensuring adequate fresh outside air circulation should be factored into operational practices. Consider a ventilation assessment of the business and the use of CO<sub>2</sub> monitors as per the [Work Safely Protocol](#) and the [WSP Employer Checklist No. 8 - Ventilation](#). Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.D of the [Work Safely Protocol](#) as well as [Appendix 1](#).  
  
The spread of the virus is most likely when infected people are in close contact so the risk of getting COVID-19 is higher in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where infected people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. It is important to maximise ventilation in areas where people are in close contact. While large droplets containing the virus will settle onto the surrounding surfaces within seconds, smaller particles containing the virus can stay suspended for longer periods of time. Dilution of indoor air by opening windows and doors or using mechanical ventilation (HVAC) systems can lower the airborne concentration and remove these smaller particles from the air.
- **Focusing on best practice in food and beverage service**  
Tourism businesses must follow HACCP, best practice in service, and physical distancing requirements to promote the health of employees and customers.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge

■ **Food and beverage service businesses as ‘controlled’ environments**

Public and private venues or workplaces are considered controlled environments. This includes food and beverage businesses such as restaurants, cafés and pubs and bars.

Uncontrolled environments are settings where people have open access to the premises and generally don’t know each other and are unlikely to be in close contact with each other for an extended period of time. Examples include supermarkets, retail stores, shopping malls and takeaway-only food outlets.

■ **Food Preparation Area**

Current legislation states a “food preparation area” means an indoor part of such premises which is structurally adapted and used for the purpose of preparing food for consumption by members of the public on or off the premises concerned and, for the avoidance of doubt, does not include a tent, caravan, vehicle, storage container or other temporary structure.

If your business serves food, you are required to have a designated food preparation area as outlined above.

■ **Food safety and COVID-19 safety**

There are no reports of transmission of COVID-19 via food. The main mode of transmission is from person to person. Food business operators must continue to apply their food safety management systems, based on the principles of HACCP.

The requirement in legislation is to have a Food Safety Management System in place based on the principles of HACCP. ISO 340:2007 is one of the available approaches to achieve this. A Health and Safety statement was already required, and is still a requirement. The COVID-19 Response plan is also a requirement of the Work Safely

Protocol.

In addition, food and beverage business operators will be required to introduce COVID-19 safety management systems in the form of enhanced hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, staff training and health checks, as well as physical distancing. This is to protect against the transmission of the virus to or between staff, customers and other people who enter their premises. Any COVID-19 precautions must not compromise food safety.

For advice and information on food safety during COVID-19 and for food businesses re-opening, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) website is a useful resource which is regularly updated [HERE](#).

■ **Guidance on International Travel**

A range of new measures and requirements, including mandatory quarantine for travel from certain countries, for those travelling to Ireland is available [HERE](#). It is important for employers to keep up to-date on travel restrictions and requirements into the country as these may be subject to change on a regular basis.

Current Government advice is available [HERE](#).



## 2. Business Response/Action Plan

**Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what is required to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give your employees and customers confidence that they are safe.**

In developing an Action Plan, the first step that the management team of a bar or pub should take is to familiarise themselves with the latest guidelines from the following sources:

- Health Services Executive (HSE)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC)
- Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
- Irish Government Departments
- World Health Organisation (WHO).

Information from these sources should help to shape your plan of action. You should also:

- **Complete a risk assessment** to identify what operational changes you need to make in your business, this should include an occupational health and safety risk as well as considering a ventilation assessment. Further information can be found [HERE](#) for risk assessments and [Appendix 1](#) for Ventilation.
- **Review of all standard operating procedures (SOPs)** to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and customers of what you are changing, what you need them to do and how you expect everyone to act and behave.
- **Visit the HSA website for templates**, checklists and advice on the returning to work Protocols. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

A number of activities will require review e.g. workflows, operations, etc. For advice on re-opening, visit the FSAI website. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

The plan should reassure employees and customers that safeguarding their health and safety is of the utmost importance. It should also ensure that your operations continue to run in an appropriate manner.

You should review the plan regularly and amend it as new regulations, guidelines and procedures come into place. Experience and feedback will inform how appropriate and effective the action plan is.

Strict management controls should be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.

Your Action Plan needs strong commitment from both management and employees. Consultation with employees, effective supervision, clear direction and information for your customers are key to ensuring compliance with Government Public Health advice and the success of your Action Plan.

For further information on the development of your Action Plan see [HERE](#).

### Monitoring & Supporting

A COVID-19 Response Team/Lead Worker Representative (LWR) must be appointed to ensure new procedures are adhered to. Adherence to this protocol will only be achieved if employers and workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol in their place of work. A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to achieve success and maximum buy in.

Each workplace should appoint at least one lead worker representative charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their workplace. The person(s) undertaking the role must receive the necessary training and have a structured framework to follow within the organisation to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus. Further information and a short online course on the role of [Lead Worker Representative](#) can be found on the HSA website.

Employers should have regular and meaningful engagement with their worker representative, workers and/or their recognised Trade Union or other representative (including health and safety committee where it exists) about the measures being put in place to address the occupational exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should provide COVID-19 induction training for all workers on their return.

The number of worker representatives for COVID-19 appointed should, ideally, be proportionate to the number of workers in the workplace and this person(s) should be clearly identifiable in the workplace. Employers and worker representatives will work together to ensure that all the actions in this protocol are fully adhered to in order to ensure the suppression of COVID-19 in the workplace.

**Section 3** of the [Work Safely Protocol](#) sets out the steps for employers and workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

These provisions include:

- Consulting with the workplace representatives in the development of a COVID-19 response plan.
- Developing/Amending policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Developing, consulting, communicating and implementing workplace changes or policies. Specific reference is made to agreeing with workers any temporary restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the COVID-19 prevention measures in the workplace. There is also provision for the lead worker representative to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.
- The HSA has introduced interim guidance to assist employers and workers to manage a return to work following COVID-19 testing or infection. The Fitness for Work interim guidance and related checklists are available [here](#).

## Policies & Processes

Management should review all business policies and standard operating procedures across each department to reflect operational changes. In particular, this means:

- Defining and documenting a clear plan of action in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 among customers and/or employees.
- Develop a policy and process in line with the Work safely Protocol to prepare your business for management of a case or cases (outbreak) of COVID-19 in the workplace. [Ref. section 9 of the Work Safely Protocol](#).

An outbreak of COVID-19 is when two or more cases of the disease are linked by time, place or person. The management of an outbreak is managed by the local Departments of Public Health to enable the outbreak to be brought under control as quickly as possible. It also requires close engagement and cooperation between the employer, the LWR, the staff, representatives and in particular with the worker(s) affected. Outbreaks in a single workplace, which are not managed and brought under control quickly, can rapidly spread to other workplaces and/or the wider community. Continuous and effective communication between all parties is essential. Refer to HPSC guidance on management of outbreaks [HERE](#).

- Defining and documenting the correct and appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required. This should be in line with the Government's Public Health advice.
- Developing and updating current policy for the care of employee uniforms to ensure they are appropriately maintained.

- Reviewing and updating cancellation and refund policies in line with business requirements, e.g. events.
- Developing and updating policy relating to the standards of behaviour expected from employees and customers to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Strict management controls should be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.
- If adopting the use of Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Tests (RADT) in the workplace, amend the COVID-19 Business Response / Action plan to take account of the agreed testing policy and approach taken and communicate to all employees. For more information see [section D13 of the Work Safely Protocol](#)

## Communication

You should share the plan with all employees, as well as changes to other policies, e.g. sick leave policies, prior to them returning to work. If it's updated at any time, you should make sure everyone knows what has changed.

Giving guidelines to employees on how they should communicate the Action Plan to customers will ensure everyone gives the same message and there is no inconsistency.

Make sure an up-to-date list of the contact information of all employees, including emergency telephone numbers, is always readily available across all departments in the business.

Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest Public Health advice from Government. Signs should be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and, where appropriate, be offered in [multiple languages](#).

Downloading and using the [HSE COVID-19 tracker app](#) is also an important measure that can be adopted. Employers should provide advice on the tracker and encourage workers to download. Workers should download as it can be used for contact tracing purposes in and out of the workplace.



## Training

Management should inform all employees of the measures being adopted to manage the threat of COVID-19. Use the most appropriate training channels to do this and ensure all employees remain at home and seek medical attention if they have key symptoms such as a high temperature, coughing or shortness of breath.

There is an obligation on employers to ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they have symptoms. This is essential to ensure that the virus does not spread.

You should organise information briefings that cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. In particular, make sure you cover:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures
- Correct use of PPE
- Cleaning and disinfecting regimes (incorporating front and back office areas if relevant)
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell
- Unwell customer/dealing with suspected cases/liasing with authorities.
- If training is needed for specific procedures or if your property has specific requirements, it should be included in the training programme.

First Aid Responders may require further training in light of COVID-19.

For a more comprehensive list of symptoms of COVID-19, please click [HERE](#). If you do not have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](#).

## Cleaning & Frequency

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of customers at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Ensure contact/touch surfaces such as table tops, work equipment, door handles and handrails are visibly clean at all times and are cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.

Implement modified cleaning intervals for rooms and work areas. This applies especially for toilet facilities and communal spaces. Cleaning of work areas should be conducted at regular intervals.

Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC [HERE](#) and from the Government website [HERE](#).

## Ventilation /Air Conditioning

Where possible, windows and doors should be opened to allow for a flow of air throughout the property. When rooms are being cleaned, windows and/or doors where appropriate, should be opened. Care needs to be taken at all times to ensure security and safety measures.

The spread of the virus is most likely when infected people are in close contact so the risk of getting COVID-19 is higher in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where infected people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. It is important to maximise ventilation in areas where people are in close contact. While large droplets containing the virus will settle onto the surrounding surfaces within seconds, smaller particles containing the virus can stay suspended for longer periods of time. Dilution of indoor air by opening windows and doors or using mechanical ventilation (HVAC) systems can lower the airborne concentration and remove these smaller particles from the air.

Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.d of the [Work Safely Protocol](#), in the [WSP Employer Checklist No. 8 – Ventilation](#), as well as [Appendix 1](#).

## Staffing Resources

Property owners/management should review rotas in line with The Work Safely Protocol, subsection 3 which provides that full consultation on these matters is required to ensure sufficient employees are available to maintain physical distancing while completing the tasks to the required standards. Employee scheduling should ensure more time is allocated for cleaning and encourage employees to work alone if possible. Further information can be found [HERE](#)

To achieve this, you should:

- Implement phased shifts.
- Schedule small teams.
- Keep the same team combinations where possible to limit employee interaction. This will assist should contact tracing be required.

You will also need to plan for the impact of employee absences; this may involve reallocating employees from non-essential tasks. Where appropriate, cross-training employees will help maintain staffing levels on your premises. Employees who have not had close contact with a confirmed case should continue taking the usual precautions and attend work as usual.

Further information on [close contacts](#), [casual contacts](#) and testing is available from the HSE website.

Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. You should apply the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

### 3. Employee & Customer Health

**All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

The health and safety of employees and customers is the number one priority for management. Strict management controls should be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times. The following steps will help ensure everyone remains fit and well:

#### Face Coverings/Masks

Wearing a face covering/mask helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is strongly recommended to wear a face covering/mask in situations where physical distancing is difficult. Face masks are always **in addition** to, and never a substitute for, other Public Health measures including physical distancing, [hand hygiene](#) and practising appropriate respiratory etiquette.

Under [current legislation](#), management and employees in customer facing roles, who engage in or carry out work relating to the preparation of, or service of, food or beverages for consumption on the premises must wear a face covering. Management must ensure that employees comply with this regulation.

There are cases where people may be unable to wear a face covering and this is deemed as a reasonable excuse. For details on what constitutes a reasonable excuse see [HERE](#). Businesses must ensure that they are familiar with the various reasons why an employee or customer may not be required to wear a face covering/mask, further details can be found [HERE](#).

The [Work Safely Protocol](#) states that face coverings/masks are recommended in public areas in buildings, including receptions/foyers and also when moving throughout buildings.

Government Public Health advice states that face covering/masks must be worn by customers when arriving to and leaving their table in the bar. Please see [HERE](#).

As part of your business risk assessment, you should determine the requirement for face coverings/masks in all individual business activities. The [Work Safely Protocol](#) states that in settings where employee separation cannot be ensured then face coverings/masks should be made available to employees in line with Public Health advice.

Ensure that customers are clearly informed of your own business policy and government regulations regarding face coverings/masks in advance of arrival. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Public Health advice issued regarding face coverings/masks.

A face covering should cover your nose and mouth, go under your chin, fit snugly against the side of the face with no visible gaps and be secured with ties or ear loops. For more information on the safe use, storage and disposal of face coverings/masks, please click [HERE](#).

Following the HPSC Evidence Summary on the “Efficacy of visors compared with masks in the prevention of transmission of COVID-19 in non-healthcare settings”, Tourism and Hospitality businesses should consider the following recommendations:

- In public settings, expert opinion and international guidance generally favours cloth face coverings over visors or shields.
- There is a rationale and laboratory evidence favouring cloth face coverings over visors where the wearer is at a higher level (standing) than those potentially exposed at a lower level (sitting). This is extremely important for food and beverage service businesses.
- Visors reduce exposure to a certain extent when compared to no face covering and may be considered an alternative in certain circumstances where an individual is unable to wear a face covering/mask. Click [HERE](#) for more information.
- If visors are used, they should cover the entire face (above the eyes to below the chin and wrap around from ear to ear) and be correctly applied.
- Further information on the handling and care of visors can be found [HERE](#)



\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.



## Physical Distancing

Physical distancing guidelines in line with the Government's Public Health advice should be incorporated into the Action Plan for each department within a business. Specific areas should also comply with mandatory capacity limits.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses should ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#), in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

In a controlled environment, such as pubs, bars and gastropubs, physical distancing of at least 1 metre\* is considered best practice.

Physical distancing is considered to be the distance between people seated at separate tables i.e. back of chair to back of chair.

Careful consideration needs to be given when using communal areas, while queuing, using elevators, stairs or moving around the premises. Ensure there are systems in place to prevent intermingling in communal areas (e.g. entrances, exits and toilet facilities).

Tables, seating and couches in public areas and other physical layouts should be rearranged to ensure physical distancing.

## Employee Physical Distancing

Where possible, on arrival and departure from work, employees should be able to enter and exit through separate doors.

Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. Where the working environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Minimise any direct employee contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids such as hand sanitisers, wipes etc. Ensure these are readily accessible so employees can perform [hand hygiene](#) as soon as a task is complete.

Make face masks/coverings available to employees in line with Public Health advice. You should note that wearing masks is not a substitute for the other measures outlined above.

## Measures to Control Noise Levels

Employees and customers should be aware of the increased risk of transmission from speaking loudly, shouting and singing etc. and should ensure that they take the necessary precautions to avoid any increased risk.

According to the WHO, transmission of COVID-19 can occur through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected people through infected secretions such as saliva and respiratory secretions or droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, etc.

High noise levels within a premises can impact conversation negatively and encourage customers to raise their voice to communicate thus encouraging possible transmission of the virus.

Straining to hear others due to high volumes can cause people to move closer to each other and not adhere to social distancing. To avoid this, businesses should put in place a plan and take appropriate measures to control noise levels, to ensure volumes do not rise to a level where people are required to take such measures to hear others.

Given the strong evidence from the WHO and other public health bodies, noise levels should be maintained at levels where it is not necessary to speak loudly or shout.

Signage relating to these COVID-19 preventative measures should be displayed in visible locations to inform customers.

Pub owners and management are responsible for keeping noise at an appropriate level to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## Providing Hand Sanitisers

Hand sanitisers (including touchless dispensers where possible) should be readily available and accessible to all, at each access point. Hand sanitisers for use against COVID-19 may be alcohol or non-alcohol based.

When choosing a hand sanitiser, it is important to ensure that it is effective against COVID-19. Further information on hand sanitisers is available in the Work Safely Protocol, found [HERE](#).

## Information Signage

You should display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout the premises. Where feasible, screens and monitors can communicate these messages effectively.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

## Employee & Customer Health Concerns

Employees should be trained on what to do if they or a customer becomes unwell. Employers and employees should follow the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

When dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 among employees, follow the Work Safely Protocol.

If management is alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 on their premises, a clinician from a local medical centre should be contacted. The clinician will advise on the next steps. Further information is available on the HSE website and also page 5 of the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

**Note:** Your reception desk needs to have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres plus public and private hospitals readily available in case a guest or employee falls ill. For a full list of Dept of Public Health contact details, please see [HERE](#).

Employers must ensure all employees submit their pre-return to work form before they return to work. For further details relating to what information should be obtained, please refer to Section 3.D4 of the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Advice is available to business owners/management and employees on how to support your wellbeing during the COVID-19 crisis. Wellbeing supports can be viewed on the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Support Hub [HERE](#)

## Isolation Area

Identify an area/room on the premises where any customer or employee showing possible COVID-19 symptoms can be isolated from other people. From there, the individual can travel home to seek medical attention elsewhere. It is essential to clean and disinfect this isolation area thoroughly after it has been used.

Further information on the public health measures for this stage of reopening are available at [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

# 4. Employee Responsibilities

**All employees and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

**The effective delivery of the Action Plan depends on how management and employees act. Paying attention to the following issues is especially important:**

## Hand Hygiene

Correct hand hygiene practices are vital to help minimise the spread of infections including COVID-19. Food and beverage businesses should ensure that adequate sanitary facilities are provided and that employees thoroughly and frequently wash their hands.

This involves hand washing with soap and water, for a minimum of 20 seconds, or the use of hand sanitiser (if hands are visibly clean), as required and frequently.

Hands should be washed as often as necessary and always:

- After coughing and sneezing or blowing nose,
- Before and after preparing food,
- Before and after eating,
- Before and after handling their face covering,
- If in contact with someone who is displaying COVID-19 symptoms,
- Before and after being on public transport,
- Before and after being in a crowd,

- When arriving and leaving the workplace/other sites,
- After drinking or smoking
- After handling waste,
- After cleaning duties including sweeping/mopping etc.
- After using the toilet,
- After handling money and
- When hands are dirty. If visibly dirty, wash hands with soap and water.

This list is not exhaustive where a more comprehensive list is available from the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

For additional COVID-19 hand hygiene measures, hands should be washed before putting on or after removing PPE.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the HSE.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.



## COVID-19 Training

All employees should receive training on COVID-19 safety and disinfection protocols. More comprehensive training should be given to teams in frequent customer contact including customer facing areas, Operations and Security.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE), can be effective in reducing the spread of viruses and disease, but only if used properly. If required by their roles, appropriate PPE must be worn by employees. Each section of the business should be assessed to decide what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE is essential.

In the context of COVID-19 risk, employers should check the [HPSC website](#) regularly for updates regarding use of recommended PPE.

As part of the business risk assessment, consideration needs to be given to the level of PPE required for various tasks e.g. power hosing which can cause an aerosol effect.

Handwashing is a greater protective barrier to infection than wearing disposable gloves. Correct hand hygiene is extremely important, whether using gloves or not. However the following should be applied when using disposable gloves:

- Gloves may be used by employees for food handling or garnish preparation, according to usual food safety guidance, but they should ensure that the gloves are changed frequently and that hands are washed before putting gloves on, between glove changes and when gloves are removed.
- Gloves should be changed after carrying out non-food related activities such as opening/closing doors by hand, emptying bins, handling money, etc.
- Employees should be aware that wearing gloves can allow bacteria to build up on the surface of the hands, so hand hygiene is extremely important when gloves are removed to avoid subsequent contamination of food.
- It is acceptable to prepare and handle food with bare hands provided proper hand washing procedures are in place. Hand sanitisers can be used as an additional measure but should not replace handwashing.

Further information on PPE is available [HERE](#)

In the context of COVID-19 risk, employers should check the [HPSC website](#) regularly for updates regarding use of recommended PPE.

## Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

As we move to a system based on personal responsibility rather than regulations, employers and employees should make every effort to ensure best practice in infection prevention control measures is adhered to. In doing so, the Work Safely Protocol should be adhered to.

Employers must ensure all employees submit their pre-return to work form before they return for work. Further details relating to what information should be obtained is available [HERE](#) for more information.

It is also essential to display signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene as well as physical distancing prominently at Back of House.

Employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms) need to be re-organised to suit physical distancing measures and be frequently cleaned and disinfected. Staggered start times and break times can also be very helpful, also review the use of clocking-in machines.

Employee meetings should be held online if possible. If physical meetings need to take place, physical distancing measures should be taken.

## First Aid Kit

A medical kit should always be available behind the bar in smaller premises. Multiple kits should be located at various locations around larger premises. Kits should include:

- Germicidal disinfectant/wipes for surface cleaning tissues.
- Face/eye masks. Note that disposable face masks can only be used once.
- Gloves (disposable).
- Protective apron (disposable).
- Biohazard disposable waste bag.



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## 5. Physical Distancing

**Physical distancing is very important to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This is achieved by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals.**

**The business owner or management needs to meet Public Health advice on maintaining current physical distancing guidance between people at all times. Strict management controls should be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.**

### Capacity Management

The capacity of your business must be reviewed prior to re-opening and at all times when your business is operational. Capacity should be determined on the basis of seated capacity rather than a mixture of standing and seated capacity.

Seating layout and table plans need to be reviewed to ensure the maximum available physical distancing and other protective measures can be strictly adhered to.

The employee and customer flow of the business should be carefully managed, particularly at entrances, exits and other areas where customers might potentially congregate but are not permitted to do so.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses should ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#), in relation to capacity management. Physical distancing measures required throughout your business are outlined below.

### Queuing

Any area where customers or employees queue should be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing. This includes tills, stairs, elevator lobbies, public areas, drop off areas, etc.

Use floor markings inside the premises to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice, particularly in the most crowded areas. Use vertical signage to direct customers to facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining distance.

### Meet & Greet

Employees should follow Government Public Health advice during the Meet, Greet and Seat process for customers. A friendly verbal greeting should replace a physical greeting. See Queuing section above to ensure peak-period queuing procedures are implemented if customers can't be seated immediately.

Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees and customers should be in place.

[Face masks](#) must be worn by staff where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing is not possible.

### Seating

In a controlled environment, it is recommended that physical distancing of at least 1 metre\* is considered best practice between tables.

Physical distancing is considered to be the distance between people seated at separate tables i.e. back of chair to back of chair.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses should ensure that they [implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#), in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Greeting and seating customers should be managed in a way that disperses them correctly throughout the premises.

A designated employee should be stationed at customer facing areas to control physical distancing measures.

It is the responsibility of supervisors and managers to ensure that customers do not congregate in groups. Customers should be seated at a table except when using the toilet, paying, and departing.

Businesses should ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#), in relation to formal or informal events within their premises.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

### Food Counter Service - Self-Service Carvery/Buffer

Robust physical distancing measures should be implemented where a business offers a Food Counter Service such as a Self-Service Carvery or Buffet. For detailed guidance on the requirements to offer this service please click [HERE](#)

### Smoking Areas

In these areas, the capacity should be in line with Government Public Health recommendations at any one time, while ensuring that the recommended physical distancing measures are adhered to.

### Back of House

Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government's Public Health advice should be observed in the shared office spaces, employee locker rooms, store rooms, delivery areas, stockrooms, IT areas, bar support areas such as cold/keg rooms, kitchens and other areas where employees gather and work.

Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Where the service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the service environment are to:

- Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that employees are not facing one another;
- Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons/uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers;
- Limit the number of employees in a food preparation or service area at any one time;
- Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is

difficult for individuals to remain apart, for example in kitchens, at cash registers, host stands and food or drink pickup areas for staff. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Physical distancing should be maintained at all times between employees except in situations where employees are part of the same household. e.g. family members working together.

### Timekeeping Facilities

If queuing takes place at the clocking-in machine, ensure that physical distancing guidance between employees is maintained. See [Queuing section](#) above to ensure appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place. If you use clocking-in machines, a strenuous cleaning and disinfection regime should be put in place.

To view Government Public Health measures currently in place, click [HERE](#).

## 6. Locations for Distribution of PPE

**All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

If required, PPE should be distributed at the following locations:

### Customer Facing Areas

All entrances and exit points to the premises and all public areas.

### Back of House

- Employee entrances.
- Specific department offices.
- Store rooms and cellars.
- Food preparation areas.
- Bar service areas.
- Location in proximity to the Isolation Room

**Note:** Hand sanitiser should be provided at all entrances and exits.

All employees should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds, or use hand sanitiser if hands are visibly clean. If hands are visibly dirty, they should be washed.



## 7. Employee Uniforms

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The policy on the care of uniforms should be updated to ensure every employee is clear on the standards of appearance and dress expected whilst at work.

### Physical Distancing Protocol

If a locker or changing room is provided, mark the floors to indicate available and unavailable spaces that should be used when changing into work attire or PPE. It may be necessary to roster access times to these rooms so physical distancing takes place.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

## 8. Cleaning Products & Protocols

**Cleaning products and protocols should be suitable and manufacturer approved for use against viruses, bacteria and similar risks.**

It is important to follow manufacturer instructions with regard to dilution, application and duration of use. Bar and pub managers should review cleaning procedures within all departments and update these if any cleaning and disinfection procedures are changed.

It is also important to work with suppliers, vendors and distribution partners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cleaning supplies.

Further information is available in the Overall Guidelines for Re-opening of All Sectors, found [HERE](#).

### Public Spaces & Communal Areas

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in all public spaces, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of customers at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Particular attention should be paid to frequently touched surfaces, which should be visibly clean at all times. These includes counters, door handles, public bathrooms, stair handrails, dining surfaces and seating areas.

### Back of House & Staff Areas

Back of House areas should also be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily but more frequently depending on the through-put of employees.

Particular attention should be paid to employee entrances, employee bathrooms, loading areas, offices, kitchens and employee relations service desks as they should be visibly clean at all times.

### Equipment Shared by Employees

Appropriately clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools before, during and after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.

This includes phones, computers and other communication devices, keys, payment terminals, kitchen implements, safety buttons, cleaning equipment, time clocks and all other direct contact items used.

Shared food & beverage equipment in Back of House areas (e.g. kettle, microwave, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.

### Control of Waterborne Hazards

It is critical that businesses review the HSA's guidance on 'Control of Legionella Bacteria During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic' and review their own systems in line with this.

This guidance highlights the requirement to continue managing Legionella control to avoid the potential for Legionnaires' disease.

The following is a non-exhaustive list relevant to the tourism sector of potential sources of aerosols, which may contain Legionella bacteria: wet cooling systems for example, cooling towers and evaporative condensers; spa pools; showers, taps and toilets; machine cooling systems; spray booth water curtains; humidifiers in food cabinets; ornamental fountains and water features; dust suppression systems; horticultural misting systems, lawn sprinklers; clinical humidifiers; sprinklers and hose reels; and power hoses.

Legionnaires' disease can be fatal and hospitalisation is generally required to treat symptoms. With the health service currently dealing with a Public Health emergency, it is vital that employers take appropriate action to maintain and operate their water systems, especially wet cooling systems, so far as reasonably practicable.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

For further advice please visit [HERE](#).



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## 9. Technical & Maintenance Services

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### Water Disinfection

Maintain the concentration of disinfectant in water for consumption within the limits recommended according to international norms and standards. Preferably this should be at the upper limits of the range.

### Dishwashing & Laundry Equipment

Dishwashing and laundry equipment should be checked to ensure it is operating properly. You should pay particular attention to operating temperatures, as well as using the correct dosage of cleaning and disinfecting chemicals.

### Dispensers

Soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers, and other similar devices should be regularly checked. Defective units should be rapidly repaired or replaced, and where possible touchless.

The Action Plan should include installing units to dispense hand sanitiser as required throughout the premises, paying particular attention to public areas, employee areas and locker rooms, etc. Please ensure that these are readily available and accessible to all, at each access point.

### Additional Recommendations

It is the responsibility of each individual business to provide sufficient facilities throughout the premises and ensure these facilities are appropriately maintained to minimise the risk of infection.





## 10. Food and / or Beverage Service

Indoor Hospitality can re-open with robust protective measures and adherence to Government regulations in relation to evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery.

**View Guidance for Indoor Hospitality [HERE](#)**

**All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

### Guidance for Food & Beverage Service

- Indoor Hospitality must operate in adherence to Government regulations in relation to evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery.
  - Outdoor Hospitality can continue to operate for customers who are unable to provide evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery.
  - A maximum of 15 people including no more than 10 adults may be seated at a table.
  - Physical distancing is considered to be the distance between people seated at separate tables i.e. back of chair to back of chair.
  - Customers can avail of both table service and service from a [food service counter](#) (e.g. carvery, self service or buffet).
  - [COVID-19 Contact Tracing](#) is required.
  - Infection Prevention Control measures such as ventilation, physical distancing, cleaning, face coverings, maintaining good hand and respiratory hygiene and staying at home if feeling unwell should be adhered to.
  - Face coverings should be worn by customers at all times other than when seated at their table.
  - Employees must wear face masks at all times.
  - The premises should be controlled and manned by personnel ensuring a managed flow.
  - Music performance and entertainment is now allowed, however, it should be on a seated basis only.
  - It is recommended that dancing or intermingling between tables should not take place.
  - Multiple tables can be booked outdoors and indoors.
  - Government Public Health advice is that table service is the safest style of service. Public Health advice is to minimise customer movement and overcrowding within bar counter areas. Some pre-COVID-19 service offerings and queueing systems may have the potential to cause a risk of transmission of COVID-19. In situations where a business does not have the facility or capacity to allow customers to queue safely or cannot adhere to any of the outlined requirements, table service should be used.
- Requirements for Counter Service:**  
Indoor hospitality counter service is defined as an area where a customer orders and collects food or beverage for consumption at a table within the premises. Businesses who operate counter service should ensure the [queueing guidance](#) is adhered to in order to minimise and prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Hygiene & Ventilation:**
- Display signage within the bar service area outlining queueing guidance
  - Hand sanitisers should be made available on entry to the premises for customer use and throughout the food counter service area.
  - Customers should wear a face covering / mask within the premises
  - Employees must wear a face mask
  - Poor ventilation in crowded indoor spaces is associated with increased risk of COVID-19 transmission. Ensuring adequate and appropriate ventilation may mitigate some of this risk. See [Appendix 1](#) for more information.
- ### Outdoor Hospitality
- Recommend segmented food and beverage areas to allow for smokers and non-smokers.
  - Customers should wear face coverings/masks when circulating around the outdoor dining and serving areas and using indoor facilities.

To view Government Public Health measures currently in place, click [HERE](#). Management should follow the Government's Public Health advice throughout customer facing and public areas. Strict management controls should be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times. To achieve this, the following steps should be taken:

### Definition of an Outdoor Space

1. An outdoor place or premises that is covered by a roof, so long as not more than 50% of the perimeter (outside) is covered by a wall, windows, gate or similar \*
2. When creating an outdoor area, it should not be wholly enclosed or substantially enclosed which in practice means it must not have sides (including windows, doors, gates or other fittings that can be opened or shut) that enclose more than 50% of the perimeter of that area. For example, a marquee or gazebo with a roof and four sides would not be an outdoor space and would be required to have at least 50% of its wall area open to the external air, calculating this 50% wall area figure also applies to trellis, windbreakers, netting or other types of partition. Consideration should also be given to the location, a tent with only a roof would in itself be considered an outdoor area, but if placed in for example a courtyard area with four surrounding walls within close proximity, the area may no longer be considered outdoors. When considering the use of tents, marquees, gazebos or other similar structures, operators should review and update risk assessments, safety statement and a weather safety plan drafted with final plans in compliance with all local bye laws or restrictions.

\* The Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004

If serving food, [a food preparation area is required on site / on the premises](#)

Where possible, customers should be able to enter and exit through separate doors. These should be propped open if fire regulations allow.

Hand sanitiser (touchless where possible) should be readily available and accessible at each access point. Signage should encourage all customers to use this when they enter and leave.

Prominent signage should explain current physical distancing practices. This should be accompanied by clear and visible markings that illustrate the safe distancing protocol throughout the premises. This includes elevators, the entrance to bar and lounge areas, at entrances to toilets, smoking areas, etc.

When a booking arrives and needs to queue, only one member should do so. The others should adhere to physical distancing until the group can be seated. Businesses should ensure that they [implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#), in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Train employees in the Government's Public Health advice to ensure compliant procedures for the Meet, Greet and Seat process. For example, a friendly verbal greeting should replace a physical greeting.

Businesses should ensure that they [implement the required measures subject to the current Public Health advice](#) in relation to formal or informal events within their premises.

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in customer facing areas, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of customers at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Pay particular attention to key areas and items including:

- Entry/exit doors
- Greeting podiums
- Service stations
- Counter tops and bar tops
- Handrails
- Smoking areas
- Exterior seating/benches
- Exterior of refuse bins
- Toilets, etc.

After **each use**, the following items should be cleaned and disinfected :

- Dining tables, chairs and seating
- Trays
- Bill/tip trays, pens and any other reusable items that customers come into contact with.

## Capacity Management

The capacity of your business must be reviewed prior to re-opening and at all times when your business is operational. Capacity should be determined on the basis of seated capacity rather than a mixture of standing and seated capacity.

For further guidance on Capacity Management click [HERE](#).

## Physical Distancing Protocol

Management is responsible for minimising the number of arrival and departure points for customers. Managers and supervisors should always monitor and manage physical distancing between people and groups rather than simply rely on signage.

Peak-period queuing procedures should be implemented if customers can't be seated immediately. If queuing isn't possible, a table reservation system should be considered. Consider an online reservation option for customers, as not only will this communicate new procedures and practices, but it will also limit the requirement for queuing.

Customers should order from their seat.

In a controlled environment, physical distancing of at least 1 metre\* is considered best practice.

Physical distancing is considered to be the distance between people seated at separate tables i.e. back of chair to back of chair.

## COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a group/sole customer and the name and telephone number of the lead person in a group/sole customer for COVID-19 contact tracing. Details must be securely retained for 28 days and be compliant with GDPR.

This information must be recorded for both walk-ins and pre-bookings.

## Measures to Control Noise Levels

Government Public Health advice states that there should be a restriction on noise levels within pubs to prevent transmission of COVID-19. For further guidance on appropriate measures to control noise levels see [HERE](#).

## Bar(s)

Employees should maintain the recommended physical distance from each other behind the bar. To help achieve this:

- Limit the number of employees behind the bar at one time.
- Keep a record of who is on duty and when.
- It is recommended to divide the bar into areas/zones and allocate a zone to each employee. Minimise and control the movement between these areas.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 1 metre\* should be maintained between employees behind the bar. Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

[Face masks](#) must be worn by staff where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing is not possible.

All employees should wash their hands frequently and as required with soap and water, for a minimum of 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser regularly if hands are visibly clean. Hands should be cleaned as often as possible.

The following should also be cleaned and disinfected more frequently:

- Beer taps, handles and optics
- Drip trays and washable bar mats
- Counter mounts and nozzles
- Glass mats
- Handheld measures
- Cocktail equipment
- Ice buckets, scoops and tongs
- Fruit preparation equipment
- Storage containers, etc.

Straws should be individually wrapped.

Embellishment or decoration of glasses (e.g. cocktail umbrellas) should be minimised.

Where fruit garnishes are required, good hand hygiene practices must be in place while preparing the fruit - follow HACCP guidelines. Keep garnishes refrigerated and in a covered container until required and serve using tongs/scoop. The scoop should have its own covered receptacle.

## Table Service

Government Public Health advice is that table service is the safest style of service. Public Health advice is to minimise customer movement and overcrowding within bar counter areas. Some pre-COVID-19 service offerings and queueing systems may have the potential to cause a risk of transmission of COVID-19. In situations where a business does not have the facility or capacity to allow customers to queue safely or cannot adhere to any of the outlined requirements, table service should be used.

### Requirements for Counter Service:

Indoor hospitality counter service is defined as an area where a customer orders and collects food or beverage for consumption at a table within the premises. Businesses who operate counter service should ensure the [queueing guidance](#) is adhered to in order to minimise and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

### Hygiene & Ventilation:

- Display signage within the bar service area outlining queueing guidance
- Hand sanitisers should be made available on entry to the premises for customer use and throughout the food counter service area.
- Customers should wear a face covering / mask within the premises
- Employees must wear a face mask
- Poor ventilation in crowded indoor spaces is associated with increased risk of COVID-19 transmission. Ensuring adequate and appropriate ventilation may mitigate some of this risk. See [Appendix 1](#) for more information.

There should be adequate spacing between customers at each table in accordance with Government physical distancing guidelines.

Following updated Government Public Health measures, businesses should ensure that [they implement the required measures, subject to the current Public Health advice](#) in relation to maximum capacity at a table. These measures are applicable to pre-bookings and walk-in customers.

Customer facing personnel allocated to serve individual tables should adhere to physical distancing where possible.

Attention should be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and table service.

Before serving a table and after clearing a table, all employees should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser if hands are visibly clean.

Orders should be taken in a time efficient manner and at a suitable distance to minimise time spent in close contact with customers. Close contact can mean spending more than 15 minutes in face-to-face contact within 2 metres\* of an infected person. For more information see [HERE](#).

Customers should remain seated and order from their seat. Customers are not permitted to access bar counters to order beverages or for seating.

[Face masks](#) must be worn by staff where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing is not possible.

Where offered, bar snacks or finger food can be served per table, they should not to be served as catering platters to larger groups.

### Order Taking

Menus should be made of a material that can easily be cleaned after each use. Electronic menus, phone apps and menu boards are an alternative option.

It may be possible to verbally recommend drinks or food to customers. If so, this should be done.

Attention should be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene during order taking and service. Orders should be taken in a time efficient manner and at a suitable distance to minimise time spent in close contact with customers. Close contact can mean spending more than 15 minutes in face-to-face contact within 2 metres\* of an infected person. For more information see [HERE](#).

[Face masks](#) must be worn by staff where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing is not possible.

It's recommended to use individual pens, pads or electronic devices.

### Glassware

Fresh glasses should be used for each new drink, particularly from optics and beer taps.

When pouring drinks, employees should handle glasses by the stem or base and place on clean service trays or the bar counter before serving. Avoid touching the nozzle, tap optic or bottle against the glass.

Similarly, there should be minimal handling of glassware when clearing glasses. Service trays should be used, where appropriate.

Following the washing and drying of glassware please ensure that you do not stack glasses on top of each other and ensure to store glasses away from the bar front.



\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.

## Food Counter Service - Self-Service Carvery/Buffer

Government Public Health advice is that table service is the safest style of service. Public Health advice is to minimise customer movement and overcrowding within food service businesses. Some pre-COVID-19 service offerings and queueing systems may have the potential to cause a risk of transmission of COVID-19.

In situations where a business does not have the facility or capacity to allow customers to queue safely or cannot adhere to any of the outlined requirements, **table service only should be used.**

### **Requirements to operate service:**

Indoor hospitality food counter service is defined as an area where a customer orders and collects food or beverages for consumption at a table within the premises, including carveries, self-service counters, buffets, etc.

Businesses who continue to operate food counter service (e.g. carvery/buffet/self-service) should ensure the following guidelines are adhered to minimise and prevent the spread of COVID-19:

### **Signage & Communications**

- Display signage at the entrance to the premises and within the premises highlighting the Public Health measures in place.
- Display signage within the food service areas including food service counters.
- Information should be made available to customers prior to arrival on websites and on signage at the entrance or outside the premises regarding the requirements for Indoor Hospitality

### **Hygiene & Ventilation**

- Hand sanitisers should be made available on entry to the premises for customer use and throughout the food counter service area.
- Customers should wear a face covering / mask within the premises
- Employees must wear a face mask
- Poor ventilation in crowded indoor spaces is associated with increased risk of COVID-19 transmission. Ensuring adequate and appropriate ventilation may mitigate some of this risk. See [Appendix 1](#) for more information.

## **Cleaning & Disinfection**

- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting throughout the food counter service areas.
- A planned programme of cleaning and disinfection should be implemented, and employee cleaning schedules adhered to.

## **On Arrival**

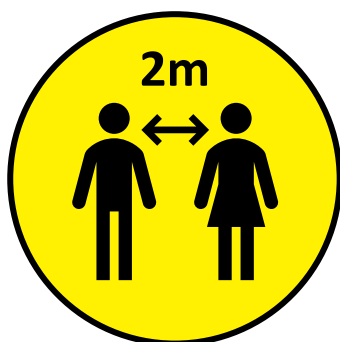
- There must be a defined, managed and supervised entrance point within the premises where employees can verify eligibility for entry to the indoor seating area before a customer enters a queue for the food counter service.
  - It is important that businesses should check photo ID when checking Proof of Immunity. There are some limited circumstances when this may not be necessary e.g. where a person is well-known to the business. Unaccompanied minors are required to present Proof of Immunity.
  - COVID-19 Contact Tracing must be recorded as outlined in the [Guidance for Indoor Hospitality](#).
- Once all required checks are complete and relevant data recorded, the customer(s) should be assigned a table within the premises where they will remain seated once they retrieve their meal.
- Capacity should be determined on the basis of seated capacity rather than a mixture of standing and seated capacity – Use floor markings in the service area to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice.
- If the capacity accessing the food counter service area exceeds the calculated number, customers should be shown to a table and remain seated until access is permitted. In this scenario, a dedicated employee will then invite each table to the food counter area when capacity permits.



## **Queuing\***

*\*In situations where a business does not have the facility or capacity to allow customers to queue safely or cannot adhere to any of the requirements below, **table service only should be used.***

- The management of the queuing system will be overseen by dedicated employees.
- The business should ensure the premises contains sufficient seating (which adheres to physical distancing requirements) to accommodate customers availing of the food counter service and should ensure that the number of customers in this area does not exceed the seating available within the premises.
- Prevent over-crowding at the food counter service area by implementing a queue management system that encourages physical distancing between customers.
- The capacity in this area, along with the overall premises, will be managed by the dedicated employees to ensure physical distancing is adhered to and to limit overcrowding.
- Use floor markings in the service area to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice.
- Use signage to direct customers to facilitate “one way” movement in this area.



## **Service**

- Employees should serve food to customers. There should be no open food areas. Where food is served buffet-style, all items displayed for customer use should be individually wrapped or be a single serve item. Pre-prepared covered portions are recommended.
- Customers will retrieve their food on a tray from a dedicated food collection area.
- An employee will be available at the food collection area to provide customers with cutlery and water when they are collecting their food.
- Once the customer has collected their tray, they should make their way to their assigned table.
- Any extra items the customer orders, other than the food collected at the food counter service area, will be ordered from their table.
- Customers remain seated at their table except when availing of the food counter service, using the toilet, paying, arriving and departing.
- Robust measures in place to ensure that customers are not permitted to move freely around the premises.

## **Payment**

- Where possible, customers should be encouraged to make payment when they are collecting their food in order to minimise any unnecessary movement within the premises.
- If this is not possible, encourage payment from the table using contactless / card payment facilities.
- Businesses should encourage the use of contactless payments where possible, recognising that not all customers will be able to pay via contactless methods. This recommendation should not disadvantage any customers.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.



## Employee Service Stations

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency at service stations, at least twice a day, but more frequently during busy periods and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Surfaces to clean include counter tops, shelving, equipment, storage containers, etc.

At service stations, customer facing personnel should be encouraged to maintain the recommended physical distance from each other. Limit the number of customer facing personnel at service stations at any one time. Minimise movement between service stations and ensure customers don't have access to these areas.

Ensure service stations are stocked with all necessary equipment (e.g. cutlery, condiments, etc.) and cleaning supplies (disinfectant, disposable paper towels, etc.).

All customer facing personnel should have their own stationery items and equipment (e.g. pens, order book). If equipment and tools are shared, they should be cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each use or before being given to another employee.

## Ice Machines

To avoid cross-contamination, each ice scoop should be stored in a separate covered receptacle and washed and disinfected regularly.

## Payment Facilities

Where possible, customers should use card/contactless payment. After bringing the debit/credit card machine to the customer (if possible), it should be cleaned and disinfected before being used again.

If handling cash, employees should observe the Government's Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures.

## Customer & Service Elevators

An employee should be assigned to clean and disinfect the button panels of elevators regularly and increase the frequency of cleaning during busy periods.

Physical distancing should be adhered to in elevators .

Signage should be displayed to ensure customers understand the physical distancing requirements that apply within elevators.

## Toilet Facilities

Clear signage should indicate the location of and route to the toilet facilities.

Patrons should wear face coverings/masks when using indoor facilities.

A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users should be enforced to ensure physical distancing.

Install clear markings to minimise contact between customers and to ensure adherence to physical distancing requirements. Encourage the use of alternate sinks.

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in toilet facilities, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of customers at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Ensure splashes are avoided while cleaning these facilities.

Ensure soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Repair or replace defective soap units.

Updated Public Health advice recommends the provision of additional toilet facilities within the premises, where possible. If additional facilities are provided they should also follow guidelines to ensure physical distancing and cleaning protocols are maintained.

## Smoking Areas

In these areas, the capacity should be in line with Government Public Health recommendations at any one time, while ensuring that the recommended physical distancing measures are adhered to.

It is recommended to have segmented food and beverage areas to allow for smokers and non-smokers.

The amount of seating should be reduced to ensure appropriate physical distancing measures.

Customers should remain seated and order from their seat.

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in smoking areas, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of customers at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

# 11. Outdoor Events

**Outdoor Events are permitted where robust protective measures are in place and they must be held in line with Government Public Health measures in relation to maximum capacity of the outdoor area**

**All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

**Management should aim to follow the Government's Public Health advice throughout all Outdoor Event Areas. To achieve this, the following steps should be taken:**

## Outdoor Event Area

- It is recommended to have segmented areas to allow for smokers and non-smokers.
- Customers should wear face coverings/masks when circulating around the outdoor dining and serving areas and using indoor facilities.

## Definition of an Outdoor Space

1. An outdoor place or premises that is covered by a roof, so long as not more than 50% of the perimeter (outside) is covered by a wall, windows, gate or similar \*
2. When creating an outdoor area, it should not be wholly enclosed or substantially enclosed which in practice means it must not have sides (including windows, doors, gates or other fittings that can be opened or shut) that enclose more than 50% of the perimeter of that area. For example, a marquee or gazebo with a roof and four sides would not be an outdoor space and would be required to have at least 50% of its wall area open to the external air, calculating this 50% wall area figure also applies to trellis, windbreakers, netting or other types of partition. Consideration should also be given to the location, a tent with only a roof would in itself be considered an outdoor area, but if placed in for example a courtyard area with four surrounding walls within close proximity, the area may no longer be considered outdoors. When considering the use of tents, marquees, gazebos or other similar structures, operators should review and update risk assessments, safety statement and a weather safety plan drafted with final plans in compliance with all local bye laws or restrictions.

\* The Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004

## Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting the following key areas and items should be at a minimum twice daily and as required:

- Entry/exit
- Greeting podiums
- Service stations
- Countertops
- Handrails
- Smoking areas
- Exterior seating/benches
- Exterior of refuse bins
- Toilets, etc.

The following items should be cleaned and disinfected regularly during the day:

- Tables and seating
- Trays
- Bill/tip trays, pens and any other reusable items that customers come into contact with.

## Capacity Management

For further guidance on Capacity Management click [HERE](#).

## Physical Distancing Protocol

Management is responsible for minimising the number of arrival and departure points for customers. Dedicated employees should always monitor and manage physical distancing rather than simply rely on signage.

Queueing procedures should be implemented if customers cannot be seated immediately.

Physical distancing between groups should be maximised within the capacity limits.

## COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a group/sole customer and the name and telephone number of the lead person in a group/sole customer for COVID-19 contact tracing. This information must be recorded for both walk-ins and pre-bookings. Details must be securely retained for 28 days and be compliant with GDPR

If food service, such as a BBQ, is offered to customers at an outdoor event, the relevant operational guidance outlined in [Section 10. Food and/or Beverage Service](#) should be followed.

### Food & Beverage Service at an Outdoor Event

- Outdoor Hospitality can continue to operate for customers who are unable to provide evidence of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity following recovery.
- Customers remain seated at their table except when availing of the food counter service, using the toilet, paying, arriving and departing.
- Customers can avail of both table service and service from a food service counter (e.g. BBQ, buffet or other self service food provision). See operational requirements for [Food Counter Service - Self-Service Carvery/Buffer](#).
- Customers are not permitted to access bar counters to order beverages or for seating.
- A maximum of 15 people including no more than 10 adults may be seated at a table.
- [COVID-19 Contact Tracing](#) is required.
- Infection Prevention Control measures such as ventilation, physical distancing, cleaning, face coverings, maintaining good hand and respiratory hygiene and staying at home if feeling unwell should be adhered to.
- Face coverings should be worn by customers at all times other than when seated at their table.
- [Face masks](#) must be worn by staff in customer facing roles.
- The outdoor area should be controlled and manned by employees ensuring a managed flow.

- Live music and performances may take place in outdoor hospitality settings, on a seated basis only, subject to adherence with all relevant COVID-19 guidance. Please note that there should be physical distancing between performance area and the customers. Further guidance on the safe presentation of music and other performances can be found at [HERE](#).
- Multiple tables can be booked in an outdoor area.
- Intermingling between tables is not permitted.

### Food Counter Service - Self-Service Carvery/Buffer

Government Public Health advice is that table service is the safest style of service. Public Health advice is to minimise customer movement and overcrowding within food service businesses. Some pre-COVID-19 service offerings and queueing systems may have the potential to cause a risk of transmission of COVID-19.

In situations where a business does not have the facility or capacity to allow customers to queue or cannot adhere to any of the outlined requirements, **table service should be used.**

### **Requirements to operate service:**

BBQ, Buffet, Self Service or any food service provision other than table service is defined as an area where a customer orders and collects food for consumption at a table within the outdoor event area.

Businesses offering this facility should ensure the following guidelines are adhered to minimise and prevent the spread of COVID-19:

### **Signage & Communications**

- Display signage at the entrance to the outdoor area highlighting the Public Health measures in place.
- Display signage within the food service areas including the BBQ, Buffet, Self Service or equivalent food service provision
- Information should be made available to customers prior to arrival on websites and on signage at the entrance or outside the premises regarding the requirements for the event.

### **Cleaning & Disinfection**

- See [Cleaning & Disinfection](#) section for further details

### **Queuing**

- There should be management of the queuing system which will be overseen by dedicated employees.
- Where customers collect their food this type of service access should be staggered to avoid queueing.
- Implement a queue management system that encourages physical distancing between customers.
- The capacity in this area, along with the overall premises, will be managed by the dedicated employees to ensure physical distancing is adhered to and to limit overcrowding.
- Use physical markings in the area to facilitate compliance with the physical distancing advice.
- Use signage to direct customers to facilitate “one way” movement in this area.

### **Service**

- Employees should serve food to customers. There should be no open food areas. Where food is served buffet-style, all items displayed for customer use should be individually wrapped or be a single serve item. Pre-prepared covered portions are recommended.
- An employee will be available at the food collection area to provide customers with cutlery and water when they are collecting their food.
- Once the customer has collected their food, they should make their way to their assigned table.

- Any extra items the customer orders, other than the food collected at the food counter service area, including beverages will be ordered from their table.
- Customers are not permitted to access bar counters to order beverages or for seating.
- Customers remain seated at their table except when availing of the food counter service, using the toilet, paying, arriving and departing.
- Robust measures in place to ensure that customers are not permitted to move freely around the outdoor event area.

### **Employee Service Stations**

At service stations, Front of House employees should be encouraged to maintain the recommended physical distance from each other. Limit the number of Front of House employees at service stations at any one time. Minimise movement between service stations and ensure customers don't have access to these areas.

See [Employee Service Stations](#) section for further details.

### **Smoking Areas**

In these areas, the capacity should be in line with Government Public Health recommendations at any one time, while ensuring that the recommended physical distancing measures are adhered to.

It is recommended to have segmented food and beverage areas to allow for smokers and non-smokers.

**Further information on the relevant operational guidance for Food & Beverage service is outlined in [Section 10. Food and/or Beverage Service](#)**

\*Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge

## 12. Kitchen

There is a requirement in legislation to have a Food Safety Management System in place based on the principles of HACCP. ISO 340:2007 is one of the available approaches to achieve this. A Health and Safety statement was already required, and is still a requirement. The COVID-19 Response plan is a requirement of the Work Safely Protocol.

### Food Preparation Area

Current legislation states that a “food preparation area” means an indoor part of such premises which is structurally adapted and used for the purpose of preparing food for consumption by members of the public on or off the premises concerned and, for the avoidance of doubt, does not include a tent, caravan, vehicle, storage container or other temporary structure.

If your business serves food, you are required to have a designated food preparation area as outlined above.

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

At the end of each shift, clean and disinfect each area systematically with effective detergents and disinfectants. All cleaning should be recorded by a suitably trained person.

### Physical Distancing Protocol

Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

Where the food service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the food services environment are to:

- Divide the kitchen into zones with an employee allocated to each zone. Control and minimise movement between zones
- Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that food workers are not facing one another
- Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons/uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers.
- Limit the number of employees in a food preparation area at any one time and record the times that employees are on duty
- Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart, for example in kitchens and at cash registers, host stands or food pickup areas. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Display signs that promote physical distancing and review all handwashing/good hygiene practice signs. Replace them if they are damaged or outdated.

### Kitchen & Food Handling Personnel

- The same food law requirements apply now as did before COVID-19. Any changes to the nature and extent of the business must be reflected in the food safety management system/HACCP documentation.
- Ensure that all employees are trained in any new COVID-19 standard operating procedures adopted by the bar or pub. Keep a record that this training has taken place.
- Ensure that the HACCP system is updated. All new protocols need to be reflected in records, food flow diagrams, cleaning schedules, zoning, allergen updates on menus and delivery and takeaway services, etc. HACCP based procedures are required for food safety and not for the prevention of COVID-19.

### Wash-Up

Ensure all mechanical dishwashers operate at optimum levels and reach the correct temperature. Ensure all heads of spray taps are cleaned and disinfected. Use adequate and safe chemicals. If equipment is being handwashed, use the correct double sink method with a drain area and wash at the appropriate temperature and using the correct chemicals.

Effective cleaning is possible with both machine and handwashing, as long as you adhere to a strict washing, rinsing and drying process.

1. Cleaning detergents should be applied as per normal practice.
2. Air dry glasses inverted on matting or glass racks.
3. Machine washing is recommended as it is more reliable.

*\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*

# 13. Back of House

## Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in all areas, at least twice a day, but more frequently during busy periods and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Particular attention should be paid to frequently touched surfaces which should be visibly clean at all times.

These include:

- Entry/exit doors
- Handrails
- Smoking areas
- Exterior seating/benches
- Exterior of refuse bins
- Toilets
- Desks, chairs and office furniture
- Computers, printers and communication devices
- Tables and seating in employee rest rooms
- Door release buttons
- Light switches throughout the property
- Lockers, etc.

## Physical Distancing Protocol

- Physical distancing protocols that follow the Government's Public Health advice should be observed in shared office spaces, employee locker rooms and other relevant employees facilities.
- Where possible, on arrival and departure from work, employees should be able to enter and exit through separate doors.
- As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 1 metre\* should be maintained between employees. Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.
- Where the service environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.
- Examples of practical measures to adhere to physical distancing guidance in the service environment are to:
  - Stagger workstations on either side of service area so that employees are not facing one another
  - Provide PPE if required, such as face masks, disposable gloves and clean aprons/uniforms. The use of PPE would be routine in high-risk areas of food premises that produce ready-to eat and cooked foods. When employees are dressed in PPE it is possible to reduce distance between workers.
  - Limit the number of employees in all back of house areas at any one time
  - Organise employees into working groups or teams to facilitate reduced interaction between groups.
- Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in back of house areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

- Employees should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible, with an individual computer, telephone and all ancillary equipment.
- In offices where face to face meetings/consultations take place, they should be arranged in line with the Government Public Health advice that is in place at the time and consideration should be given to best practice for infection prevention control including with respect to the length of the meeting, the number attending and the importance of physical distancing. Seats and tables of all visitors should be cleaned and disinfected after each visit.

## Employee Toilet Facilities

- A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users within toilets should be established to ensure physical distancing.
- Install clear markings to minimise contact between employees and to ensure they follow physical distancing requirements. Encourage the use of alternate sinks.
- Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in toilet facilities, at least twice a day, but more frequently during busy periods and whenever facilities are visibly dirty. Ensure splashes are avoided while cleaning these facilities.
- Ensure soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Repair or replace any defective units.

## Cellars, Cold Rooms & Store Rooms

- Hand sanitiser (touchless where possible) should be placed at all entrances to cellars, cold rooms and storerooms with instructions that they be used on entering and leaving.
- Clear signage should tell employees to observe physical distancing. A minimum of 1 metre\* should be maintained between employees if the size of cellars, cold rooms and storerooms allows. Where physical distancing is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.
- Access systems such as biometric touchpads, keypads or swipe cards should be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Clean and disinfect the dispense head and keg neck at every keg change.

\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.



# 14. Suppliers of Goods and Services

**All individuals and businesses will need to continue to monitor the ongoing risk from the disease and take personal responsibility as they take steps individually and collectively in their everyday lives to keep this risk under control.**

**Bars, pubs and gastropubs should contact their suppliers to ensure that they have put all necessary protocols in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

**Note:** Fresh food deliveries must be treated separately to other deliveries. HACCP only refers to food deliveries.

## Deliveries

- An employee should meet each supplier who is delivering to the pub or bar.
- All delivery personnel should follow the Government's Public Health advice on physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to employees:
  - Wear suitable, clean and protective clothing where necessary
  - Maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness.
  - Clean hands before and after each delivery transaction. The use of gloves is not recommended as this can give a false sense of security. Hand washing is best practice.
- If possible, delivery drivers should not be allowed to enter the premises (with the exception of food deliveries which adhere to HACCP delivery protocols). Employees should not come in close contact with drivers. HACCP is in the context of food safety and re-opening only and not for COVID-19 prevention.

## Dealing with Drivers

- Provide hand sanitisers (alcohol or non-alcohol based) in the delivery area.
- Delivery personnel should be asked to use hand sanitiser if required to exit their vehicle and enter the premises.
- Drivers should be supplied with hand sanitisers and use this before passing delivery documents or goods to employees.
- Hand hygiene, in conjunction with physical distancing, is also of paramount importance.
- Drivers should comply with HACCP procedures and ensure that all transport containers delivering food products are kept clean and frequently disinfected.
- Disposable containers and packaging, where possible, should be used to avoid the need to clean any returns. In the case of reusable containers, appropriate hygiene and disinfection protocols should be followed by employees.

## Entering the Premises

Delivery personnel should use hand sanitiser if required to exit their vehicle and enter the buildings.

Signage should make drivers aware of:

1. Physical distancing when picking up deliveries and passing deliveries to employees,
2. The need to maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and,
3. The need to wear clean protective clothing.

A system for recording visits to the site/property by employees/others should be put in place as required (contact log). Ref. Section D9 of [Work Safely Protocol](#). The same system should be implemented for suppliers who are required to enter the site/property.

## Accepting Deliveries

- Ideally deliveries should only be made before opening. However, if the bar or pub is open, delivery drivers must not enter through public areas and drivers should not come in close contact with customers.
- A goods reception area should be set up that is large enough to ensure physical distancing for both driver and business employees. HACCP procedures must be strictly implemented and observed at all times. HACCP based procedures are required for food safety and not for the prevention of COVID-19.
- All excess packaging should be removed by the driver. All outer packing should be removed (if possible) and placed in a suitable disposal unit.
- When signing for deliveries, employees should only use their own pens which can be disinfected. In the case of electronic devices, both the device and pen should be disinfected before signing.
- The delivery area should be cleaned and disinfected after each delivery and before accepting the next delivery.

*\* Current physical distancing guidance is in line with Public Health advice. This document will evolve to reflect new Public Health advice and changes to protocols as and when they emerge.*

# Appendix 1

## Ventilation

The ventilation of enclosed places of work is a requirement under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (General Application) Regulations, 2007. Natural means (via windows and doors) or mechanical means (Heating, Ventilation and Air Condition systems – HVAC) significantly improves hygiene and better air quality. The ability to adequately ventilate an indoor setting including opening windows and doors where possible is a key mitigating measure to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

General recommendations contained with *HPSC Guidance on Non-Healthcare Building Ventilation during COVID-19 (Version 2.0)* are listed below. This document provides an overview of the current literature examining the association between ventilation and COVID-19 and is aimed at commercial and public buildings.

While ventilation reduces the amount of virus in the air and the aerosol risk, it will have minimal impact on droplet transmission where people are less than 2 metres from each other, or contact transmission (touching surfaces), which is why it is not a standalone measure and continued adherence to other public health advice is absolutely essential.

Any planned changes to ventilation should consider regulatory requirements under building, food and/or health and safety regulations along with other consequences such as cost, energy use, noise and security.

Reoccupying workplaces should not, in most cases, require new ventilation systems but improvements to ventilation will help increase the quantity of clean air and reduce the risk of exposure to airborne concentrations of the virus.

Determining ventilation of enclosed workplace settings should be considered as part of the workplace risk assessment. For more information see [Section D of the Work Safely Protocol](#)

To assist with the workplace risk assessment of ventilation, see the [WSP Employer Checklist No. 8 - Ventilation](#). It is important to remember that ventilation is part of a hierarchy of risk controls. It is not a substitute for other infection prevention measures, such as vaccination, physical distancing, cleaning, face coverings, maintaining good hand and respiratory hygiene and staying at home if feeling unwell.

## Manual (Natural) Requirements

### Considerations:

- Windows and doors should be opened to allow for a flow of fresh air throughout the premises.

## Mechanical Requirements

### Considerations:

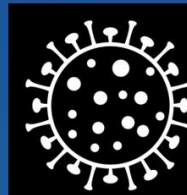
- Consider a ventilation assessment of the business and the use of CO<sub>2</sub> monitors as per the [Work Safely Protocol](#).
- Make sure that any mechanical ventilation systems are adequately maintained as per manufacturer's instructions. There is no need for additional maintenance cycles beyond the routine maintenance.
- Where filters are used in the central HVAC system, ensure that these are replaced regularly as per manufacturer's instructions. There is no need for additional cleaning or changing beyond routine maintenance.
- If filters are used as part of a central ventilation system, consideration should be given to installing the most efficient filter for the system (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value - MERV – 13 to 16; ISO 16890 ePM1 rating 60-90%). HEPA filtration should be considered where air is re-circulated. Increase air filtration to as high as possible without significantly diminishing design airflow/fresh air amount.
- Increase the outdoor air fraction of air inside buildings as much as possible. This can be done by fully opening outside air dampers in mechanical systems or opening windows where available, taking into account weather and comfort level of room occupants.
- Increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces by increasing number of air exchanges per hour. The overall objective should be to increase the ventilation in the building thereby improving the existing ventilation without impacting on the occupants' comfort.
- Ceiling mounted, desk and portable fans do not provide fresh air and can mask poor ventilation issues. They are difficult to keep clean, and could increase the duration of suspended particles by creating air currents in confined spaces. Such fans merely recirculate air in a room if there is no source of fresh air. Therefore, a fresh air supply, as required by building regulations, or 10L per second per person (whichever is greater), should be provided when using a fan. Fans should only be used where there is a single occupant in a room. When used, fans should be directed to exhaust directly to the exterior environment (e.g. open window), to minimise potential spread of pathogens.

- Disable demand controlled mechanical ventilation if possible. These types of HVAC systems are set to only circulate air when a certain threshold is passed, usually the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> build-up in the room, or the ambient room temperature. If it is not possible to bypass this system, then set the threshold to the lowest possible setting (e.g. 400ppm or less of CO<sub>2</sub>) so that the system remains ventilating at a nominal speed.
- Keep ventilation running at all times (i.e. 24/7), regardless of building occupancy. When unoccupied, ventilation can be reduced to the lowest setting.
- Extend the hours of nominal HVAC operations to begin two hours before the building is occupied, and to only reduce to lowest setting 2 hours after the building has emptied. This ensures that rooms are well ventilated before occupancy each day.
- Ensure extractor fans in bathrooms are functional and running 24/7. When the building is occupied, they should operate at full capacity. As with the central HVAC, they can be set to the lowest speed 2 hours after the building is emptied and ramped up again 2 hours before occupancy if the system allows.
- Avoid directing air flow directly onto individuals or across groups of individuals, as this may facilitate transmission of pathogens between individuals.
- Avoid the use of air-recirculation systems in HVACs as much as possible. Use 100% outdoor air if supported by the HVAC system and compatible with outdoor/indoor air quality considerations. If it is not possible to disable the air recirculation system, then HEPA filtration or the highest efficiency filter possible according to the HVAC manufacturer's specifications should be considered (MERV – 13 to 16; ISO 16890 ePM1 rating 60-90%). Increase air filtration to as high as possible without significantly diminishing design airflow/fresh air amount.
- While there is evidence in experimental settings that coronaviruses like the SARS-CoV-2 virus deteriorate faster in high temperatures and humidity, the levels that need to be achieved are not attainable or acceptable in buildings. In addition, indoor humidification is not a common feature in most HVAC systems, and would incur additional maintenance and equipment costs. However, low relative humidity (<20%) is known to increase an individual's susceptibility to infection. Where such systems do exist, the advice is to maintain a relative air humidity of 30-50% if feasible.
- Create "clean" ventilation zones for staff that do not include high-risk areas (e.g. guest reception). This can be done by re-evaluating the positioning of the supply and exhaust air diffusers and adjusting flow rates to establish measurable pressure differentials.

For other information on the use of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) monitors and other equipment and systems, please see [section D of the Work Safely Protocol](#)

Further information on a Ventilation checklist is available in Section 5 of the REHVA COVID-19 guidance document, available [HERE](#).

# Work Safely Ventilation



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## Ventilation should be by:



Natural ventilation which relies on passive air flow through windows, doors and air vents that can be fully or partially opened.

This is the simplest way to ensure adequate air quality in poorly ventilated areas.



Mechanical ventilation using fans and ducts including window fans to bring in fresh air from outside.



A combination of natural and mechanical ventilation, for example where mechanical ventilation relies on natural ventilation to maximise fresh air.



Ensuring extractor fans in bathrooms are functional and running when in use.

## What to avoid:



Desk or ceiling fans should not be used in poorly ventilated areas as they may only recirculate the virus droplets rather than remove them from the area.

Fans should only be used in areas where there is a single occupant.



Avoid the use of ceiling mounted, desk and portable fans where possible as they may only recirculate the virus droplets rather than removing them.



Extractor fans which recirculate air to other poorly ventilated areas of the workplace where workers are exposed.



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