

# GUIDANCE FOR MICRO AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Scottish Chambers of Commerce



# SUPPORTING SCOTTISH BUSINESSES

This short guidance provides practical advice for micro (less than 10 employees) and small (less than 50 employees) companies as they plan to re-open their businesses.

This guidance sets out the expectations on the steps that should be taken before and after re-opening, and is based on the principles set out [here](#). If your business is in a sector for which specific guidance has been published, then you should follow this.

There are further links available throughout this guide and other support documents available from Scottish Chambers of Commerce.



DISCLAIMER: THE MATERIALS IN THIS GUIDANCE ARE PROVIDED FOR GENERAL INFORMATION PURPOSES AND DO NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL ADVICE. WHILE THE INFORMATION IS CONSIDERED TO BE TRUE AND CORRECT AT THE DATE OF PUBLICATION, CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES MAY IMPACT THE ACCURACY AND VALIDITY OF THE INFORMATION. YOU SHOULD CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL ADVISER FOR LEGAL OR OTHER ADVICE WHERE APPROPRIATE.



# ASSESS THE RISK

— Before re-opening, business owners should assess the risks to themselves, employees, suppliers and customers.



## ASSESSMENTS

- All employers are by law required to carry out risk assessments before re-opening;
- Given the current risk to public health from Covid-19, self-employed persons should also carry out a risk assessment;
- Businesses must fully engage its employees in the process;
- Protecting the health of employees is fundamental to establishing shared confidence around the safety of returning to places of work.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Businesses must think about where it works, where its customers are and assess each risk identified;
- Businesses must identify risks associated with handling machinery or equipment where possible contamination may occur;
- Some members of a workforce may be disproportionately at risk and may need extra support to return to work;
- Safe travel to work arrangements must be considered, with any relevant adjustments adopted.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- Ensure you/your health and safety professionals and representatives have the skills, training and knowledge to understand the risks associated with COVID-19;
- Explore external support options;
- Health and safety experts and advisors from the business community are available on a voluntary basis to support the development of workplace risk assessments.

[businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk](mailto:businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk)



# CONSULT WITH EMPLOYEES

— Before re-opening, all businesses should consult with its employees to share key messages and information.



## SPEAK WITH EMPLOYEES

- Businesses should discuss how they can safely reopen with its employees or employee representatives as appropriate;
- It is important everyone understands the measures being taken to establish the safe working environment;
- Discussions should include arrangements for those working from home and adopting new or alternative working patterns;
- Arrangements should be made for staff who are shielding, ill or have caring responsibilities.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Businesses should take every possible step to facilitate employees working from home where this is practical and appropriate;
- This may include providing suitable IT and equipment to allow employees to do this;
- Companies should make arrangements to ensure staff are not disadvantaged due to medical advice;
- Travel to work and childcare considerations for individual employees should be taken into account.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- Health and safety experts and advisors from the business community are also available on a voluntary basis to support the development of workplace risk assessments. Contact:

[businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk](mailto:businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk).





# INFECTION CONTROL

— Before re-opening, all businesses must put in place infection and control measures.



## TAKE MEASURES

- It is essential that physical distancing continues to be practiced, along with other good hygiene practice amongst employees, customers and those on business premises;
- Ensure physical distancing between employees, customers and suppliers is maintained, currently set at 2 metres in Scotland;
- Adapt work activity and workspaces to minimise contact (i.e. markings/barriers);
- Limit the number of employees or customers on business premises to ensure spaces are not crowded.

## HELPFUL TIPS

- Consider changes in working practice, such as staggering start/finish and break times and reducing the number of people each person has contact with;
- Put in place good hygiene practices for all employees, customers and visitors to premises;
- Ensure adequate facilities are available for hand hygiene, including hand wash facilities or alcohol-based hand rub at key areas like entry points;
- If not possible, businesses must take equivalent preventative measures to provide protection which may include using PPE and face masks.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- Consider whether an activity
- Health and safety experts and advisors from the business community are also available on a voluntary basis to support the development of workplace risk assessments. Contact:

[businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk](mailto:businesssupport@scottishchambers.org.uk).







## FURTHER INFORMATION

- Check that what you're doing is in line with the latest public health guidance;
- If an employee becomes ill at work with Covid symptoms you should follow the Test and Protect guidance;
- The Health & Safety Executive also provides more information on managing risk, risk assessments and other workplace health and safety issues.



## HELPFUL LINKS

- Businesses can find specific guidance on the Healthy Working Lives website;
- For information for businesses, including packages of support, go to FindBusinessSupport.gov.scot;
- You can also find additional help and advice for businesses through Scottish Chambers of Commerce;
- All of the the Scottish Government's guidance on COVID-19 can be found here;
- Businesses can also find information on working safely during COVID-19 in different workplaces through the UK Government guidance.



## KEEP REVIEWING

Once re-open, businesses should regularly review its risk assessments to make sure that all actions put in place are working well and continue to engage with its employees for feedback.





# CONTACT SCOTTISH CHAMBERS FOR ENQUIRIES

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