

Risk Assessment Checklist: Working With Others During The COVID-19 Virus Situation

Deliberately spitting, coughing or attempting to bite them is an offence. With regards a COVID-19 infected person, deliberately making effort to infect another could give legal basis for attempted murder; if the intent to cause death can be evidenced. Consideration should be given to the charge of murder under these circumstances if death results.

Employers need to be reminded that serious action may be raised against them for negligence i.e. any failing in duty of care that results in harm, injury or death to both those employed, and others not directly employed; however, are affected by the operations of the company doing the work.

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the various supporting statutory Regulations are what all organisations need to comply with regards to the duty of care owed to staff and others.

The Health and Safety Executive outline the legal requirement in their statement below:

"If you are an employer or self-employed. It is a legal requirement for every employer and self-employed person to make an assessment of the health and safety risks arising out of their work. The purpose of the assessment is to identify what needs to be done to control health and safety risks."

With regard to the process of risk assessment, the process for accessing the activity of physical restraint should be assessed for risk in line with the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended), because the risk involves a 'manual handling activity'.

In addition, the following other regulations also need to be referred to:

- The COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health);
- The Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984;
- The Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988.

The following assessment therefore has been constructed to identify any foreseeable hazards and provide guidance on some suitable and sufficient control measures (not exhaustive) as part of every employer’s statutory duty and in line with all of the above regulations.

Every organisation and each environment will also have its own unique hazards and issues therefore, each organisation should undertake its own individual assessment of risk for the environments their staff will be operating in.

It must be accepted that the possible risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus can also be life threatening for certain people.

Due to the risk of serious harm or death, this risk assessment is based at the highest level of risk.

METHODOLOGY AND EVALUATION OF THE RISK

The risk of any hazard reflects both:

1. The likelihood that the harm from that particular hazard will be realised, and
2. The severity of the injury that is likely to result from the harm.

The following table below provides a Likelihood score and rating by definition / description.

LIKELIHOOD	RATE	DESCRIPTION
3	High	Where it is certain that harm will occur
2	Medium	Frequent, often or likely to occur
1	Low	Slight chance of occurring.

The following table below provides a Severity score and rating by definition / description.

SEVERITY	RATE	DESCRIPTION
3	Major	Death or major injury
2	Medium	Injuries where people may be off work for more than 3 days.
1	Slight	Minor injury, minor damage to property or equipment.

Having determined the rates for likelihood and severity, each score will be multiplied together to arrive at the overall risk rating for the hazard. This risk rating can be used to establish the priority of the risk using the 'Risk Rating Chart':

RISK RATING CHART

		SEVERITY OF OUTCOME		
		Major (3)	Medium (2)	Minor (1)
LIKELIHOOD OF EVENT OCCURRING	High (3)	9	6	3
	Medium (2)	6	4	2
	Low (1)	3	2	1

From the 'Risk Rating Chart' we can now identify the type of priority action required to control, eliminate or reduce the corresponding level of risk using the table below:

OVERALL RISK SCORE	OVERALL RISK RATING	ACTION & TIMESCALE
6 - 9	High	Requires immediate action in terms of eliminating the risk at source. This should include: removing oneself from the hazardous area, containing, cordoning and isolating the hazard (use of secure rooms, locked doors, etc) effective control methods (with regards to restraint this would include the serious consideration of shields, mechanical restraints, sedative medication, personal protective equipment, and competent staff training in effective and efficient restraint techniques to enable them to control the person presenting the hazard quickly and effectively.
3 - 4	Medium	Requires the situation to be reviewed and more effective controls to be in place or further action to be taken to reduce the risk.
1 - 2	Low	Requires no further action.

HIERARCHY OF CONTROL

In terms of applying control measures there is a hierarchy of control that should be followed:

1. **Elimination:** *Can the risk be eliminated by avoiding the hazardous activity at source? This is the first and paramount consideration. Consideration here with regards to Covid-19 has to be given to containment and isolation as a primary control method.*
2. **Reduce:** If the activity cannot be avoided then the overall risk must be reduced to its lowest possible level?
3. **Isolate:** In reducing the risk we need to ask whether the hazard can be isolated, by use of secure area, locked doors, etc.
4. **Control:** Are the appropriate control measures in place to enable staff to undertake the activity as safely as possible if the activity itself cannot be eliminated (i.e. give serious consideration to the use of shields/barriers, protective equipment, sanitisers and ensuring staff are competently trained).
5. **Personal Protective Equipment / Provision of Use of Work Equipment:** Do the staff have the appropriate (fit for purpose) equipment to enable them to undertake the activity safely when working near someone who may be infected with the Covid-19 virus? Examples may include goggles, face masks, gloves, protective clothing, etc (not an exhaustive list) in addition to the work equipment listed in item 4 above.
6. **Discipline:** Where a safe system of work is in place and supported by safe working practices then any staff who intentionally choose to take unnecessary risks may need to be promptly disciplined; and/or possibly reported to authorities; and/or removed from the workplace.

Tight-fitting respirators (such as disposable FFP3 masks and reusable half masks) rely on having a good seal with the wearer's face. A face fit test should be carried out to ensure the respiratory protective equipment (RPE) can protect the wearer. Source HSE website - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-Covid-19-virus.htm> and NHS England and NHS Improvement (issued 22 March 2020) - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/Covid-19-virus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/Novel-Covid-19-virus-COVID-19-standard-operating-procedure-Community-Pharmacy-v2-published-22-March-2020.pdf> . Although the reference is from NHS England, the information is deemed sound and applicable UK wide.

RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR WORKING WITH OTHERS DURING THE COVID-19 VIRUS SITUATION

HAZARD	PERSONS AT RISK	LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY	OVERALL RISK RATING	CONTROL ACTIVITY OPTIONS
<p>Physically being near someone within the risk assessed working environment who may be infected with the Covid-19 virus</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>1 (Low)</p>	<p>3 (High)</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>Can the risk of contact be Eliminated altogether by waiting until the other person has moved > 2m?</p>
					<p>Can the person be asked to leave and allowed to leave the environment on their own?</p>
					<p>Can the person be isolated from your staff member?</p>
					<p>If another individual refuses to respect the 2m cordon staff should remove themselves from the area and report to management. If staff must remain and/or it is deemed absolutely necessary to work in close proximity, they must be issued with the appropriate and suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment such as: goggles, face masks, gloves, protective clothing, etc (not an exhaustive list) and fully sanitised at the end of the works.</p>
					<p>If the risk cannot be eliminated at source, then it has to be reduced to its lowest possible level. Consideration should be given to the use of equipment e.g PPE, mechanical equipment, technical equipment etc.</p>

HAZARD	PERSONS AT RISK	LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY	OVERALL RISK RATING	CONTROL ACTIVITY OPTIONS
Works going on for an extended period of time	Staff	2 (Med)	2 (Med)	Med	<p>Prolonged exposure can increase the risk to staff. It could result in staff being infected, protective clothing being damaged, face masks being damaged, etc., exposing staff to the risk of contamination. Therefore, any work should be planned and completed as fast as safely possible. Consideration therefore must be given to the capability of staff to undertake the activity whilst wearing any additional protective clothing that may impede their ability to breathe when undertaking the work. As such staff may use other equipment to assist their tasks so that reduced manual handling, reduced exposure, reduced time on task, reduced physical effort and reduced assistance from others is required.</p>
Training	Staff	2 (Med)	2 (Med)	Medium	<p>If additional training is required to enable staff to competently use personal protective equipment (PPE) or indeed any equipment to aid completing their task, this must be provided.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to allowing staff to practice doing their job using this equipment away from the working environment i.e. pressure testing prior to deployment to the real task.</p>
Age, fitness and capability of staff	Staff	2 (Med)	2 (Med)	Medium	<p>Ensuring that any staff expected to undertake this activity are fit and have the capability to be able to do the activity – refer to Regulation 13 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.</p>

HAZARD	PERSONS AT RISK	LIKELIHOOD	SEVERITY	OVERALL RISK RATING	CONTROL ACTIVITY OPTIONS
Person deliberately coughing at staff.	Staff	1 (Low)	3 (High)	Medium	Can the risk be isolated and/or contained? Consider the use of cordoned work areas or a locked room.
					Staff must wear protective clothing including goggles, face-masks (that are appropriate to reduce the risk of infection).
Person deliberately spitting at staff.	Staff	1 (Low)	3 (High)	Medium	Due to the potential severity of harm all employers must consider emergency procedures and ensure first aid, support and sanitisation equipment is available at all times.
					Due to the potential severity of harm all employers must consider the use of work equipment: PPE, goggles, face-masks (that are appropriate to reduce the risk of infection).
Staff contamination	Staff	2 (Med)	3 (High)	High	Staff must have the facilities to wash/shower after any contact with others and surfaces and have access to soap and water and sanitising gel.
Contaminated clothing and equipment	Staff	2 (Med)	3 (High)	High	All protective clothing should either be destroyed or cleaned dependent on the instructions provided by the manufacturer/supplier of the clothing.
Physical & Mental Health of Staff who have been exposed to someone from outside the working area	Staff	1 (Low)	3 (High)	Med	All staff concerned should be isolated, sanitised and given medical aid as necessary. Affected staff should be safely de-briefed post exposure by a suitably qualified and competent person from Management and given psychological support and/or counselling should they wish or require it. A formal report made to all necessary bodies and authorities and any other support networks e.g. financial applied for should they require it.

The named persons below have all been made aware of the content and significance of this risk assessment. All below who have signed agree to adhere to the control measures stated within this risk assessment and the safe working practices as written in our company policy and procedure. Further, all who have signed agree to do their utmost to ensure safe working practices for all concerned in the workplace and understand the importance of their actions and omissions to everyone's health & safety.

Print Name:	Signature:	Date: