



Returning to work

Your business guide



With the easing of restrictions and the end of lockdown in the horizon, we know that a number of you will be starting to think about returning to work.

Here, at **Aspreys**, we've put together your ultimate "returning to work" toolkit, with a full business guide on how to prepare, checklists to support your employees and a number of frequently asked questions. This will not only help you prepare but also ensure you adhere to social distancing measures or other advice from the government.

As always, our team of HR Managers are available to support you and your business.



Preparation



Social Distancing



Cleaning Requirements



Hygiene



Employees



Access & Control

Preparation

The first step towards returning employees to the workplace is ensuring your building or premise is prepared.

The initial steps you can do towards achieving this is, carrying out a risk assessment, ensuring you consult your employees throughout this process.

It is likely that your employees will be feeling anxious and even apprehensive about returning to work (including traveling to work) so it is therefore important to ensure you consult with them throughout your preparations. Providing them with insight into the preparations you are taking and the steps you have considered to ensure their safety will help them feel at ease.

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

When conducting your risk assessment, you will need to cover the following core areas:

- Identify what work activity and situations might cause transmission
- Consider which employees are high risk (those vulnerable to those living with vulnerable people)
- Review how likely it is that someone could be exposed

Your risk assessment can be used as a central document that can be updated to reflect any legislation changes.

If you have fewer than five employees, you do not need to record anything, however it may help if you do. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/risk-assessment-template-and-examples.htm>



The HSE (Health and Safety Executive) has risk assessment template and examples available for you to download [HERE](#)

Cleaning Requirements

This would be the perfect opportunity to review your current cleaning regimes and depending on the nature of your business, you may want to consider conducting a deep clean before opening and on a regular basis.

Other cleaning requirements you may want to consider are, ensuring phones and keyboards are wiped daily with anti-viral cleaner, providing additional PPE including masks or anti-viral hand gel.

If you would like employees to wear gloves or masks, you will need to ensure there is training and briefing around the correct usage.



Communal Areas

There are a number of communal areas within the workplace, including: restrooms, kitchens and tea points, changing facilities, lifts, canteens and reception areas. These areas tend to gather larger groups of people and therefore it is important to consider how these areas will be managed. You may want to consider the following measures:

- Reduce the number of people who are able to use these areas
- Use floor markings to assist with social distancing
- Ensure your employees are clear on the rules when using common areas
- Utilise barriers and screens

Employees

Once you are comfortable that the building or premise has been assessed and any additional requirements that are needed to safeguard your employees have been implemented, the next step to consider are your employees.

You will need to think about how your employees return to work, creating a plan about who will return and when. Each company is different, however there are a number of things to help you formulate a plan that works best for your employees and the business.

Whichever plan your business decides to take, it is important that this is well documented and communicated to all employees to ensure everyone is on the same page.



Vulnerable employees or those that are living with vulnerable individuals who are required to stay at home, should be supported to do so.

Key things to communicate:

- When the workplace might reopen and staff might return
- How the business will make sure the workplace is safe
- How staff will travel to and from the workplace
- If there might be a phased return of the workforce
- Who will stay working from home or who will return

Social Distancing

Implementing social distancing within the workplace will help reduce the day-to-day contact with other people as much as possible.

To achieve social distancing within the workplace, you may want to think about re-designing the workspaces to enable 2 metre spacing. Alternatively, you can look at staggering start times, creating one way walk-throughs or changing seating layouts. If it is not possible to keep the 2 metre spacing, you can look at implementing barriers, encourage employees to not work facing each other and think about reducing the capacity of employees who are in the building (shift patterns).



Ensuring a minimum of two-meter distance from people



Avoiding gatherings (where possible, keep meetings virtual or reduced in capacity)



Allocating seating or desk arrangements (avoid hot desking) which are in line with social distancing



Operating paperless - avoiding the need for printed material that can be exchanged between people



Restricting visitors or other members visiting the premise



Hygiene

Aside from conducting an initial deep clean and regular cleaning of the building, there are other ways in which you can manage hygiene in-house:

- Distributing and placing sprays and wipes in prominent areas of the business such as: entrances, exits and kitchens
- Utilising low-touch or no-touch doors, switches and other fittings
- Removing shared tools and equipment, ensuring each employee has their own things to use
- Implementing a clean desk policy

Access & Control

Limiting the number of contractors and visitors to the building is advisable to keep the rate of contact low. You may want to consider implementing the below in cases where this cannot be avoided:

- Designated drop off and collection points for deliveries, with enhanced safety measures for staff who enter or work in this area
- If practicable, separate entrances and exit points for staff



Let qualified experts support you returning to work

Call us on 01932 485 325 or
email hrteam@aspreysuk.com