

## Risk Assessment

**Working safely during Covid-19 at MCM offices at 180 Borough High Street (180 BHS)  
London SE1 1LB  
Date 2 September 2020**

### Introduction

This risk assessment has been produced by MCM in response to the issue by HM Government of *Working safely during Covid-19 in offices and contact centres – Guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed* first issued on 11 May 2020 and updated on 12 August 2020. It follows the advice and format set out in that document.

Its purpose is to consider how to safely occupy MCM's office in the Fora serviced office at 180 BHS in a manner that protects staff to the fullest extent reasonably possible from exposure to Covid-19 infection while in the offices. It will also be used to assist the MCM board in deciding whether or not it is safe and appropriate for staff to use the office at this time.

### Context

Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected. In the context of COVID-19 this means working through these steps in order:

- In every workplace, increasing the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning.
- Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to ensure their employees can work safely. From 1st August, this may be working from home, or within the workplace if COVID-19 Secure guidelines are followed closely. When in the workplace, everyone should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines set out by the government (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable is acceptable). From 1st August, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals, who were previously advised to shield at home, can go to the workplace as long as it is COVID-secure, but should carry on working from home wherever possible.
- Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff. Further mitigating actions include:
  - Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning. Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
  - Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.

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- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
- You should ensure that steps are taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission, particularly from aerosol transmission.
- Finally, if people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.
- Any assessment should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.

## **Considerations in preparing the risk assessment**

### **Who needs to work from 180 BHS**

Current advice from HM Government is Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to ensure their employees can work safely. From 1st August, this may be working from home, or within the workplace if COVID-19 Secure guidelines are followed closely.

MCM staff have been working from home effectively since the government since the lock-down began. We expect that most of us will continue to choose to work from home for part of the time. However, there are also circumstances where it is either necessary or preferable to work from the office, or in other locations away from home or the office. These include:

- where home circumstances make working from home difficult or impossible
- where, in order to carry out their work, teams need to collaborate in a group, or otherwise meet colleagues in person
- where, in order to carry out their work, staff need to meet with clients or other third parties in person
- Where, in order to carry out their work, staff need to visit construction sites, showrooms, or visit client or third party premises.

### **Protecting people who are at higher risk**

MCM has consulted with staff in order to identify those with underlying health conditions that would make them either clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable in relation to Covid-19. We have also consulted with staff to establish whether they are currently living with family members or partners who fall into either of these two categories.

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Our staff survey identified four colleagues who are clinically considered to be vulnerable, with a further 8 who considered themselves to be vulnerable due to asthma, suppressed immune system, or other concerns. A further 9 people are living with someone who is considered vulnerable.

From 1st August, clinically extremely vulnerable individuals can return to their workplace providing COVID-secure guidelines are in place but should work from home wherever possible. If extremely clinically vulnerable individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable). It may be appropriate for clinically extremely vulnerable individuals to take up an alternative role or adjusted working patterns temporarily.

Notwithstanding that, MCM will not require any member of staff who is themselves in the clinically vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable category, or who is currently living with someone in these categories, to do any work that cannot be carried out at home.

## **People who need to self-isolate**

Any staff who have notified MCM that they need to self-isolate will not be required to visit site, or to visit MCM's office or any third party's office, or do any other work that cannot be carried out at home, for the duration of the period of self-isolation.

## **Equality in the workplace**

MCM is not aware of any member of staff having circumstances that would affect their ability to work either from home, or in the office, because of any protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. Should MCM be made aware of any such circumstances, then MCM will work with the individuals in question to understand and take account of their circumstances, putting in place any reasonable measures or adjustments that may be required.

## **Ventilation**

Mechanical ventilation with 180 BHS is controlled by Fora, and MCM cannot modify the flow rates of fresh air. However, 180 BHS is a recently refurbished modern office facility, with fresh air and filtration that meets all current building regulations.

## **Social distancing at work**

We must maintain 2m social distancing wherever possible, including while arriving at and departing from the office, and while in work at the office.

Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, businesses should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.

Mitigating actions include:

- Further increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.

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- Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
- Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
- Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).

Social distancing applies to all parts of a business, not just the place where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, teapoints, toilets and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing.

## **Specific requirements for MCM's space on the second floor of 180 BHS**

In order to ensure social distancing within the MCM office space on the second floor of 180 BHS we are restricting capacity of the room to a maximum of 5 people at any one time. Staff should stagger seating on either side of the main bench desk so that no member of staff is sitting directly opposite a colleague.

Additional staff can work in the Fora spaces or in meeting rooms (either using one of the MCM passes or as a guest), up to the maximum number of MCM passes available. Irrespective of where staff are working, social distancing must be maintained, and both MCM and Fora health and safety procedures must be followed.

Sanitising hand gel is available in MCM's office area, and should be used each time you enter the space. Surface cleansers are also available. You should spray your desk area on arrival, and again when you leave the desk at the end of the day.

Do not come to the office if you have a temperature, have been advised to self-isolate, or are experiencing any of the symptoms of Covid-19.

## **Arranging to come to the office**

Any staff wishing to come into the office must arrange to do so in advance. Turning up without prior notification will not be allowed. This is to enable MCM to manage the number of people in the building. Arrangements can be made by contacting Ellen Redmayne-Smith by email or via Teams.

## **Coming to the office and leaving the office**

Access to the office, and circulation through the building, other than in MCM's own second floor area, is under the control of Fora, and is subject to their Covid-19 health and safety procedures. These are contained in the attached "The New Standard" document, which sets out the protocols to be followed in the building. Please note the following points:

- Thermal imaging cameras are provided at the reception desk. Non-invasive temperature checks are done for all Fora residents, guests, and staff on arrival.

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- Hand washing stations are available in every lobby of every building, and must be used.
- Disposable face coverings are provided for all residents, guests, and staff. These must be worn when moving around public areas of the building.
- Clinical-quality cleaning is provided to the Fora spaces. Additional staff have been provided, with advanced training for Housekeeping, and anti-viral cleaning solutions proven to kill MRSA, E-coli, Norovirus and Coronavirus. In addition to nightly cleaning schedules, Fora have implemented hourly cleanings of kitchens and washrooms, and cleanings every 30-minutes in lifts. Meeting rooms and Wellness Studios are cleaned after every use.
- Signage has been designed to help maintain physical distancing.
- Please contact concierge by phone or email rather than face to face to reduce lobby crowding.
- Phone booths are closed for now to protect residents and staff.
- To ensure social distancing at entrances in the morning, please stagger the start times for your team members where possible.

## **Access to the working floors**

Please follow the one way systems and keep left when using stairwells. Please respect the two person limit in the lift cars.

Use sanitisation stations prior to using the kitchen, wellness areas and other shared spaces.

## **Shared Spaces**

Please use face coverings in the shared areas.

Use sanitisation stations prior to using the kitchen, wellness areas and other shared spaces.

Show consideration to fellow residents by checking with each other before moving around, sitting nearby, or waiting within shared spaces. To reduce traffic, floor access is limited to Residents that reside on that floor, unless absolutely necessary.

When using the kitchen facilities:

- Try to avoid peak times (8-10am and 12-2pm)
- Reduce the items you touch by reusing your cup, mug, or glass
- Use pre-prepared foods when possible

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- Prepare refreshments for your team. Trays will be provided
- We ask that you sanitise your hands before using the kitchen area
- Sanitise utensils after every use
- Please wear face covering in the kitchen areas
- To speed the cleaning process, please place disposable items in the waste bins provided and leave the kitchen area clean.

## **Travel to the Office**

As MCM's offices are located in central London, means of travel by staff to the office is a major factor to be taken into account when assessing risks associated with coming to the office.

Consultation with staff has found that 65% are reliant on one or more forms of public transport to get to the office. Only 35% could get to the office without using public transport on a regular basis.

Public transport has now opened up, with the stipulation that non-medical masks are mandatory for travel. MCM advises travel to the office without using public transport wherever possible. Where public transport must be used, then we encourage staff to travel outside of peak hours. However, individual staff must make their own assessment and decision as to whether or not they wish to use public transport to get to the office.