

## RISK ASSESSMENT AND GUIDELINES FOR GARRATTS SOLICITORS REGARDING COVID-19

This document sets out our most recent Risk Assessment and the Guidelines upon which we will operate over the next stage of the Pandemic. These measures will assist and encourage safe working within the business during the pandemic and the protection of members of the public attending the Offices.

### 1. Social Distancing in the Workplace

#### 1.1. Staff arriving at and leaving work (for members of the public, see 1.4)

*Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible, on arrival and departure and to ensure handwashing upon arrival.*

- 1.1.1. Going forward we will ask that the first person into the office prop open the internal door from the waiting room into the meeting rooms to minimise contact throughout the day. The coded door into the rest of the building will be closed for security reasons. There will be hand sanitiser available once through the door, however, we would recommend washing your hands on arrival to the office.
- 1.1.2. The signing in sheet will remain in reception, hand sanitiser will be supplied so that once signed in, you can sanitise your hands and make your way into the rest of the building. I would ask that you minimise as much as possible your trips outside of the building, including appointments and lunch breaks etc.
- 1.1.3. Signing out will remain the same, however, the last person to leave the building should close the internal door for security and fire safety.
- 1.1.4. As will be reiterated within this document, please be aware and respect the social distancing advice where possible by keeping a 2 metre distance from one another.

#### 1.2. Moving around the building

*Objective: To maintain social distancing wherever possible while people travel through the workplace.*

- 1.2.1. Movement around the building should be kept to a minimum. There are the essential exceptions such as toilet and lunch breaks, however, trips to the printer should be kept to a minimum by sending printing to a document box and collecting on a less frequent basis. The same applies to collecting files.
- 1.2.2. The use of the stairs over the lift is advisable, or if you do need to use it, keep the number of occupants to a minimum and wash your hands after use.

#### 1.3. Workplaces and workstations

*Objective: To maintain social distancing between individuals when they are at their workstations.*

- 1.3.1. The social distancing measures will be maintained where possible, throughout the building. Where possible workstations will be assigned to an individual, however, if they do need to be shared, it will be with the smallest possible number of people.
- 1.3.2. Measures have already been taken to reduce the occupancy of the secretaries office to aid with social distancing. These measures will remain in place.

- 1.3.3. Rooms that have higher/shared occupancy have been measured and scaled plans of the spaces will also be provided to give a visual representation of the space required.

#### 1.4. Client Meetings

*Objective: To reduce transmission due to face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in meetings.*

- 1.4.1. Meetings can take place remotely or in person dependent on client preference, provided that the current social distancing guidance are maintained.
- 1.4.2. If a meeting is to take place in person, please ensure that you follow the procedures previously advised and the following will apply.
  - 1.4.2.1. The meeting rooms have a maximum capacity for 2 clients who must be from the same household.
  - 1.4.2.2. Children cannot be accommodated and we reserve the right to decline the appointment should clients bring children to the office with them.
  - 1.4.2.3. Reception will call the fee earner to inform them of their client's presence.
  - 1.4.2.4. The fee earner must be responsible for allowing their client access into the meeting room and requesting that they use the sanitiser provided.
  - 1.4.2.5. It is recommended that the fee earner give clear verbal instructions to the client to direct them to the correct interview room and allow them to be seated so that a 2 metre distance can be maintained.
  - 1.4.2.6. A sign will be in place on the meeting room doors to assist the clients where to be seated.
  - 1.4.2.7. If you require a client to sign documents, pens in the meeting rooms can be used but must be sanitised afterwards. Sharing of pens/equipment could lead to transmission.
  - 1.4.2.8. At the end of your meeting, please show the client out and use an anti-bacterial wipe to wipe over the surfaces and contact points that the client may have come into contact with. For example, phone, door handles/plates and desktop.
  - 1.4.2.9. The furthest that clients will be allowed to progress within the building is the meeting rooms to control/limit spread. Therefore the W.C facilities will not be available to clients.

#### 1.5. Common Areas

*Objective: To maintain social distancing while using common areas.*

- 1.5.1. Due to the size of the kitchens, there must only be one person at a time in the third floor kitchen and two in the first floor kitchen.
- 1.5.2. The cleaning arrangements will remain the same for the office. Anti-bacterial wipes are provided in the common areas so that staff are able to wipe down frequently.
- 1.5.3. We ask that you wipe down surfaces following the use of the kitchen.
- 1.5.4. We encourage all employees to bring your own food and limit the amount of trips off site where possible.
- 1.5.5. If you do need to leave site, please maintain social distancing and upon return wash your hands.

## 1.6. Accidents, Security and Other Incidents

*Objective: To prioritise safety during incidents.*

- 1.6.1. In an emergency, for example, an accident or fire, people do not have to stay 2m apart if it would be unsafe.
- 1.6.2. People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

## 1.7. Managing Contracts

*Objective: To minimise the number of unnecessary visits to offices.*

- 1.7.1. If a physical visit is required, our guidance on social distancing and hygiene must be explained to visitors.
- 1.7.2. Where possible, schedule essential services at a time when interaction between people can be kept to a minimum.
- 1.7.3. All visitors must be recorded. There is a separate sheet in reception for visits to be recorded. Please ask reception staff to record the visit.

## 1.8. Providing and Explaining Available Guidance

*Objective: To make sure people understand what they need to do to maintain safety.*

- 1.8.1. Clear signage will be in place to make visitors aware of social distancing and hygiene when they arrive.
- 1.8.2. Fee earners will be responsible for hosting their clients and visitors. You will be responsible for maintaining the social distancing and hygiene guidance. You must wipe down the meeting room and touch points once your meeting is over.

## 2. Cleaning the Workplace

### 2.1. Keeping the Workplace Clean

*Objective: To keep the workplace clean and prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces.*

- 2.1.1. The cleaning of the offices will remain the same, however, anti-bacterial cleaning products and wipes will be provided for regular wipe downs.
- 2.1.2. Regular cleaning of your own work area and equipment is recommended.
- 2.1.3. Please keep the use of high touch items, such as printers, to a minimum and wipe down regularly.

### 2.2. Hygiene: Handwashing, Sanitation Facilities and Toilets

*Objective: To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.*

- 2.2.1. Additional signage has been put around the offices to build awareness of good handwashing technique and the need to increase handwashing frequency.
- 2.2.2. Avoid touching your face and cough or sneeze into a tissue and bin it safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- 2.2.3. Hand sanitiser is provided to all offices.
- 2.2.4. Paper towels are provided as an alternative for drying hands. Please ensure that they are disposed of in the bins provided.

### 2.3. Handling Goods, Merchandise and Other Materials

*Objective: To reduce transmission through contact with objects that come into the workplace and vehicles at the worksite.*

- 2.3.1. Hand sanitiser is provided for those handling goods and merchandise, although, hand washing is encouraged where possible.
- 2.3.2. Deliveries should be made to the waiting room or the area at the bottom of the stairs if this is not practical.
- 2.3.3. Social distancing should be adhered to when taking deliveries or giving collections. Most delivery services will not ask you to sign for things now to avoid contamination.

### 2.4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

- 2.4.1. Wearing a face covering is optional and is not required by law, including in the workplace. If you choose to wear one, it is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and taking them off.
- 2.4.2. If you wear a mask you must follow the guidance below:-
  - 2.4.2.1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
  - 2.4.2.2. When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
  - 2.4.2.3. Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
  - 2.4.2.4. Continue to wash your hands regularly.
  - 2.4.2.5. Change and wash your face covering daily.
  - 2.4.2.6. If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
  - 2.4.2.7. Continue to practise social distancing wherever possible.

### 2.5. Work Related Travel

*Objective: To avoid unnecessary work travel and keep people safe when they do need to travel between locations.*

- 2.5.1. Where possible, please limit the amount of inter office travel.
- 2.5.2. You should first consider remote options, such as Skype or Zoom etc.
- 2.5.3. If a remote option is not a possibility, you must try to arrange meetings at your base office.
- 2.5.4. Where this is not possible, you must maintain a high level of hygiene, washing or sanitising your hands where possible and maintaining social distancing.

### 2.6. Ongoing Communication and Signage

*Objective: To make sure all workers are kept up to date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated.*

- 2.6.1. We will continue to communicate with you in a clear manner about all aspects of the pandemic and the impact to your work.
- 2.6.2. Clear signage will be used and updated in line with any changes.

- 2.6.3. Consideration will be given to those where English is not their first language where signage is concerned.
- 2.6.4. We are aware of the importance of mental health in times of uncertainty. We would like anyone to feel free to discuss any issues with your department head or a partner.
- 2.6.5. The governments guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>
- 2.6.6. If you have any concerns that you would like to raise, please communicate them to Adrian Reid, your department head or a partner.