

WELSH GOVERNMENT RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment Title:	COVID-19 RETURN TO THE OFFICE
Risk Assessment No:	WORKPLACE AND FACILITIES - GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT 03

- This assessment applies to all staff returning to work in Welsh Government offices.
- The priority remains to safeguard health and minimise the risk of infection through the implementation of reasonable and proportionate counter-measures
- The risk assessment is owned by PSG Facilities Management and will be reviewed in line with developments in government regulations, guidelines and public health advice in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

What are the hazards associated with the activity?	Who might be harmed and how?	What counter-measures are we taking to reduce the risk?	Risk Owner	Risk Evaluation		
				L	I	O
Spread of infection in the workplace	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices including sub-tenants as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The predominant modes of transmission of COVID-19 are understood to be airborne droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces. ➤ The following counter-measures are designed to minimise these transmission risks. <p>Physical distancing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revised office layouts including revised seating plans prepared for each office based on two-metre distancing. Maximum safe office capacity reduced to 30% to 40% ➤ Social distancing signage, floor markings and visual cues throughout offices to help staff minimise person-to-person contact and achieve safe boundaries. 	Redacted Section 40(2)	2	4	8

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff will not work within 2 metres of each other at any time – with the exception of those undertaking specific service delivery functions (subject to bespoke risk assessment). ➤ Building entry/exit arrangements redesigned to ensure physical distancing requirements can be maintained ➤ Changes to signing-in arrangements for staff and visitors (when permitted) to minimise the risks of transmission. ➤ Adaptations to physical security processes and checks made to make interactions between security personnel and receptionists with staff and visitors safer. ➤ Further adaptations implemented include protective screening at high-interface locations (e.g. reception and catering outlets) ➤ Core messages remain – work from home where possible; virtual meetings by default. No external visitors unless by exceptional agreement ➤ Number of people physically attending any meeting in Welsh Government offices limited to a set maximum in line with physical distancing measures ➤ Lifts, toilets, showers and changing rooms limited to single occupancy. Lift occupancy can increase to two or more persons if members of the same household ➤ Redesigned self-service style catering provision with card / contactless payment preferred. Catering services are being delivered in line with the contractor’s bespoke risk assessment. ➤ Numbers of staff and others coming into the office are managed in line with the reduced numbers of people offices will be able to accommodate to meet physical 				

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		<p>distancing measures or alternative lower maximum limits set by the organisation through the transition phases.</p> <p>Office cleaning and sanitising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All offices thoroughly cleaned prior to re-occupation ➤ Enhanced cleaning regime in place across the estate with emphasis on high touch areas, increased frequency and presence during the day. ➤ Cleaning regime agreed in conjunction with principal service provider to include robust site monitoring arrangements – and the availability of swab-testing equipment for joint cleaning audits. ➤ Easy to locate sanitisation stations for staff and visitors at office entry points and in prominent locations throughout offices. These include hand sanitiser and surface / equipment cleaning products. <p>Clear safe desks and surfaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clear desk imperative communicated to all staff to enable thorough and effective cleaning of desks and surfaces. ➤ New Clean Workspace Policy agreed with Trade Unions. ➤ Adhering to clear desk protocols remains a vital hygiene requirement. Monitored as part of new cleaning regime. ➤ Introduction of a 'red card' notice for any desk left in breach of the Clean Workspace Policy to indicate 				

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		<p>cleaning has not been possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Action taken in advance of building re-occupation to clear all desks and surfaces to enable thorough cleaning to take place prior to re-occupation. <p>Ventilation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The latest industry guidance on the operation and use of building services in order to minimise the risk of spreading coronavirus recommends avoiding recirculation of air. ➤ Welsh Government will continue to follow industry guidance on the safe operation of its building systems during the pandemic. ➤ Revised operating parameters introduced for mechanical ventilation systems allow for full fresh air supply. These have been in place since lockdown ➤ Enhanced filtration measures introduced. ➤ Mechanical ventilation systems will continue to be operated in line with latest COVID-19 ventilation guidance ➤ Communication to staff encouraging them to open windows (where available) more than normal to boost ventilation ➤ Action taken to remove portable plug-in desk fans which pose an additional risk of airborne transmission and spreading infection ➤ Signage in toilet areas reminding staff to close toilet seats before flushing to mitigate the potential risk of airborne contamination from this route. 	Building SROs			

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		<p>Building Charters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each office has a bespoke Building Charter in place setting out arrangements/procedures within the office to protect the health safety and well-being of staff and other building users (e.g. contractors etc.). ➤ Staff required to confirm that they have read and understood requirements and sign a 'pledge to protect' before attending an office for the first time. ➤ The above documents are reviewed in line with Welsh Government's transition planning. <p>Lateral Flow Testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lateral flow self-test kits are available if staff are unable to work from home which includes those who are working from one of our open offices for business critical or wellbeing reasons. Use of the kits is voluntary but encouraged. ➤ Guidance has also issued on how staff can obtain lateral flow self-test kits for home delivery. 	WG Staff			
Insufficient time for all pre-occupancy checks and preparations ('readiness essentials') to be	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices including sub-tenants as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All statutory/mandatory building maintenance across the estate has continued through the lockdown phase. From a maintenance perspective all offices are compliant and ready for re-occupation ➤ Offices re-opened on a phased basis to enable available resource to be managed effectively. ➤ There is a pause and review after each transition phase 	Redacted Section 40(2)	1	4	4

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undertaken before offices are re-opened compromising health and safety	appropriate	<p>so that lessons gained can be applied to subsequent phases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Subsequent phasing has full regard to resource availability necessary to ensure all pre-occupancy preparations are carried out ➤ Revised office layouts to achieve physical distancing completed ➤ All desks and surfaces cleared in advance to enable thorough cleaning prior to reoccupation ➤ Additional resource secured for extensive clearance activity where required. 				
Not maintaining adequate stocks of hand sanitiser, cleaning/ disinfectant products and PPE for individuals to follow hygiene protocols	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices and sub-tenants as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sufficient stocks secured in advance of re-opening and pre-ordering undertaken. ➤ Alternate sources of supply continue to be explored as appropriate in conjunction with key service providers. ➤ Working with key service providers to ensure on-site staff/contractor personnel have the PPE needed to fulfil specific functions / activities – which will be subject to bespoke risk assessment. ➤ Supply chain issues are no longer problematic but this will be kept under continuous review to ensure continuity of supply going forward. 	Redacted Section 40(2)	1	3	3
Insufficient numbers of Fire Marshals and Incident Control Officers to be able to carry out emergency	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices and sub-tenants as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fire Risk Assessments reviewed/revised prior to re-opening. ➤ Fire Marshals engaged. Numbers of Fire Marshals attending site established. ➤ Fire Safety Awareness training provided to additional staff to supplement numbers. ➤ Numbers of fire marshals further supplemented 	Redacted Section 40(2)	2	4	8

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evacuation	appropriate	<p>(nominations from site-based contractor personnel).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Site specific training provided for new fire marshal recruits on local evacuation arrangements. ➤ Independent spot checks by Crown Premises Fire Inspector for Wales ➤ Evacuation procedures to be compliant with social distancing requirements in so far as is reasonably practicable. ➤ Taking advice from Welsh Government fire safety specialist arrangements have been adapted according to individual site-specific circumstances to ensure an appropriate response in the event of an evacuation having regard also to the fact that WG office premises are categorised as low risk. ➤ These arrangements include a new Fire Marshal response procedure, temporary roll-call arrangements and staff being corralled in specific areas of WG buildings for ease of evacuation management. ➤ Any changes to standard evacuation management arrangements have been communicated at a local level to those affected. ➤ Arrangements are monitored at the building level under the direction and oversight of the respective Safe Transition House Committee. ➤ NB - associated risks for those staff requiring Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) must also be considered by the line manager and respective business areas and in consultation with the PEEP holder in determining which staff can safely return to the office, having particular regard to the limited 				

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		numbers of other staff available in offices to assist with an evacuation. The option of ground floor accommodation can be considered where available and appropriate for PEEP holders who need to be in the office for critical business continuity or welfare reasons				
Unable to provide first aid to staff due to insufficient numbers of trained first aid personnel on site.	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of first aiders attending each site established to determine potential gaps and coverage requirements. Arrangements continually monitored ➤ All available trained first aiders (including our third parties and contractors), to be utilised and shared across site. ➤ Process developed for coordinating first aider response and communicating coverage arrangements with staff. ➤ Alternative interventions adopted where appropriate. Where staff numbers are low, an “appointed person” is in place who is in charge of the first aid coordination arrangements, including calling emergency services, if required. (This is in line with the Health & Safety Executive guidance for low risk workplaces) ➤ All sites provided with first aid posters highlighting the first aid support that is available within each building. ➤ Where a site is shared with other tenants, the sharing of first aid resource is encouraged and agreed between the relevant parties on site. 	H&S Team	4	3	12
Not controlling building occupancy and exceeding capacity limits set	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designated persons (Building SROs) responsible for managing which staff and teams come into the office and when in line with the reduced numbers of people offices will be able to safely accommodate to meet physical distancing requirements or alternative lower 	Building SROs	1	3	3

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to achieve two-metre social distancing rule	offices and sub-tenants as appropriate	<p>maximum limits set by the organisation through the transition phases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Safe Transition House Committees established as key control mechanism. ➤ New 'real time' occupancy tracking technology installed at all re-opened offices to assist in monitoring office occupation levels. 	Redacted Section 40(2)			
New incidence of COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 on the premises	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices and sub-tenants as appropriate	<p>C-19 Workplace Incident Framework in place including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cleaning and decontamination response procedure in place ➤ The building FM will follow building procedures for commissioning an urgent, thorough clean of the infected area that meets the guidance issued by Public Health England (PHE) COVID-19: Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting. ➤ WG to inform the cleaning team of a deep clean requirement within 2 hours of being notified of a workplace incident. ➤ Cleaning Team to undertake a deep clean within 1 hour where cleaners are already on site and within 4 hours for other sites. It is expected that all parties will aim to have the area reopened safely within 72 hours (subject to a further risk assessment). Vinci Facilities understand and can meet standards 	<p>Health and Safety Team</p> <p>Redacted Section 40(2)</p>	2	3	6

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		<p>required in the above guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Incident to be reported via the Accident/Incident reporting system in order that an investigation can take place to try to determine cause of outbreak and to ensure that all measures in place remain effective. 	Individual/ Line Manager/ First aider H&S Team			
Welsh Government sub-tenants not adhering to revised COVID-19 office operating procedures and policies	All staff, visitors and contractor personnel attending Welsh Government offices and sub-tenants as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relevant revised return to work protocols communicated to sub-tenants. ➤ Through the Safe Transition House Committees Building SROs to ensure new protocols, distancing strategies and occupancy controls are understood and practiced by all building occupants. 	Redacted Section 40(2) PSG Land Division Building SROs	2	3	6
Impact of COVID-19 office counter-measures on provision of workplace adjustments	Disabled staff and others with agreed Workplace Adjustments as recommended by occupational health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In many cases staff whose workplace adjustments could be affected will be working from home so there will be no conflict between office Covid 19 measures and need for adjustments. In this context, working from home may provide the best workplace adjustment. ➤ Where a member of staff is working in the office and normal adjustments are affected by office Covid 19 measures, means of making adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis with advice as needed from the Workplace Adjustment Team 	Redacted Section 40(2)	3	3	9

Additional Information relevant to the activity:

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Assessor:	Redacted Section 40(2)
Senior Manager Accountable:	Redacted Section 40(2)
Date:	
Assessment Review Date	September 2021

Risk Rating

I = impact (impact if the risk materialises, scored 1 to 5)
L = likelihood (likelihood of the risk materialising, scored 1 to 5)
O = overall rating (impact x likelihood, scored 1 to 25)

High Risk: 16 to 25 - Activities should cease immediately until further control measures to mitigate the risk are introduced;

Medium Risk: 9 to 15 – Activities should only be tolerated for the short-term and then only whilst further control measures to mitigate the risk are being planned and introduced, within a defined time period;

Low Risk: 1 to 8 – Largely acceptable, subject to reviews periodically, or after significant change