

COVID Sense IS Common Sense: The Way Forward

Since March 2020, Businesses across Hertfordshire have been asked to make significant changes to the way they work. These changes have been critical in helping to keep our communities safe and as we begin to emerge from the restrictions, we need to maintain control to prevent the effect of current / future diseases and learn to live with COVID and its variations.

Although vaccinations are available, we cannot become complacent. It is vital, now more than ever, to ensure Business' comply with the Health and Safety Act, with Risk Assessments being reviewed to reflect the changing working environments on a regular basis. The [Governments Working Safely Guidance](#) can provide further help.

1. Maintaining Control **BENEFITS** Your Business By:

- Forming the basis of your Business Continuity Plan: Keeping the business open and profitable.
- Ensuring your local communities across the county are protected now and in the future.
- Boosting consumer confidence: enhances business reputation as a 'safe' business to visit.
- Reducing the risk of transmissible disease, thus protecting staff, customers, and your Business.
- Giving staff and customers confidence to interact with each other safely.
- Supporting employee wellness and mental health.
- Reducing staff sickness and increasing staff retention

2. Practical Steps on **HOW** to Maintain Control

What was previously a legal requirement is now Government guidance. COVID has **NOT** gone away and can still **AFFECT YOUR BUSINESS**. You need to ensure that you maintain control to reduce the risk of **ANY** transmissible diseases (COVID variants, T.B, flu etc) by continuing with what you are already doing i.e.

- Following the current Government guidance / legal obligations.
- Reviewing your COVID 19 risk assessment when changes occur.
- Supporting social distancing / restricting numbers *(if required from Risk Assessment)*
- Ensuring that there is adequate ventilation and air movement. If possible, utilise outdoor areas. ***(please see [our guide on ventilation](#))***
- Encouraging hand washing with soap and warm water. Providing Hand Sanitiser (at least 60% + alcohol)
- Continuing with good hygiene / cleaning procedures.
- Encourage Employees to have the COVID vaccination: supplying them with accurate information. (You cannot legally force Employees to take the vaccination.)
- Encourage Employees to cover their nose / mouth when they cough / sneeze; staying at home if unwell / COVID symptoms occur etc
- Wearing of face masks *(if required from Risk Assessment)*

(Cont'd)

2. Practical Steps on **HOW** to Maintain Control (Cont'd)

- Ensuring regular staff training is undertaken.
- Supplying relevant communications to staff, customers and stakeholders.
- Displaying the QR code poster and collecting customers' details if they do not have the app. *(this is no longer a legal requirement but good practice)*
- Encouraging twice weekly Lateral Flow Tests amongst Staff

3. **ADDITIONAL** Controls / Suggestions You May Want to Consider:

- Monitor local infection rates: This may prompt you to review your Risk Assessment.
- Find out what are other Business' are doing within your sector.
- If existing controls can remain in place, without impacting the business, can they remain as an additional control measure? ie. One-way systems, barriers etc

4. **WHO / WHAT** Can Support You?

- [Your local Environmental Health Team, other council regulators and economic development teams](#)
- [BBfA Trading Safely Toolkit](#)
- [Hertfordshire Growth Hub](#)
- [Business Improvement Districts \(BIDS\)](#)
- [Hertfordshire Trading Standards](#)
- [Hertfordshire Fire Protection](#)
- The [Government Working Safely Sector Guides](#)
- [Food Standards Agency](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive](#)
- [ACAS](#)

