JF DUNNE INSURANCES

in association with

Irish Risk Management CENTRE

COVID-19

RETURN TO WORK INFORMATION

The Return to Work Safely Protocol

Along with a phased roadmap for re-opening business and society, the Irish Government has published 'The Return to Work Safely Protocol' designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

The Protocol is a 29-page document published by The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation. It's not specific to any industry or sector but contains guidelines for all employers to follow when reopening following restrictions as well as employers who were continually active during restrictions (*see links below to read the protocol*).

The Protocol states that 'any decisions to re-open a workplace shall be in done in compliance with the Government and public health advice' and should be used by all workplaces to adapt their workplace procedures and practices to comply fully with the COVID-19 related public health protection measures identified as necessary by the HSE.

What measures do I need to take before I reopen for business?

All measures to be taken by employers are listed in Protocol. One of the most important is to follow 'current Government guidelines. As we've seen already, guidelines can change as new information arrives and as the situation develops. The onus is on employers to regularly check current guidelines and update safety measures if required.

Current guidelines and information for employers is available at:

www.gov.ie

www.hsa.ie

www.hse.ie

www.nsai.ie

Among the measures Employers must have in place are:

- A business COVID-19 Response Plan *(details below)*

- COVID-19 induction training for employees *(the protocol lists items to be covered)*

- Returning workers must complete a 'Pre-Return to Work' form 3 days in advance *(see template below)*

- COVID-19 risk assessment carried out & Safety Statement updated

- COVID-19 Staff Representative appointed

- Contact tracing logs in place

- Physical distancing measures in place

- Queue management & One-way systems in please where needed

- COVID-19 Information signs and symptoms of displayed *(see links below)*

- Temperature testing in place

- Appropriate hygiene facilities

- Regular cleaning and disinfection routine

- Plan to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace *(including a designated isolation area)*

- Canteens and break areas organised

- Cleaning & Personal Protective Equipment available *(should include Tissues, Hand sanitisers, Disinfectant, Disposable gloves & Face masks)*

(See Employers Return to Work Checklist below)

Note: This is not a complete list of measures, a full list of measures for employers is available in the 'The Return to Work Safely Protocol' at https://www.gov.ie

JFDUNNE INSURANCES

The COVID-19 Response Plan

Every workplace must now have a COVID-19 Response Plan. This has a similar layout and function to a Health & Safety Statement. It should be specific to the employer's workplace and list details of the employer's policies and measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and should comply with the Return to Work Safely Protocol. The plan should be regularly reviewed to take account of updated guidelines.
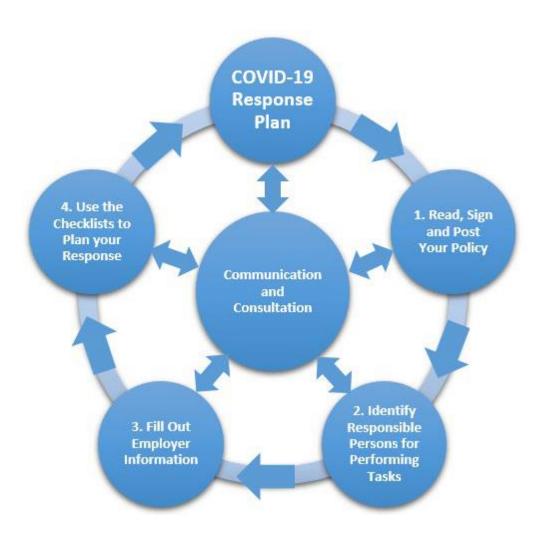
The Health & Safety Authority have provided a template that employers may use for this *(see link below)*.

This template should be 'personalised' to your business and contain all necessary details and measures taken in *your* workplace.

Along with the Response Plan Template, The HSA has produced seven **checklists** *(links below)*.

The checklists are designed to help you follow the Protocol and will highlight any areas you may have missed. Some items may not apply to your workplace.

The checklists should be completed and kept with your Response Plan to demonstrate your compliance.

Remember – It's not enough just to have a Response Plan document. Policies must be adhered to and the listed controls must be in place. There may be serious implications for businesses who don't follow guidelines. The Health & Safety Authority have the power to inspect business premises and issue prohibition notices. This may follow a random inspection or a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace

Guidelines for Coach, Bus & PSV operators.

Capacity

According to current Government Public Health advice, capacity on a public or private coach should not exceed 50% while maintaining distance between passengers. This may be achieved by using window seats only and leaving aisle seats free (this should be clearly marked).

Face Coverings

The wearing of Face Coverings on public transport became mandatory on 13/07/20. This does not apply to children under 13 or to those with a 'reasonable excuse' such as illness or disability.

A driver may request a passenger to wear a covering, refuse entry or ask a passenger to leave if they don't wear a face covering.

Drivers should always consider their own safety as well as that of their passengers. The Gardai Siochana should be contacted where necessary.

Guidelines

A comprehensive set of guidelines for the reopening of tourist transport has been published by **Failte Ireland** and is regularly updated. Many of these guidelines will also apply to private coach hire and includes information on cleaning vehicles, passenger safety and signage. The guidelines are available here:

https://covid19.failteireland.ie/business-supports/business-reopening/guidelines-for-re-opening/guidelines-for-re-opening-tourist-transport/

USEFUL COVID-19 SIGNAGE

JF DUNNE INSURANCES

Important Links

Return to Work Safely Protocol (national protocol for employers & employees)

https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/

COVID 19 Response Plan Template *(use this template to write your plan)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/covid19-response-plan-template1.pdf

Checklist No. 1: Planning & Preparing

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employers_checklist_no11.pdf

Checklist No. 2: Control Measures

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employers_checklist_no2_control_measure1.pdf

Checklist No. 3: Induction/Familiarisation *(Most of this checklist will be completed following COVID-19 training)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employers_checklist_no3_induction1.pdf

Checklist No. 4: Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 *(some of this checklist would only be used in the event of a suspected case)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employers-checklist-no-41.pdf

Checklist No. 5: Cleaning & Disinfection

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employers_checklist_no5_cleaning-and-disinfection1.pdf

JFDUNNE INSURANCES

Checklist No. 6: Workers *(to be completed by employees following training)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/employee_checklist_no-61.pdf

Checklist No. 7: Workplace Representatives *(completed by the staff rep)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_and_checklists/worker_representative_checklist_no_71.pdf

COVID-19 Information Signs *(can be printed and displayed in the workplace)*

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/

Employers Return to Work Checklist

The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has produced 'The Return to Work Safely Protocol' designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

The Protocol should be used by all workplaces to adapt their workplace procedures and practices to comply fully with the COVID-19 related public health protection measures identified as necessary by the HSE. The protocol is available at www.gov.ie and www.hsa.ie.

EMPLOYER NAME: _____

WORKPLACE ADDRESS: _____

Are the following measures in place?

	YES	NO
A business COVID-19 Response Plan		
COVID-19 induction training for employees		
Pre-return to work form for workers		
COVID-19 risk assessment carried out (includes how workers may be exposed, general public, customers, co-workers etc.)		
At Risk/Vulnerable Workers considered		
Controls in place to address the risks identified		
Health & Safety Statement updated		
Safety Representative appointed		
Log of contact/group work to facilitate contact tracing		
Physical distancing measures in place		
Distance markings in please where needed		
Queue management systems in please where needed		
One-way systems where needed & possible		
Customer/visitor contacts limited & controlled		
Barriers and markings to separate workers and customers		
Multiple occupancy of offices and workspace avoided		
Workers don't share tools/equipment/phones/stationary etc.		
Physical barriers in place where 2 metre worker separation cannot be ensured		

Information on signs and symptoms of COVID-19 displayed		
Advice on COVID-19 measures displayed		
Information on how to wash hands displayed		
Information on good respiratory practice displayed		
Temperature testing in place		
Appropriate hygiene facilities		
Advice and training on how to perform hand hygiene		
Regular cleaning and disinfection routine established		
Plan to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace		
Manager appointed for suspected cases		
Instruction for workers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work		
Designated isolation area identified		
Contingency measures for absenteeism		
Canteens and break areas organised		
Break times appropriately staggered		
No sharing of cups/utensils		
Cleaning & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available **(The following should be included)**		
Tissues		
Hand sanitisers (including all entry/exit points)		
Disinfectant		
Wipes		
Disposable gloves (where required)		
Face masks (where required)		
Clinical waste bags		

SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

Note: This is not a complete list of measures, a full list of measures for employers is available in the 'The Return to Work Safely Protocol' at www.gov.ie

Employee Pre-Return to Work Form

This form has been developed as part of our compliance with the National Return to Work Safely Protocol (COVID-19 Specific National Protocol for Employers and Workers). All employees returning to work following COVID-19 restrictions are required to complete this form at least 3 days in advance of returning to work.

Employees answering yes to questions 1 – 6 are strongly advised to follow the medical advice they receive or seek medical advice before returning to work

EMPLOYER NAME: _____

WORKPLACE ADDRESS: _____

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____

*Please tick **Yes** or **No** to the following questions.*

		YES	NO
1	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms now or in the past 14 days?		
2	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3	Are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days (i.e. less than 2m for more than 15 minutes accumulative in 1 day)?		
4	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
5	Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time?		
6	Do you have any reason to believe you are at higher risk from COVID-19 than the general population?		
7	Do you agree to attend induction training containing advice and information on COVID-19 in the workplace?		
8	Do you agree to submit to regular non-invasive temperature testing in line with Public Health advice?		
9	Do you agree to comply with & implement all workplace safety guidelines designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19?		

Signed:_____

Date: _____