



Your COVID-19 Five-Point Action Plan



Let's Get You Back to Business

On the evening of Sunday 10 May, Boris Johnson introduced an overview of the government's phased plan to gradually move the country out of lockdown.

The measures, which came into force on Wednesday 13 May, include 'unlimited' time outdoors (as long as social distancing is maintained), encouraging those who can't work from home – such as those in construction or manufacturing – to return to work and plans to open schools in stages. The country is now starting to look toward life beyond total lockdown.

As a business owner, you're probably thinking about your next steps when it comes to opening the doors of your business and you may have already started to put your plans together based on the Back to Business guidance you've already received from us. To make sure you've covered the key actions in your planning process, our experts have gathered the top 5 points for you that you should be dealing with right now.



Work from home if you can

The guidance states that "all reasonable steps" should be taken by employers to help people work from home but "for those who cannot work from home and whose workplace has not been told to close, our message is clear: you should go to work."

If you've made the temporary move to homeworking, it's now time to start considering how you will make that arrangement more permanent, at least in the medium to long term. Here's some starting points to consider.

CONTACT

For more information call us
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CHECKLIST

- Is homeworking a benefit for your business? Can you reduce overheads on office space by allowing more if it?
- If full time homeworking wouldn't work, could staff do part office/part home based?
- Do you have a homeworking policy?
- Flexible working applications - what has been your approach before, what is your view now? Discuss the advantages of a proactive approach.
- Do you need to review your data protection policy where confidential and sensitive information is being taken home etc?
- Have you considered how best to keep in regular contact with your people, maintaining their wellbeing and managing anxiety around returning to work
- Have you undertaken a DSE (Display Screen Equipment) assessment of your employees' home working station?
- Have you given them advice on fire and electrical safety?



Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment, and put relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) in place

All businesses, regardless of size have to legally carry out a COVID-19-specific risk assessment, to establish what safety measures you need to put in place before your people start returning to the workplace. Your COVID-19 risk assessment must be created with input from your employees.

The guidance also states "if possible, employers should publish the results of their risk assessments on their website and we expect all businesses with over 50 employees to do so".

Here are some considerations you need to make when it comes to properly risk assessing your premises.

CHECKLIST

- Are you confident that you can conduct a robust risk assessment yourself?
- Will your risk assessments help you decide if you need to use PPE or RPE in the workplace?
- Can you confidently select the right PPE/RPE for your people to use?
- Is your risk assessment easily understandable for all your employees?
- How will you train your employees in the content of the risk assessment?
- Are you able to update your website with your COVID-19-specific risk assessment?
- Have you completed your Covid Secure certificate and displayed it?



Maintain 2 metres social distancing, wherever possible, and if not possible, manage transmission risk

It's highly likely that when it's time for you to reopen your doors and start to introduce people back into the workplace, you'll have to redesign your workplace to maintain the required 2-metre social distancing. If you can't maintain 2-metre distancing, it's down to you as an employer to put in place measures to manage the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

CHECKLIST

- Do you need to remodel your workspace? Can you create one-way walkthroughs to ensure people are 2-metres apart?
- Can you open more entrances and exits to avoid a bottle neck of people?
- Can you change seating or desk layouts to keep people apart? Is staggering start and finish times a way to manage social distancing?
- If your people can't be 2 metres apart, can you put barriers in shared spaces? Create workplace shift patterns or create fixed teams to manage risk of transmission?
- Where people have to work closely, can they face away from each other and still fulfil their duties?



Reinforcing cleaning processes

Safe hygiene practices are going to be key for a long time to come in the workplace and will be vital in managing transmission of the COVID-19 virus among your people.

Do you already have core hygiene practices in place? Here are some of our top tips for upping your hygiene practices when you're back in the workplace.

CHECKLIST

- Additional cleaning materials around the offices and in kitchens/toilets will be needed (along with a COSHH Assessment for these cleaning materials). This should include disinfectant spray known to kill coronavirus and antibacterial wipes.
- Encourage staff to clean equipment (phones, keyboards, tools etc.) before use and at the end of the working day.
- Bins must be provided (ideally near the exits) for safe disposal of PPE/RPE.
- Any communal equipment (cutlery, crockery etc.) should be taken out of use and people should be encouraged to use their own.
- Social distancing should be maintained during break and lunch hours. If this can't be done, then breaks and lunch times should be staggered.



Fire processes/procedures

Despite the major changes that the fight against COVID-19 has introduced, the government has not relaxed fire safety requirements for business owners. Whether your business is currently closed, or you're still operating during lockdown, it's likely that your fire risk will change. Here's some key points

CHECKLIST

- Is your Fire Risk Assessment up to date? If your workplace has been closed – or if your way of working has significantly changed – that can change your fire risk.
- Are your escape routes still viable?
- Are your fire marshals coming back to work or are they furloughed? Can you train anyone else up in the meantime?
- Are you confident that your fire alarms, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and fire doors are still up to scratch? Will they need to be retested by a professional before you reopen?



How can Orbex Solutions help?

Orbex Solutions Ltd is a company that specializes in finding the right voice and data solutions for small and medium sized organizations. It's three directors are all from a technical background, totaling over forty years experience between them.

The experience gained in the service industry is invaluable when applied to a consultancy task or a sales meeting. We find there are many questions that need to be answered there and then and, as with most projects, time is of the essence.

For over ten years we have been an business partner and we also install and support a number of other systems. Anyone can sell you a business telephone system, but not everyone can offer you the peace of mind that comes with the right solution tailored for your business communication needs.

Orbex offer a complete end-to-end service; from system design and installation, to support and network services. Based in central London, we specialise in finding the right voice and data solution for small and medium size organisations.

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