

**Safely Re-opening your Accommodation Business after Lockdown**

After months of lockdown many hotels, guest houses, B&Bs, camp sites and holiday rentals are starting to re-open but the process requires careful planning. There is detailed guidance from the Government, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

Our checklist is here to assist you with your planning and provide some useful pointers:

<b>General Risk Management</b>	<b>Check</b>
Review all activities to see if they are safe or how they can be made safe; a risk assessment template is a useful tool for this. If you cannot carry out an activity safely it should not be undertaken at all	
Consult with employees regarding the risk assessment, share the details and train them in the revised working procedures.	
Make sure employees understand social distancing rules, hygiene and why it is relevant	
Make sure visitors clearly understand the rules through the use of signage, floor markings, announcements, TVs, etc. and reassure them with explanations of the safety steps you are taking	
Have a plan in place to deal with employees and members of the public who do not comply with your rules	
It is good practice to have your assessment, policies and procedures recorded in writing	
Keep up to date with the changing guidelines and government announcements	
<b>Employees</b>	<b>Check</b>
Consult with employees to see who is able to return to work, considering things like transport, childcare, health issues, disability, etc. If they can continue working from home do they need to come in?	
If required, provide suitable and appropriate protective equipment such as face masks, gloves and screens	
Be aware of employee anxiety over return to work: talk through anxieties and signpost to support services. Take HR advice if there is a potential conflict	
Ensure employees are aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and understand what to do if they or someone they are in contact with experiences them	
What rules will you have regarding rest breaks, eating and storage of personal items	
Allocate tasks and roles to minimise touching of the same objects, unnecessary movement and contact	
<b>Cleaning</b>	<b>Check</b>
Will cleaning be done by employees or external contractors? Will additional and more thorough cleaning be required? Will you need to extend gaps between visitors to allow proper cleaning?	
Ensure adequate and appropriate cleaning materials and protective equipment are available. Remember alcohol-based sanitiser is flammable and has storage considerations	
Put a plan in place for regular cleaning of surfaces, paying particular attention to frequently touched items: door handles, office equipment, kitchen equipment, toilets, light switches, etc	
Ensure waste and items such as bed linen are handled and removed safely	
<b>Premises management before you re-open</b>	<b>Check</b>
If water systems have been drained they should be gradually refilled, checking for leaks. Before you re-open you should run hot and cold water systems for about 15 minutes to clear any water that may have been standing for many weeks	
Check the premises for damage, security and maintenance issues	
Test the fire & security systems and emergency lighting. Ensure that keyholder details are up to date and held by your alarm monitoring centre	
Fire suppression and sprinkler systems should be tested in line with installer's recommendations	
Some of your equipment may have gone past its inspection date – lifts, fire extinguishers, portable appliances, etc	

Ducting and extraction systems should be cleaned in line with recommended maintenance procedures	
Where building services, such as air conditioning and boilers, have been shut down they should be reinstated by qualified individuals following OEM procedures	
Check that your suppliers are operational and able to fulfil your requirements and that they understand your new procedures	
If practical, consider enforcing a separate entrance and exit to your premises and introducing a one-way system within the building. Pay particular attention to confined spaces like stairwells, lifts, kitchens, store rooms, etc.	
Think about how First Aid procedures might be impacted and review fire and emergency procedures and other risk assessments which may have changed	
Liaise with neighbouring businesses regarding topics of common interest such as: parking, waste removal, etc.	
<b>Premises management when you open</b>	<b>Check</b>
Ensure suitable washing and sanitising facilities are available throughout the premises. Shared washing facilities might need to be timetabled and cleaned between users	
Consider staggered arrival times for staff and visitors, review how they are travelling and how they will enter the premises	
Consider changing practices that allow you to eliminate or reduce contact with items like cash, keys, buffets, light switches, door handles, menus, condiments, etc. Don't lay tables until they are needed.	
Can technology be used for booking, ordering, payments, information sharing, etc?	
Will you have to reduce the number of visitors you can accept within the premises? Will you have to introduce or amend a booking system?	
How are you going to control facilities such as children's play areas, TV lounges, vending machines, etc or are you going to keep them closed?	
How will rules be communicated to visitors, especially children? How will problems be addressed? Will security staff be required?	
Look at the best way to ventilate the premises	
Stagger meal times and put measures in place to assist social distancing and hygiene in common areas such as dining rooms, bars, toilets and kitchens	
Review visitor seating and staff working practices. Side by side or back to back is better than face to face	
Encourage the use of face masks by visitors, especially those in vulnerable categories, and staff in confined areas	
What steps will you be taking to assist contact tracing if this is required, how are you collecting & storing the data securely?	
Are you going to install barriers between tables? Do you have a procedure for cleaning these?	
If you rent out your premises to third parties ensure that they carry out risk assessments and maintain standards	
Shouting increases the risk of spreading so keep music and other noises down	

More comprehensive and regularly updated information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> as well as information specific to health and safety at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>

You should also remember that various existing regulations, such as the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992, remain in force so employee and public safety must remain a priority.

For advice or assistance on risk management or your insurance please contact our team on 01905 21681 or [email us](#).

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