

Staying Safe in the Heat...

Many of us are being asked to carry out our job very differently at the moment due to the coronavirus pandemic, and with the spell of hot weather it is important to remember to stay safe in the heat.

Some people are being asked to work from home, no longer with access to office air conditioning, having to use rooms in their house which may be warmer due to other elements, such as kitchen equipment.

Others are being asked to return to work and are required to wear much more layers than they are used to. Such as; masks, overalls, and face shields. Others may be carrying out their work within confined workspaces separated by screens.

It is important we are returning to work safely, however; we must remember the other threats out there, especially during the summer months, where heat exhaustion, heat stroke, sunburn, and dehydration is common.

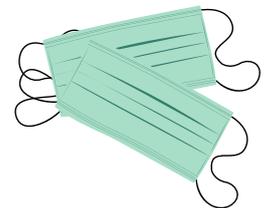
Here are some simple steps to consider so you can protect yourself and employees;

Working from Home

- Ensure you are sat in a well-ventilated room, to allow natural air to flow through. Open windows and doors if possible.
- Avoid working in rooms where heat sources could impact the room temperature. I.e.; kitchens.
- Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water, or water-based drinks.
- Take regular breaks – head outside and sit in the shade if that is the coolest place.
- Employers - Please ensure you are checking in with your staff regularly to ensure they are comfortable at home, and able to work through the tasks you have set efficiently despite the weather.

Back to the Workplace – External Workspaces such as construction sites

- Social distancing measures and additional PPE must be worn at all times where the 2.0m rule cannot be adhered to, including break areas.
- If an employer sets a regulated break schedule you must adhere to this for your own safety and other works close by.
- Work procedures should be carried out adhering the social distancing rules as much as possible unless it is deemed unsafe. For example, a plaster board can fall short of this distance but require two people to lift and fit safely. If this is the case, PPE must be worn.



Back to the Workplace – Internal Workspaces such as shops, factories, health care services, etc...

- Take regular breaks where any face masks, shields, overalls could be removed. Ensure you follow the correct guidance for removing these masks to avoid contamination of the virus.
- Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water, or water-based drinks.
- If you work near a window or door, make sure it is open and the room ventilated as much as possible.
- Air conditioning units can be used as the risk of them spreading COVID is extremely low. However, you need to make sure that if you use a centralised ventilation system, which usually removes and circulates air to different rooms, then it is turned off recirculation and uses a fresh air supply instead.
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- If an employer sets a regulated break schedule you must adhere to this for your own safety and other works close by.



Employers Responsibilities

- If you have employees working from home, ensure you are checking in with them regularly to ensure they are comfortable at home, and able to work through the tasks you have set despite the weather.
- Ensure workers have access to regular breaks which allows them to access ventilated areas and remove any additional PPE they are wearing.
- Regulate breaks times which will affect communal areas – you do not want everyone to access these areas at once, so breaks will need to be staggered to allow for the social distancing measures.
- Provide the required PPE for employees to stay safe, including the provision of sun cream, whilst outside works take place.
- Rearrange employers work zones to adhere to the 2.0m social distancing rule where possible. If a worker must work within the 1.0m plus zone than it is advised no two people face each other.
- Ensure shared facilities such as break rooms and toilets have hand sanitiser stations available and undergo regular and rigorous cleaning regimes. Evidence of this may be required so ensure a record is kept.
- Keep a record of all visitors so you can also do your part in the track and trace procedure.

