



mia

meetings industry association

Operating and building confidence in a risk-averse world

Best practice: creating a COVID Secure environment for your customers and staff

Introduction

As we enter Step 4 of the roadmap, we are urging the sector to move forward cautiously, with recognition that the government guidance, which covers a vast range of event types, leaves so much to the judgement of business operators.

With this in mind, as the leading association for business meetings and events in the UK as well as the owners and keepers of [AIM Secure](#) – the industry’s only accreditation scheme, we have compiled our own best practice guidance encouraging venues and organisers to continue asking event attendees to wear face masks, as well as keeping in place their meticulous cleaning protocols and stringent risk management practices.

We know that the sector is diligent, acts responsibly and maintains the highest of service standards, and that it will continue to proceed with caution through this next transition. This is hugely important as we look to assure both government and the public that even in a period of increased cases, we as a sector can provide confidence to event bookers and delegates.

It is advised that these guidelines should be read in conjunction with your own brand standards and adopted alongside both the latest UK government advice and any specific regional or local restrictions.

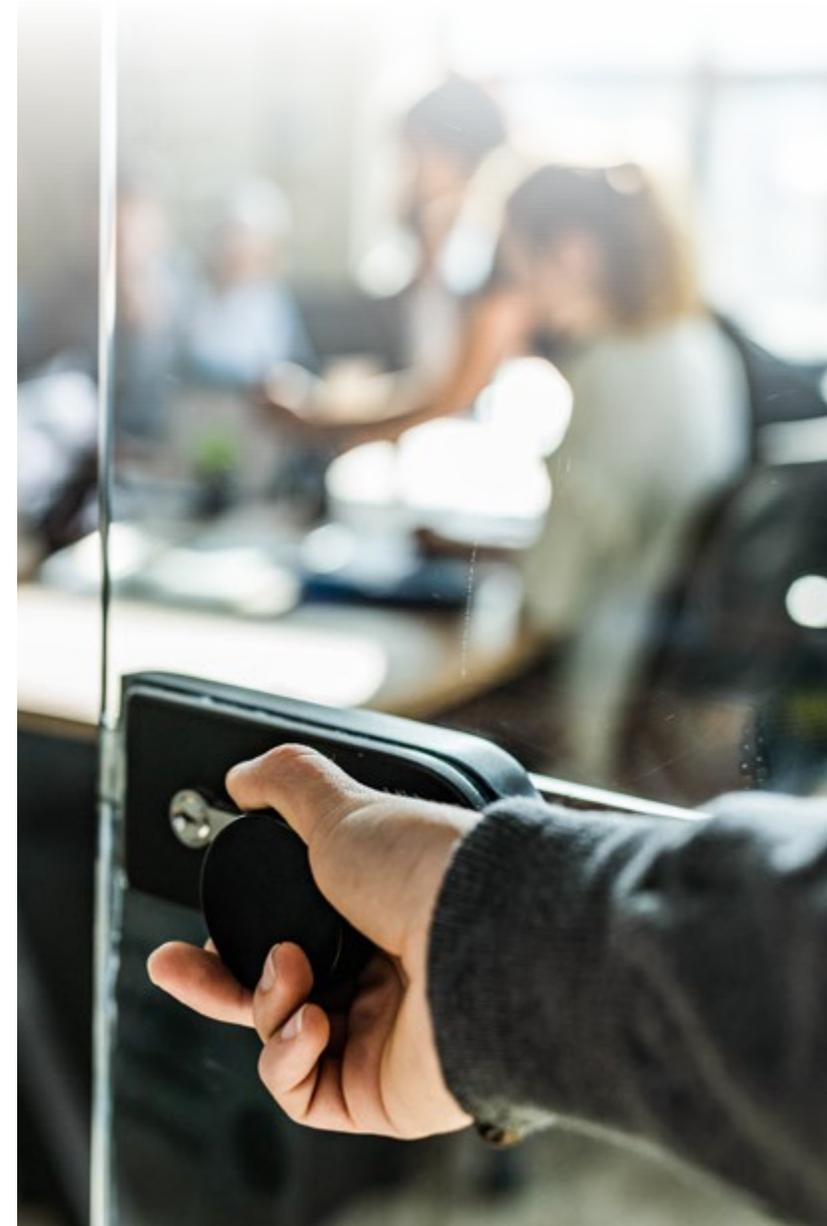
Please be aware that as the situation continues to evolve and the UK government – driven by the latest science and medical advice – continues to offer direct guidance, this is therefore designed to be a working document and is subject to change.

Best regards,



Jane Longhurst
Chief Executive mia

To access the latest supporting information, please visit:
<https://www.mia-uk.org/Safety-Resources>



Business planning

The mia recommends that all operators should ensure, as a priority, that they have a COVID-19 risk assessment in line with HSE guidance, including all the steps required to ensure your venue is considered COVID-Secure. This will include consulting with your workers or trade unions and sharing the results with your workforce and on your website.

Your plan needs to outline all of the actions you will take and the procedures you have in place to ensure the safety of your staff and customers.

Your risk assessment needs to be agile and responsive to any changes that may come as a directive from the UK government and National Institute for Health Protection.

This, along with your existing risk assessments, policies, procedures,

emergency plans and those of your suppliers, needs to have regular reviews.

As part of the process all AIM Secure venues should upload their COVID-19 risk assessment on [miaTouchstone](#) and set dates – the platform will remind you when it's time to review.

Please also review your booking contracts - they should always include a pandemic clause. Careful consideration will need to be given to your cancellation policy in the event of any future national or regional lockdown. The mia has issued guidelines, which include a clause prepared by legal experts Mishcon de Reya, around this.

If you prefer to use your own cancellation policy and pandemic clause, then the mia strongly recommends taking legal advice on this.

Minimum recommendations

Business Risk assessment

Employers have a legal duty to identify and manage potential COVID-19 risks for users of their business as part of the normal risk assessment process and to make reasonable adjustments to mitigate risk to public health:

- Either review your previous COVID-19 response plan, update and maintain it as a separate document or review and merge updates into your general business risk assessment.
- Ensure the guidance from the government [Working Safely Guidance](#) Step 4 is included. This document gives you guidance to consider on all these areas.
- Your risk assessment should include plans for managing a potential regional or localised COVID-19 infection outbreak and possible further restrictions along with plans for managing an outbreak within your venue.
- The government will review guidance in September so consider using a flexible three-stage process such as standard prevention procedures, identifying what should be increased if there is a potential regional risk and remediation procedures if there is an outbreak of infection.
- Bookers are increasingly risk aware and although the government has lifted restrictions, bookers will want to ensure that venues are working safely and securely and may want to view your risk assessment. Consider using the miaTouchstone secure depository through AIM Secure accreditation.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

- Set regular review dates to identify new or changed risks and set new procedures and be aware of government updates as they happen.
- Communicate your risk assessment to staff and ensure they receive training in line with your risk assessment to reduce risk to themselves and customers.
- Your plan must be completed or signed off by Owners/Managing Directors of the venue.
- As part of their usual visit, the EHO will review your risk assessment as part of their audit process.

Department risk assessments

Venues may also use department risk assessments which identify specific risks within department procedures.

- Review and update department risk assessments with information from the main business risk assessment including COVID-safe procedures.
- Train staff in the updated procedures and record.

'COVID-safe' certification

Accreditations and certifications of cleanliness and safety are highly recommended and should be used in marketing collateral to inspire customer confidence.

- Consider the mia's AIM Secure accreditation, which is venue specific and includes staying safe criteria.
- Also consider using a consumer facing scheme such as VisitBritain's 'We're Good to Go'.
- Groups will have their own brand certification and/or will be AIM Secure accredited.

Cleaning and hand washing

[Government Working Safely Guidance](#) Step 4 recommends that increased cleaning procedures should be carried out especially on surfaces that are touched frequently and recommends you should ask your staff and customers to use hand sanitiser and clean their hands frequently and provide them with advice to promote good hygiene.

- See section 'Disinfection, Cleaning & Hygiene' for more guidelines.
- Update policies and risk assessment with any new procedures or products.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Use of face masks and other PPE

For venues in Wales the wearing of face masks and other PPE is mandatory until 7 August in hospitality settings.

For venues in Scotland the wearing of face masks and other PPE is mandatory until further notice.

In England, the government recommend that face masks are worn when people come into contact with people they don't normally meet in enclosed and crowded spaces.

- Businesses may decide to carry on asking customers to wear masks if they feel it would reduce infection transmission substantially and mitigate public health risks.
- Take into account customer confidence, the type of event, indoor or outdoor, size of meeting room or area and size of group, potential movement around the venue, any valid reasons people may have for not wearing a mask such as a medical condition and protecting the safety of your staff.
- Carrying out your risk assessment will help your decision along with specific event risk assessments.
- Update your policy and booking terms and conditions.
- Be proactive with your policy and communicate clearly to bookers, delegates, guests and staff so they are fully aware of your policy.
- Ensure that staff feel confident to uphold your policy and have clear guidelines on how to respond to customers who either refuse to wear a mask or if you do not require masks, to explain why.
- Have clear guidelines for staff to refer to more senior managers to deal with customers if necessary.
- Use of other PPE, such as gloves and aprons, should be defined within the risk assessment and will vary according to tasks. General Food Safety and COSHH legislation will usually dictate the use of PPE and later sections will give you examples of where gloves may be worn to reduce the risk of COVID infection.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Distancing and capacity

Events in Wales will be able to resume from 17 July with capacity caps before all restrictions are lifted on 7 August.

Scotland will be in Alert Level 0 from 19 July, meaning there will still be limits on the size of events.

Event restrictions in Northern Ireland are due to be reviewed on 22 July.

See section 'Meeting Rooms and Areas' for further information.

In England, all restrictions on capacity and distancing are lifted from 19 July.

- Businesses must identify and manage potential risk especially large events where overcrowding could easily occur, where venues have small rooms or narrow staircases and corridors or restricted entrances and exits.
- A risk assessment should be carried out for each event and risks reduced as much as possible.
- This may include offering reduced capacities, controlling customer flow with barriers and one way systems to reduce crossover and controlling numbers entering or leaving venues at one time.
- There will also be customers who remain cautious, and businesses should remain flexible to individual needs to create confidence and ensure the safety of customers.
- Discuss individual requirements of bookers during the booking process.
- Consider allocating a 'safe area' where customers may go to if they are concerned of overcrowding or are clinically vulnerable and require support. This is not the same area as someone would use if they feel unwell with COVID symptoms

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Venue entry requirements

COVID-status certification will not be required in law as a condition of entry for visitors to any setting.

- Many venues, particularly those with large, crowded settings, may decide to ask for proof of COVID Status as a means of reducing infection risk.
- The NHS COVID Pass will be made available on the NHS app as a certification tool, on the NHS website or as a letter that can be requested by ringing NHS 119. Visitors will also be able to show text or email confirmation of test results.
- Venues must ensure they comply with all relevant legal obligations and guidance, including on equalities.
- The government will publish more guidance on using the NHS COVID Pass shortly.

Venues are no longer required to collect customer contact details or keep a record of your staff and visitors but doing so will help reduce the spread of infection.

- Display an NHS QR code for people to check in using their app. If you display the app then you should also have a system to collect and securely store names and contact details for those who ask to check in but do not have access to a smartphone or prefer not to use the app.
- Consider using the [miaTrustedTrace](#) system which can be used to collect data securely. The online tool requires all delegates to complete their own data record and then the system stores this securely for 21 days.
- Bookers can supply delegate lists in advance of events with names and addresses along with where delegates will be arriving from if not the home address. Be aware to comply with Data Protection regulations.
- If delegates are arriving from international destinations, ensure any quarantine regulations have been adhered to.
- Businesses may decide to ask all visitors to the venue to sign in and out.

Government guidance in England requires venues not to admit people who are unwell with COVID-19 symptoms.

- If businesses have already invested in thermal imaging or thermometers, they may choose to continue use of these for the confidence of delegates.
- Health declaration forms can be used for delegates to complete.
- For large venues evidence of a negative lateral flow test may be required.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Please note: If sufficient measures are not taken to limit infection by businesses, the government will consider mandating the NHS COVID Pass in certain venues at a later date.

- Communicate your policies clearly to bookers and delegates.
- Update your terms and conditions to reflect your policies.
- Communicate policies to staff and train staff to be able to respond to customer questions.
- Sales staff should discuss the venue policies with bookers during the booking process and confirm with them how the policy can be applied to each event.

Review ventilation systems

In England, government Working Safely Guidance identifies ventilation as a critical control factor to reducing aerosol transmission and infection cross contamination.

Meeting rooms in particular are at high risk of aerosol transmission due to the length of time delegates are in the one area. Customers will feel more confident if ventilation systems work effectively, particularly in internal meeting rooms and areas.

- Identify areas that have poor ventilation and take steps to increase air flow eg: internal rooms, toilet areas.
- Carbon dioxide (CO₂) monitors could be used to help identify where a space is poorly ventilated with businesses encouraged to take steps to improve ventilation if CO₂ readings are consistently high.
- It is recommended that ventilation and air conditioning systems that normally run on recirculation mode, are set to run on outside air where possible.
- Operate air conditioning at full speed.
- Change filters regularly and have a planned schedule for this.
- Check windows can be opened easily and are secure.
- Check extractor fans work effectively and are cleaned regularly.
- Check air vents are cleaned regularly.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Staffing and welfare

Businesses have a duty of care for their staff and must consider ways to reduce risk of infection.

Further sections will give guidance on how risks may be reduced.

Government guidance in England requires businesses not to allow staff who are unwell with COVID-19 symptoms to attend work.

See the section in 'Staffing and Welfare' for further guidance.

Insurance

Check and update insurance policies.

- Loss of business through future cancellations or infection outbreaks.
- Check your business insurance has a pandemic clause for future use wherever possible to safeguard your business.
- Check your cover as many insurance companies have changed what they will cover over the last year.

Work processes

Review work processes to ensure events can be delivered smoothly and efficiently.

- Use technology to enhance procedures for delegates and guests and reduce personal contact: such as table tablets for ordering food, in room operation tablets, online check in and out, single-use electronic keys.
- Cyber crime is on the increase. Ensure staff are aware of potential scams and the action they should take.
- Check and update firewalls and security systems.

Communicating your procedures

Government Working Guidance identifies that businesses should continue to inform customers and staff of the safety measures they have in place. Clear and transparent information is vital to build customer confidence to use your venue.

Further sections will give guidance on communication.

Business planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Review suppliers

As part of your due diligence procedures review your suppliers and ensure that:

- They have robust procedures and policies for disinfection and hygiene in line with your requirements.
- They know they must communicate with you if any of their staff that have been on your premises become ill.
- Always sign in and out to support your policies on tracking.
- The supply chain is under pressure. Work with suppliers to ensure stock levels are maintained as required. This may mean a change to ordering schedules.

If a delegate / guest becomes ill

Businesses should not admit people who are unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, but people may start to feel unwell during an event. Define in your risk assessment the procedure you will follow in your venue.

- Allocate a permanent, closed isolation area for customers to go to if they start to feel unwell.
- If possible and the customer is in agreement, a lateral flow test will help assess the next action.
- Any customer with a positive result must leave the venue and support with arrangements if required.
- Your local authority health team should be informed.
- Deep clean and disinfect the meeting room immediately. See section: 'Disinfection, cleaning and hygiene' for information.

Sales, showrounds, booking and contracts

For some time, sales will be built on confidence. As your frontline, your sales team will need to be totally conversant with your plans for a COVID Secure environment. So, arm them with clear information on your policies and procedures for sanitising, PPE and your venue's requirement for risk assessments and advance delegate lists. All of this will help to instil confidence and, making sure organisers get this information very early in the sales process, will ensure you are being totally transparent in your dealings with them.

Investment in technology such as thermal imaging is not essential, however, it could help to offer confidence to bookers by demonstrating very clearly your venue's commitment to keeping delegates and staff safe and it will almost certainly help you to influence delegate behaviours within the venue.



Minimum recommendations

Venue flexibility

There will still be an element of customers who will not wish to resume face-to-face events for some time to come and offering different ways to deliver events will attract bookers to your business and increase sales opportunities.

- These could include hybrid events, teleconferencing and increasing outdoor events.
 - Ensure technology is high quality and provided by an AV partner that can provide support.
 - Train staff to ensure they are confident to set up these solutions and discuss with bookers.
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Sales, showrounds, booking and contracts *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Terms and conditions / contracts

Review current terms and conditions and, to safeguard your business, ensure they reflect your updated policies along with clauses regarding future potential infection increases and pandemics.

- Use mia recommended terms and conditions including pandemic clauses to safeguard your business.
- Check cancellation policies reflect emergency situations.
- Bookers should sign an agreement to follow venue policies eg: arrival checks.

Event risk assessments

Review current terms and conditions and, to safeguard your business, ensure they reflect your updated policies along with clauses regarding future potential infection increases and pandemics.

- Identify specific COVID secure risks for the event with the organiser and together, decide the action to take.
- Communicate your business risk assessment to organisers either via your website, using miaTouchstone, email or have copies available during an appointment.

Sales staff

The government recommend that businesses lift the requirement to work from home, as many sales staff have been doing, with caution. Sales staff are in direct contact with a range of different people and employers have a duty of care to ensure their personal safety.

- Discuss with sales staff how they feel being in full contact with customers.
- Are they comfortable using public transport to go to external meetings?
- Are they comfortable to attend exhibitions?
- Provide any PPE and consider distancing and other safety measures that may be put in place to support sales staff.
- Consider maintaining some days working from home.
- If sales staff are travelling into other areas of the UK that may have restrictions, ensure the requirements are met and staff feel comfortable travelling to these areas.

Sales, showrounds, booking and contracts *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Showrounds

A personal show round is an opportunity to show potential bookers that their personal safety is a priority and to communicate your infection safe procedures.

- Either inform bookers when appointments are made of the venue policy on wearing masks or ask bookers if they would prefer to wear masks and maintain a social distance or have any other personal safety needs.
- Have masks and sanitisers readily available.
- Ensure sales staff are fully aware of updated COVID safe procedures to discuss with bookers.
- Use your infection safe and secure procedures as a selling point.

Many clients may not want to travel if it is unnecessary or if their start point, for international bookings, prevent this and virtual showrounds should be considered.

- Consider ways to develop virtual tours, from simple videos to using rapidly advancing immersive experience technology.
 - Hold meetings via a digital platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
 - Have clear visuals on your website displaying meeting areas along with options.
 - Use your infection safe procedures as a selling point.
 - For bookers of smaller meetings and events, or those who have used the venue previously, consider adding Live availability to your website to enhance work processes.
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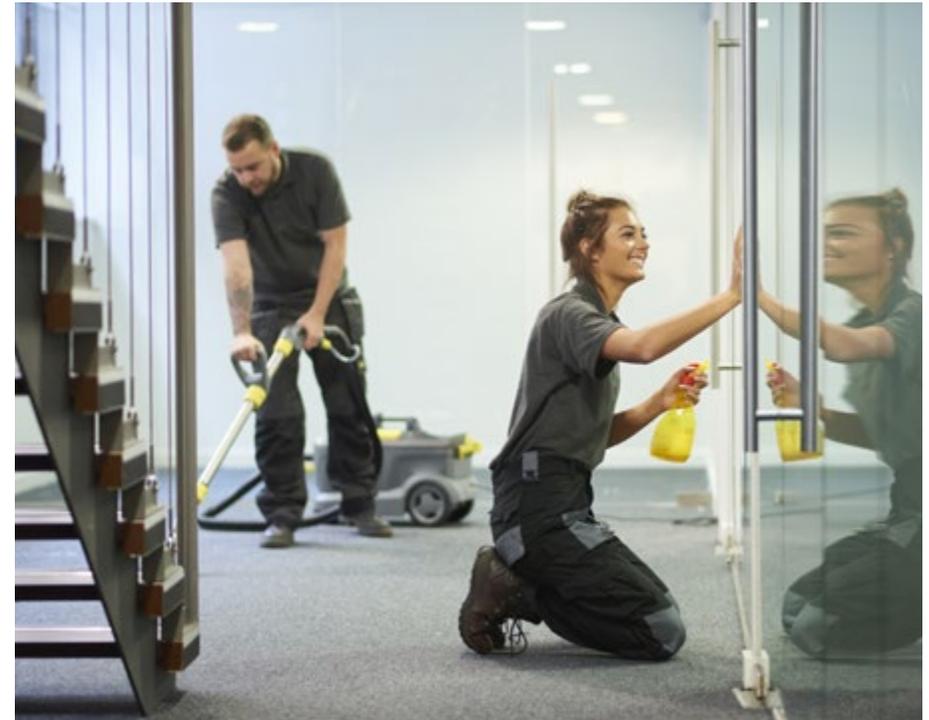
Disinfection and cleaning planning

For a COVID-Secure environment, your cleaning procedures need to be considered carefully.

We are now operating in an environment where every element of your venue will be under scrutiny by visitors so, keep your cleaning protocols updated, look for areas of risk constantly and ensure a regular checking procedure for all high traffic areas is in place. Your venue should demonstrate first class cleaning protocols throughout.

Walk through your business as a customer to consider all of the high touch and high traffic areas and develop your procedures to ensure these are given priority. Your cleaning procedures will by necessity become hourly, at minimum, in some high traffic and high touch areas.

Don't forget to publish and share your procedures; visible procedures and cleaning activity will continue to give confidence to your customers.



Minimum recommendations

Re-opening a venue

Deep cleaning of venues which have been closed for some time should take place.

- If you choose to fog or electro-statically decontaminate, it is recommended that you use an external contractor service. Check company references to ensure standards.
- Contractors should issue a certificate of cleaning. (This can be used to support marketing material and as evidence of COVID-19 due diligence.)
- Ensure equipment with water connections is thoroughly flushed through to remove the risk of Legionnaires and carry out your usual Legionnaires checks after flushing. Ventilation systems should also be checked and serviced before reopening. (See section 'Business Planning – Review ventilation' for key points.)

Disinfection and cleaning planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Cleaning standards

Customer confidence will be increased if the enhanced cleaning protocols put in place over the last year are maintained. Visible cleaning activities inspire customer confidence.

- Maintain enhanced cleaning procedures based on the six-stage disinfection procedure across all departments. Refer to Public Health advice on the type and dilution of products and procedures.
- The use of electrostatic disinfectant sprays is recommended in your deep clean procedures.
- Use disposable equipment as much as possible and use cleaning techniques that avoid splashing onto surrounding surface areas or items during the cleaning process.
- Use signed schedules in key areas, not only as a check for managers but also as a visible signal to customers that cleaning is a priority.
- Managers should check schedules regularly to ensure that the disinfection of high touch points is carried out correctly.

Cleaning surfaces that people touch regularly (high touch points) is a high priority to minimise infection cross-contamination. There may not be the need to carry this procedure out hourly now.

- Identify high touch points in every room and area and consider how often these points should be disinfected based on the number of people using an area or item. This may vary at different periods of time eg: peak times of the day or week.
- High touch points should be disinfected using sprays or wipes. Disinfection wipes are better to use on electronic items.
- Disinfection of shared items eg: phones, keyboards and pens should take place between each use.



Disinfection and cleaning planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

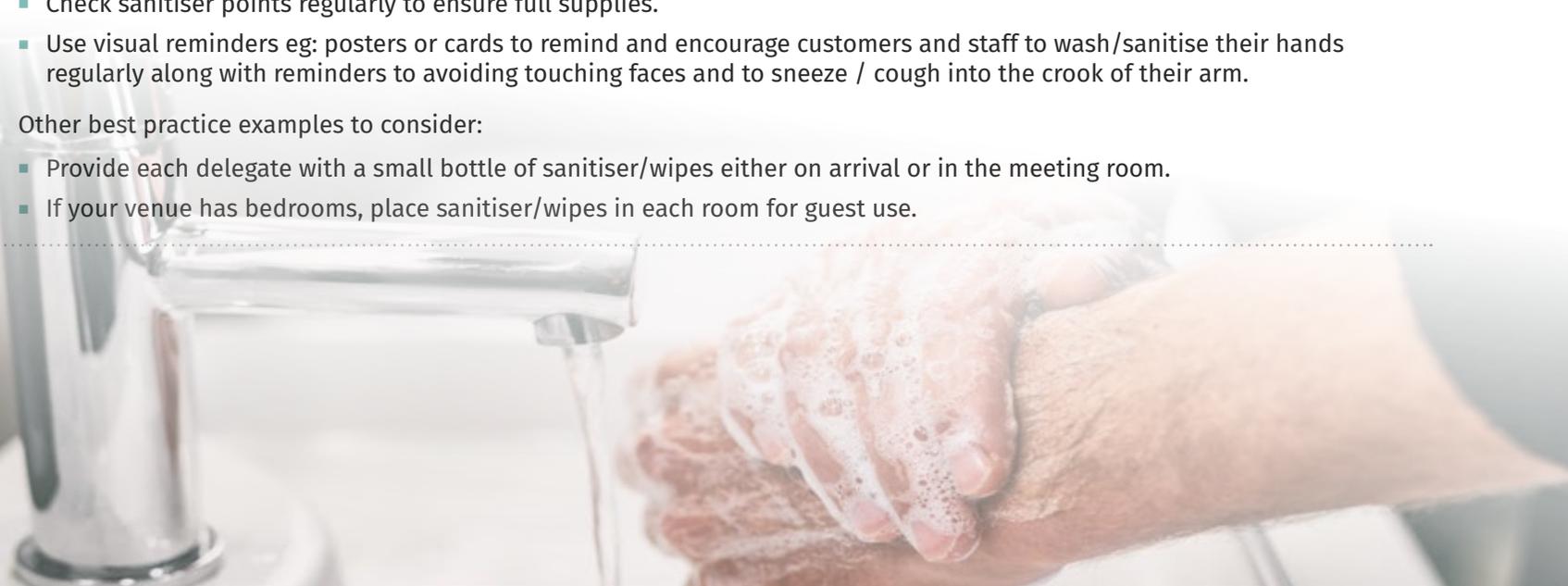
Encourage hand washing and use of hand sanitiser points

Hand washing and use of sanitisers are critical procedures in minimising infection transmission and government Working Safely Guidance Step 4 recommends these hygiene practices are continued.

- Provide hand sanitiser points throughout the venue particularly at high traffic and high-risk areas eg: venue entrance, reception or welcome desks, entrances to restaurants, refreshment points, toilets, lift entrances and stairwells along with staff areas.
- Touchless dispensers are preferred as dispenser buttons are high touch points and must be disinfected between each use.
- To be effective against coronavirus, sanitisers should have a minimum 60% alcohol content.
- Provide lidded bins for safe disposal of wipes, paper towels and tissues which are either foot pedal or auto operated. Liners should be used for safe removal.
- Bins should be emptied, disinfected and liners replaced regularly.
- Check sanitiser points regularly to ensure full supplies.
- Use visual reminders eg: posters or cards to remind and encourage customers and staff to wash/sanitise their hands regularly along with reminders to avoiding touching faces and to sneeze / cough into the crook of their arm.

Other best practice examples to consider:

- Provide each delegate with a small bottle of sanitiser/wipes either on arrival or in the meeting room.
- If your venue has bedrooms, place sanitiser/wipes in each room for guest use.



Disinfection and cleaning planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Cleaning meeting rooms and refreshing

It may not be feasible from a financial point of view to have meeting rooms or bedrooms dormant between each use, in which case it is best practice to continue to deep clean after use and before re-letting.

- Secure the room after deep cleaning to prevent entry.
- For meetings of more than one day, disinfect equipment, tables and chairs at the end of each day.
- During the main lunch break, rooms should be refreshed by cleaning high touch points (eg: tables, chair arm rests, door handles, light switches).
- Staff should wear masks and gloves if your risk assessment identifies for them to do so to protect from droplet transmission.
- Leave a signed schedule on the organisers desk for their confidence.

Cleaning rooms and areas where a guest has reported COVID-19 symptoms

Follow the recommendations of Public Health UK:

a) Deep cleaning procedures including disinfection must be carried out immediately.

- The minimum PPE to be worn by staff is gloves and an apron. Staff may feel more comfortable wearing a mask to reduce breathing in droplets.
- Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through and spent minimal time but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids, such as corridors, can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.
- All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab rails in corridors and stairwells.
- Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – think one site, one wipe, in one direction.

Disinfection and cleaning planning *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

- Use products as recommended by Public Health England or your supplier's recommended product.
 - Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.
 - Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.
 - When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.
 - Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other items.
 - To minimise the possibility of dispersing viruses through the air, do not shake dirty laundry prior to washing.
 - Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above.
 - Personal waste from individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 and waste from the cleaning of areas where they have been (including PPE, disposable cloths and used tissues): put in a plastic rubbish bag and tie when full, then place in a second bin bag and tie again, before placing in a suitable and secure place, marked for storage until the individual test results are known.
 - This waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. It should not be placed in communal waste areas until negative test results are known, or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.
 - If the individual tests negative, this can be disposed of immediately with the normal waste.
 - If COVID-19 is confirmed this waste should be stored for at least 72 hours before disposal with normal waste.
- b) If body fluids are involved:**
- The nose and eyes must be protected with a surgical mask equivalent to those used in healthcare. Staff should be trained in how to put this style of mask on correctly. Items that have been heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be cleaned should be disposed of.



Meeting rooms and areas

There is no longer a mandated requirement for social distancing, however, you may find your customers do require extra space between delegates so do bear this in mind in your room set-ups.

Also consider how best to ventilate the room; open windows and doors to create natural ventilation or ensure the room is properly air conditioned.

Your protocols around cleaning must be exemplary, so review your processes around breaktime 'refreshes'. Also review your delegate supplies and consider replacing flipcharts with white boards that can be disinfected.

Meeting rooms *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Room capacities

Venues in Scotland: Capacity has increased from 19 July to outdoors, 2000 seated and 1000 standing. Indoors 400. 1m distancing still applies.

Venues in Wales: Capacity is limited until 7 August to Indoor 1000 seated and 200 standing.

In England capacity and distancing restrictions have been lifted from 19 July.

- Venues should consider the level of risk that different events may have and carry out an event risk assessment taking into account the number of people and the meeting room or area.
- These should be discussed with the booker and actions put in place to reduce risk together.
- Be aware of distance between the speaker and audience and the risk of droplet transmission.
- Consider supplying lapel microphones to speakers to eliminate the shared handling and cross contamination of microphones.
- If stand microphones are used, replace covers after each use. Provide disinfectant wipes and/or a small bottle of sanitiser at lecterns.

Syndicate rooms

To minimise the spread of infection it is best practice to minimise the amount of movement around the venue during a conference.

- Try to allocate syndicate rooms as close as possible to the main room.
- If possible, keep small group work within the main room and consider allocating a larger space to facilitate this.
- Discourage use of lounge areas where general venue users may be seated.

Meeting rooms *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Ventilation

Good ventilation is effective at reducing droplet transmission and infection. See section 'Business Planning – Review ventilation' for further points.

- Check ventilation systems every day to ensure they are working effectively.
- Air conditioning should be set to run on outside air where possible.
- Filters have been changed in line with maintenance schedules.
- Air vents are fully open.
- Extractor fans work effectively.
- Windows can be opened easily.
- Inform organisers of the checks that have been made for their own and their delegate safety.

Supplier set up

If external suppliers are used to deliver chairs or equipment, they must follow your procedures.

- Suppliers should supply a venue with evidence of their staff vaccination status or negative lateral flow test result.
- Suppliers should preferably deliver at back of house to minimise crossing with customers.
- Suppliers should wear masks and gloves to reduce the risk of contamination if identified in your risk assessment.
- Suppliers must sign in and out, creating a record to enable infection tracing, if required.
- Suppliers must provide evidence to the venue before leaving, that the equipment provided has been disinfected.

Meeting rooms *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

General room set up and break down

The process of setting up equipment or breaking a room down has a potential risk of surface droplet contamination and transmission.

- Assess the risks and identify if staff should wear gloves and or a mask during these times. Gloves should be worn when removing food and drink items at the end of a meeting.
- The use of baize or other cloths is not recommended due to the retention of droplets and increased risk of transmission during laying and removing.
- If baize is used, it must be changed at the end of each day and not reused for 72 hours. Staff should wear masks on removal if identified in the risk assessment.
- If linen cloths are used, they must be changed at the end of each day and laundered at a minimum of 60°C.
- Tables and chairs, particularly arm rests, should be disinfected when in place.
- If a venue uses chairs with attached writing desks, these should be disinfected before use and at the end of each day.
- Trolleys used to move chairs, tables and other equipment, should be disinfected before and after use.

Outdoor areas

Outdoor areas will be in demand as the risk of infection is less outdoors and the same guidelines on set up and disinfection still apply.



Meeting rooms *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Setting up AV equipment

It is recommended best practice:

- For staff to wear gloves when installing AV equipment to reduce cross infection.
- Disinfect equipment after setting up.
- Disinfect whiteboards at each set up and at the end of each day.
- Provide a new flip chart for each new client. Disinfect flip chart pens and stand. At the end of the event offer your client the opportunity to take the chart away with them or alternatively destroy the chart.
- Use your chosen communication method (card, text message etc.) to inform organisers that the equipment has been disinfected.
- Additional cables and controls that organisers request should be disinfected before taking to the room and gloves should be worn for the installation of these.

Delegate packs

Delegate packs of stationery and other items are at high risk of droplet contamination and if provided should be done so with care to minimise risk.

- You may decide to offer packs on request from bookers and this would be confirmed during the booking process.
- If you use delegate packs as part of your offer, single-use packs are recommended which can be taken away by the delegates, or disposed of at the end of the event.
- Packs should be disinfected before placing in the room.
- Paper should be stored securely to reduce contamination and changed at the end of each day.
- Pens should be disposed of at the end of the day or disinfected using a wipe.
- Disposable glasses are better from an infection point of view. If you use glass, they should be run through the dishwasher and then immediately hygiene wrapped by staff wearing gloves.
- To minimise cross-contamination, it is recommended to provide each delegate with their own sealed bottle of water.
- To minimise risk, consider not supplying sweets to delegates.
- Provide small bottles of sanitiser / pack of wipes at each delegate place.
- Provide access to disposable masks and gloves in the meeting room if delegates require them.

Organiser/delegate arrivals

Carefully managed entrance areas, made clear to the organiser in advance, will give confidence to all attendees and guests. The mia's minimum recommendation is that guests are asked to wear masks – compulsory throughout all public areas in your building – and use sanitiser as they enter the building.

As a venue, you will be dealing with mass arrivals, and you must plan for this eventuality.

Use this entrance period as an opportunity to influence delegate behaviour with the provision of hand sanitisers and signage.

Minimum recommendations

Entry requirements

Review your risk assessment and update your policy as in Business planning.

- If you use NHS QR codes for delegate check in ensure they are easily accessible for delegates to use. (See section Business Planning – Venue entry requirement' for more information).
- If thermal imaging or temperature checks are carried out, ensure staff are fully trained in these procedures and action to take if negative results are displayed.
- If health declaration forms for delegates to complete are used, ensure they are readily available and a hard surface is nearby for ease of completion (disinfected).
- Staff should be fully informed of entry requirements and how to manage delegate questions, including if they refuse to provide the required information.

See section 'Business Planning – Venue entry requirement' for more information.

Organiser arrival

- The 'on the day' organiser may not be your pre-event contact so do ensure they know all of your policies related to onsite precautions and what has been agreed with the main booker.
- If organisers require assistance with equipment, staff should wear gloves and take equipment directly to the meeting room.
- If a trolley is used, this should be disinfected after use.



Organiser/delegate arrivals *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Delegate arrivals

Venues should aim to reduce the risk of droplet transmission and the touching of surfaces during this time.

- Front doors should either be left open during key arrival times or be automated.
- Encourage, through signage, delegates and guests to use hand sanitisers prior to entering.
- Give a copy of the venue policy on safety and hygiene to all delegates, which should also include a request that they take responsibility to keep themselves and others safe or assist to download a delegate app.
- Request delegates stay in the meeting room during the event as much as possible.
- Use one way systems and in/out to reduce cross infection.
- In addition, it is advisable to plan staggered arrival times for larger meetings to minimise overcrowding.

Large number of arrivals:

- If large numbers of delegates are in one area, masks are recommended to be worn.
- Discuss with organisers how arrival times may be staggered.
- Consider using QR codes to ease queuing and overcrowding in a small space.
- Use badge-less events where digital credentials are used that reduce prolonged personal contact time between staff and delegates.
- If you identify in the event risk assessment that managing distancing would be advantageous, use rope barriers to manage queuing and entry safely.
- Doormen or security could also be used to control numbers entering the venue lobby area at any one time to avoid overcrowding.

Organiser/delegate arrivals *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Reception / registration desks

The aim of your procedures should be to reduce the risk of infection to both delegates / guests and staff while maintaining high levels of customer service.

- Use pre-registration wherever possible or digital check in/out with email billing.
- Use separation glass between staff and delegates, if appropriate.
- Use extended desks or tables for placement and collection of keys and event information.
- Providing information electronically reduces the need for personal contact.
- Disinfect keys and re-useable key cards between use.
- Use contactless payment systems and have a policy of not accepting cash.
- Use the credit card that guaranteed bookings at check out where possible to avoid any requirement for a new card.
- If a PDQ is used, use a disinfectant wipe before handing it to a guest and wipe after use.
- If delegates require a pen, offer and use disinfectant wipes before and after use.
- Provide sanitisers and appropriate waste bins.

Staff safety during delegate arrivals

You may have a venue policy to wear masks and/or gloves. If not, some staff may feel more comfortable doing so and venues should support them to do so confidently.

- Provide an adequate supply of disposable masks and gloves.
- Provide sanitisers and appropriate waste bins.
- Encourage staff to sanitise their hands before and after dealing with guests or wear gloves if they feel more comfortable.
- Use separation glass if appropriate.
- If you offer valet parking or airport/station pick up, ensure staff feel comfortable providing these services and provide appropriate PPE as identified in your risk assessment to reduce their risk of infection.



Organiser/delegate arrivals *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Storage and cloakroom areas

Storage and cloakroom areas are high risk of cross infection, and many venues may not offer these facilities at this time.

If you decide to use cloakroom facilities minimise risk by:

- Installing screens between staff and customers.
- Use place and pick up routines and drop off collection points.
- Disinfect surfaces between each collection and pick up.
- Provide sanitiser points for staff and customers.
- Delegate luggage should be taken to bedrooms before the person goes to the room, or use knock and step back routines and leave the luggage at the door.



Organiser/delegate arrivals *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Manage access to meeting rooms

Delegates crossing with other delegates could create an infection risk. Risk assess each situation based on the number of different meetings on the day, numbers of delegates, access pathways to meeting rooms.

- Consider using an 'in' and 'out' flow system to reduce crossing with other delegates or guests.
- Leave doors open, if possible, to reduce touching but consider fire regulations.
- For large events or multiple meetings in the same area, manage the flow of people in meet and greet areas and corridors using rope barriers or signs.
- Lifts no longer require social distancing but lift controls are high touch points and delegates will feel more confident if disinfectant wipes are available and an appropriate bin to dispose of them after use is nearby.

Public toilet areas

These are areas of high risk and the highest cleaning and disinfection standards should be maintained to give customers confidence.

- Check and clean toilet areas frequently. This may vary depending on the number of delegates each day.
- Disinfect toilet areas before meetings take place each day and at the end of each day.
- Leave signed schedules of completion in view of customers.
- Use enhanced disinfection protocols for toilets and other high touch point areas.
- Place signs to warn customers that cleaning is taking place.
- Use visible reminders to wash hands effectively to reduce infection, to not touch faces and to sneeze or cough into the arm.
- Check taps are working effectively and there is always a supply of hand wash.
- Provide disposable towels for hand drying and pedal operated, lidded disposal bins.
- Clear disposal bins regularly and disinfect before replacing liners.
- Identify potential pinch points when multiple breaks might take place and take extra measures to inform delegates of possible overcrowding.
- Keep facilities well ventilated.

F&B

During breaks your delegates will want to enjoy a networking experience and under government guidance they can now do so. As a venue operator this does mean that inevitably you will need to consider all aspects of the networking experience and people's behaviour to maintain a safe environment.

Ultimately what you offer is for you as the venue operator to decide. You may feel that for the safety of your staff and your delegates that you only want to offer a seated lunch for instance, or you may feel that you can manage the risks of networking areas with ventilation, sanitisers and signage. Whatever you decide, risk assess carefully and ensure the space is never overcrowded by managing queues carefully.

With all preparations, consider speed of service, minimising risk, delegate comfort and staff and delegate safety.

Minimum recommendations

Food and beverage service procedures

Carry out a risk assessment across all areas of food and beverage service based on your responsibility to mitigate public health infection risks and keep staff safe from possible infection.



F&B *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Refreshment points

Although distancing measures and the wearing of masks for food and beverage service are now lifted in England, venues may decide to maintain these procedures at some level to manage the risk of droplet transmission and infection.

Best practice includes:

- Allocate set refreshment spaces for each meeting and multiple points for larger meetings.
- Identify potential pinch points and consider ways to stagger break times of meetings to reduce the risk of infection.
- Discuss this with organisers at the time of booking.
- If self-serve machines are used, provide sanitiser wipes and bins with visual reminders to remind delegates to wipe dispense buttons after each use.
- Disinfect tables before setting up and after use.
- Cover refreshment points once they are set up.
- Use disposable cups and spoons wherever possible.
- Offer cold refreshments in sealed individual bottles and pre-wrap additional products eg: cakes.
- Provide sanitiser points at entrances and counter points for staff and guest use.
- Staff should not hand anything directly to customers or receive anything from them. Use pick up/put down tables.
- Tables and arm rests should be disinfected between use.
- Handwashing of glassware, plates and cutlery should be avoided.
- Check dishwasher temperatures are correct to rinse above 60°C.



F&B *(continued)*

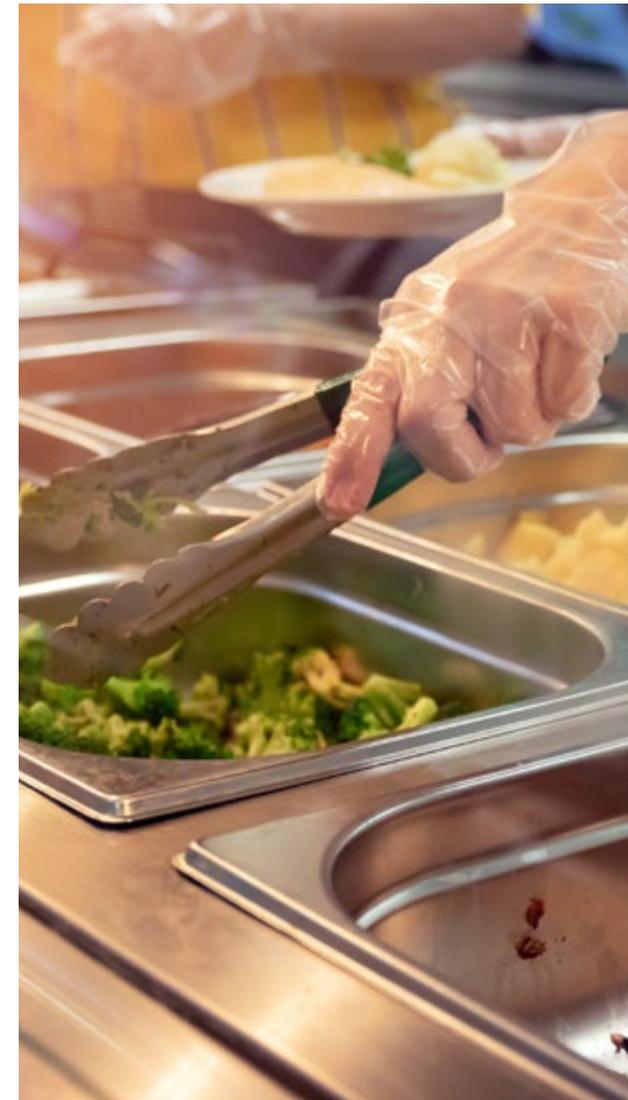
Minimum recommendations

Buffet Service

Although social distancing of buffets, tables, or guests is not required in England, buffet flow and seating arrangements should be risk assessed and potentially modified. Consider that some customers may feel uncomfortable being seated close to people they do not know and reduce cross traffic and bottlenecks where people will be in close proximity.

Best practice includes:

- Ideally and where possible, buffets should continue to reflect individually portioned items with disposable wrapping.
- Or use smaller quantities with more frequent replenishment.
- Multiple buffet points may be required with large events to avoid pinch points.
- Customers serving themselves from buffets could be high risk through use of shared serving spoons. Staff served buffets are preferred.
- Use rope barriers to control queues and use a 'start and leave' flow round buffet tables.
- Sneeze guards should be used on permanent buffet counters.
- Cover food on smaller tables until delegates are ready.
- Use prewrapped cutlery (staff wear gloves) or disposable cutlery for large event buffets.
- Use individually wrapped condiments and sauces that are given to delegates on request.
- Place sanitiser points with disposal bins at the start and end point of the buffet for both staff and guest use.



F&B *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Table service

As with buffet service, table service should be risk assessed and procedures modified to ensure droplet transmission and infection risk is reduced as much as possible.

Best practice includes:

- Encourage pre-booking to manage potential pinch points.
- Use single-use menus, display boards or digital tablets and encourage delegates to pre-order.
- Use full plate service to reduce staff being in close contact and serving individual portions to guests.
- Use cloche covers to protect food between the kitchen to the customer.
- Use individually wrapped condiments and sauces which should be offered on request and served with the plated food.
- If non-disposable condiment containers are used, these should be disinfected between each customer.
- Ideally wrapped cutlery, brought to the tables with the food, is less risk than laying tables in advance.
- Plates of food should be placed directly on tables and not handed to customers.

Banqueting:

Numbers of covers on tables may be modified taking into account that people may not want to be seated in close proximity to people they don't know. Discuss safe seating arrangements with bookers.

Best practice includes:

- Use service procedures as for table service (above).
- If linen cloths and napkins are used these should be bagged upon breaking down the room. Staff should wear a mask and gloves to manage the risk of droplet transmission.
- Linen must be disinfected at temperatures above 60C.



F&B *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Bar service

Ordering at the bar can be resumed in England from 19 July. Venues may decide to maintain table service particularly at times of high demand.

Best practice:

- Keep pre-sliced garnishes covered.
- Use individually wrapped single-use straws or metal straws that can be disinfected.
- Give customers fresh glasses for re-orders.
- Provide masks and gloves for staff who prefer to wear them.
- Provide customer sanitiser points with disposal bins.
- Bar tops to be disinfected regularly throughout service.
- Request customers not to lean on bar tops when ordering.
- Use contactless payment where possible.
- Use screens to reduce infection spread and close contact when ordering or paying.

F&B cloakroom and toilet area

Encourage 24-hour delegates to use their bedroom bathrooms as a way of reducing infection.

(See section on 'Organiser/delegate arrivals – public toilets'.)

F&B *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Room service/ In-house dining

Distancing rules in England are lifted. To safeguard staff delivering in-room dining some infection controls should be maintained.

Best practice includes:

- Staff should wear gloves and a mask if they feel more comfortable to deliver and pick up trays.
- The whole tray must be covered for delivery to rooms.
- On a guest answering the door, request they stand back while the member of staff enters or maintain the standard using a butler tray or light table to place items outside the guest room and guests take the tray themselves.
- Ask guests to leave their completed meal tray outside the room, these should be picked up promptly.
- Use the normal disinfection procedures for crockery and cutlery in the dishwasher.
- Trays or butler trolleys must be disinfected after use and before next use.

Staff

- Staff should use the highest standards of personal hygiene at all times.
- The highest standards of food safety should be applied to all food and beverage service.
- Food handler disposable gloves should be available if staff wish to use them along with masks should they prefer to wear them, or the venue has identified wearing these in their risk assessment.
- Update staff training on Food Safety procedures and record.



Venues with bedrooms

Bedrooms are high risk areas for your staff and must be treated as such, so please do consider this as part of your risk assessment process. Follow the mia's recommendations on the next page and support with clear messaging so guests understand the lengths you have gone to in order to protect them.

Venues with bedrooms *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Bedrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced disinfection protocols should be maintained. ▪ Identify high risk areas in guest bedrooms and disinfect regularly. ▪ Venues may put back some of the additional items that were previously removed. Eg: extra pillows, refreshment trays, mini bars, room information folders. ▪ Cleaning and disinfection of these items must be risk assessed to minimise cross infection. ▪ Place sanitiser spray/wipes in each room and disposal bins to encourage guest hand hygiene. ▪ Stored linen should be covered.
Occupied rooms	<p>Venues should review the risk of cleaning occupied rooms, decide their policy and communicate to bookers and guests. If venues are part of a group, the organisation cleaning protocols should be followed.</p>
Staff personal safety	<p>Handling used linen and cleaning high touch points puts staff at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff should wear the PPE identified in the risk assessments or masks and gloves if they feel more comfortable. ▪ Do not shake linen when removing from beds. ▪ Staff should not handle guests' personal items.
Departure rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rooms should be disinfected on departure. ▪ Change mattress protectors after each guest and launder at 60°C as a minimum. ▪ Change duvets after each use. Either launder or place in a secure area for 72 hours before using again. ▪ Use 'disinfection stickers' which are broken by the next guest on entry or place a card in the rooms outlining the cleaning that has taken place. ▪ Use hygiene wraps on toilets, and other items. ▪ Replace shower curtains with a freshly laundered curtain.

Staff safety and welfare

Your staff are your business. Without them your venue cannot operate. You need to build confidence in your staff and the best way to do this is through a dedicated training programme.

Consider every element of their working day with you and ensure each element is risk assessed and addressed accordingly. Make sure your staff understand all of the protocols you have in place – they communicate regularly with your guests and need to be able to answer any questions they may have.

Always ensure your staff have the right level of protection for the job they do.

Minimum recommendations

Reopening staffing

Ensure your staff are safe to return to work.

- Carry out staff health checks by phone or use a return to work form.
- Assess any staff with pre-existing conditions or who are clinically vulnerable and discuss reasonable adjustments.
- Assess staff who are living with someone with current COVID-19 symptoms and delay their return to work unless they are double vaccinated and have PCR tested negatively.
- Staff wellbeing is important, and businesses should consider offering an EAP, or equivalent, that staff can use if they have concerns of how their health is impacting their ability to work.



Staff safety and welfare *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Managing COVID-19 for staff

Businesses should put in place procedures for staff to manage and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

From 16 August in England, staff that have had both vaccinations will not need to self-isolate: A PCR test should be taken, which, if negative, and they don't develop any symptoms, means they are not required to self-isolate.

This applies from 19 July in Scotland and 7 August in Wales.

PCR tests can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or pharmacies

Until 16 August staff should self-isolate if:

- They feel unwell with COVID-19 symptoms.
- They are in contact with someone at home with COVID-19 symptoms.
- They have been in contact with a customer who reports symptoms.
- Contacted by NHS Track and Trace to self-isolate.
- Someone in a childcare or support bubble has tested positively.

Further information on isolating: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate>

Consider asking your employees to get tested regularly.

- Anyone with symptoms should get a free NHS test as soon as possible.
- Employees who do not have symptoms of COVID-19 can access regular testing free of charge at home or at a test site: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms>
- You can also pay an approved provider to provide tests or run a test site for your workplace: <https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>

Staff safety and welfare *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Businesses must not require a self-isolating worker to come to work and should make sure that staff who feel unwell do not attend work.

- Communicate to staff the procedures for reporting symptoms.
- Emphasise the importance of doing this to reduce infection and safeguard colleagues and customers.
- Maintain contact with staff who are self-isolating, especially those who live by themselves, to ensure their wellbeing.

Staff starting symptoms at work:

- Provide a closed isolation area.
- Inform staff to contact their manager (wear masks) who will give support.
- Areas where the member of staff has been working must be disinfected immediately.
- If the member of staff has immediate difficulty in breathing, then call for an ambulance immediately.
- Ensure the member of staff can get home safely and maintain contact with them.



Staff safety and welfare *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Training

All staff should receive training on safe working related to COVID-19, including:

- Routes of coronavirus transmission and breaking the chain of infection, personal hygiene including washing hands effectively, safe use of PPE and key cleaning protocols.
- In addition, guidelines on how to respond positively to guest questions will give them confidence.

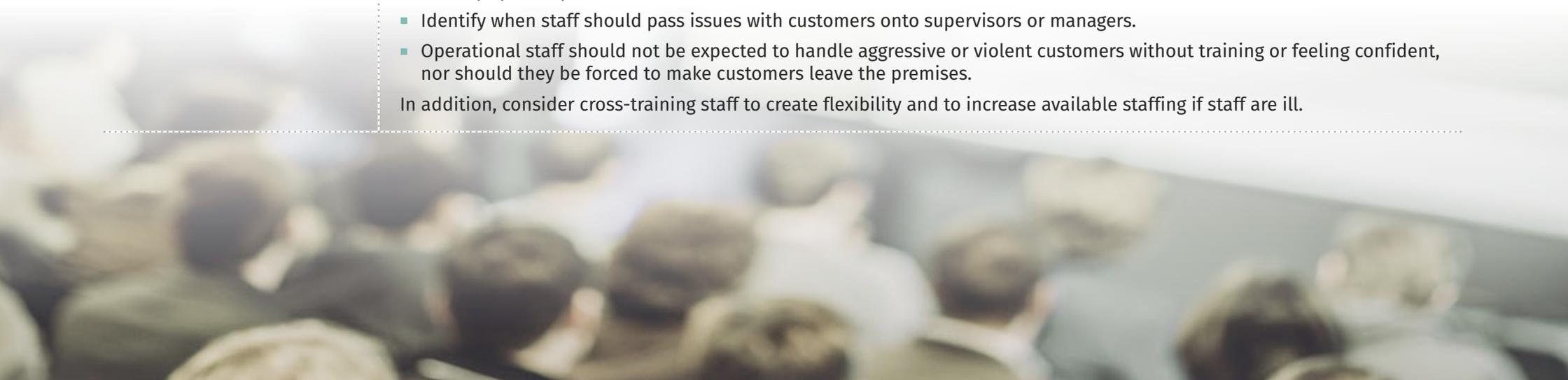
Communicate the increased risks in tasks and the new procedures that are in place to keep staff safe when working.

- Train staff in new procedures and products.
- Ensure supervisors and managers understand their responsibilities to train staff in new procedures and the importance of checking standards along with their role with maintaining staff wellbeing.
- Keep records of training.

Train staff on business policies for customer safety.

- Ensure staff feel confident to answer guest questions regarding policies or handle refusals to comply.
- Identify specific phrases that can be used.
- Identify when staff should pass issues with customers onto supervisors or managers.
- Operational staff should not be expected to handle aggressive or violent customers without training or feeling confident, nor should they be forced to make customers leave the premises.

In addition, consider cross-training staff to create flexibility and to increase available staffing if staff are ill.



Staff safety and welfare *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Staff personal safety

Safety and welfare of your staff is vital and employers have a duty of care to keep staff safe.

- If staff feel more comfortable wearing a mask or gloves, businesses should supply them, even if it has not been identified in the risk assessment.
- Promote regular hand washing especially when arriving to work and place sanitiser points in key areas: staff entrance, staff canteen and locker rooms, office areas.
- Managers should check staff are wearing correct PPE for tasks, as identified on the risk assessment.
- Wearing uniform to work could spread infection. Laundering uniform on site is best practice using temperatures of 60°C where materials allow. Dry Clean items which cannot be laundered.
- Staff should not use guest lifts to avoid cross infection.
- Use work systems such as fixed teams or partnering, back-to-back work stations rather than face- to-face.
- Avoid shared workstations where possible.
- Continue to stagger staff start times where feasible to avoid overcrowding at the staff entrance and locker rooms.
- If feasible, restrict the number of staff using corridors and locker rooms at one time.

Staff breaks

There is no longer a requirement for staff to distance in back-of-house areas. Venues with small or cramped back-of-house areas may modify this requirement to safeguard staff.

- Canteen areas/locker rooms should be disinfected at the end of each day and high touch point cleaning carried out throughout the day.
- Stagger break times to reduce overcrowding in staff canteens.
- Sanitiser points should be placed at the canteen entrance and visual reminders to wash/sanitise hands used.

Staff safety and welfare *(continued)*

Minimum recommendations

Staff working in offices

There is no longer a requirement for staff to distance in office areas. Venues with small office areas may modify this requirement to safeguard staff.

- Where possible desks and computers should not be shared.
- If this is not possible, items must be disinfected between use eg.: chair arm rests, phones, keyboards, pc mouse.
- Supply sanitisers/wipes for office and reception areas.

Staff working in high density areas back of house

High density work areas such as kitchens, puts staff at increased risk of infection, so do everything practical to manage the transmission risk:

- Assess the workflow of kitchens and make adjustments where possible eg.: back-to-back or side-by-side working.
- Avoid sharing workstations where possible.
- Devise menus that reduce the crossover of preparation techniques.
- Restrict entry to areas eg.: dry stores and cellars to one person at a time.
- Use rope barriers to manage separation eg.: between event staff and kitchen staff, event staff from different areas of the venue.
- Implement a one-way 'in, out' system, if feasible.

To access the latest supporting information, please visit:
<https://www.mia-uk.org/Safety-Resources>



As with any other policy such as wearing ties or no jeans, businesses have the right to decide to ask customers to wear masks. Businesses can refuse entry or service if customers are not wearing masks and refuse to put one on but there is no law in England to support your decision.

(London underground and buses are the only areas where masks are still mandatory.)

Be aware of people who have valid reasons for not being able to wear a mask such as medical or physical conditions.

Supporting links:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945754/S0973_Ventilation_Actions_Summary_16122020_V2.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings#left-area>



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