

EPS COVID-19 SITE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Do not leave home if you or someone you live with has either:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

These are exceptional circumstances and it is essential that EPS and others within the construction, development and environmental compliance industries comply with the latest Government advice on Coronavirus (Covid-19) at all times. The Government has advised that Construction work can continue if done in accordance with the social distancing guidelines wherever possible.

The following outlines the procedures through which EPS will ensure the protection of its workforce and minimise the risk of spread of infection, particularly with respect to social distancing. It is our intention that these procedures should be fully considered when managing and designing out risks wherever possible and planning for the practical safe delivery of our projects.

Public Health England (PHE) guidance for construction states "*where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission*".

The government and industry guidance upon which the following procedures are based is subject to change and when that happens this document will be revised to reflect either specific or general requirements or variations to our own risk assessments. A key guidance document on which these procedures are based is the Construction Leadership Council – Site Operating Procedures Version 3, a copy of which can be downloaded here:

<http://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Site-Operating-Procedures-Version-3.pdf>

The following procedures should not be considered an exhaustive list – further measures may well be appropriate for specific sites, conditions and work activities.

EPS would by default produce a site-specific risk assessment for all projects, a specific aspect of which now deals with Covid-19 risks and management of them.

Staying at home and away from others (Social Distancing)

Government guidelines state that you may travel for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home, recognising that certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work – for instance if they work in construction.

The government is not saying only people doing "essential" work can go to work. Every worker – whether critical or not – should work from home if they can but may otherwise travel to work.

As an Employer, EPS must make all efforts to help people to work from home where possible, as this will help limit the spread of the virus by reducing the amount of contact between people.

EPS is primarily a geo-environmental consulting firm whose operations are a mixture of office based professional consulting with associated administration and physical site based activities. All office based activities should now be completed by working from home with the aid of various the IT support and systems which have been provided. Site based activities should be minimised wherever possible and only undertaken where considered necessary for the successful and safe delivery of our operations.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy advised in a letter to the UK construction industry on 31 March 2020: *“that wherever possible, people should work at home. However, we know that for many people working in construction their job requires them to travel to their place of work, and they can continue to do so. This is consistent with the Chief Medical Officer’s advice”*.

It is important to understand the following guidelines by which workers should or should not travel to work as outlined below.

Social distancing	Workers in the construction industry should follow the guidance on Staying at home and away from others (social distancing). Where they cannot work from home, they must follow the same principles of social distancing while travelling to and from work and while at work.
Self-isolation	Anyone who either has a high temperature or a new persistent cough or is within 14 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) should not come to site, but must follow the guidance on self-isolation.
Person at increased risk	<p>Anyone who is at increased risk of severe illness from Coronavirus (Covid-19) is strongly advised to work at home and should be particularly stringent about following social distancing measures.</p> <p>This group includes those who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions) • under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis • chronic heart disease, such as heart failure • chronic kidney disease • chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis • chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy • diabetes • problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed • a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy • being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> those who are pregnant
Living with a person in one of the above groups	Anyone living with a person who is at increased risk of severe illness, or an extremely vulnerable person who is shielding from Coronavirus (Covid-19), should stringently follow the guidance on social distancing and minimise contact outside the home.
If someone falls ill	<p>If a worker develops a high temperature or a persistent cough while at work, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure their manager or supervisor is informed • Return home immediately • Avoid touching anything • Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow. <p>They must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.</p>

General Operation Considerations

It will be EPS Covid-19 policy to maintain a 4m social distancing exclusion zone from colleagues, subcontractors, clients, other site operatives and the general public at all times.

The nature and operational status of a site will be considered as part of an initial assessment as to whether EPS could (and should) undertake a specific site operation. For example, a busy and constrained construction site will represent significantly greater (and potentially unsurmountable) challenges to social distancing compared to an open field or an enclosed and secure vacant site.

EPS will generally only undertake site operations at locations within approximately 2hrs of Engineer’s homes, to enable travel to and from their homes each day and thereby avoid the need for overnight stay away. If an overnight stay were to be required, then a specific risk assessment of the available options available should be completed and the work only taken on if all parties are comfortably that there is a genuine need, reasonable to do so, and can be safety undertaken within Social Distancing requirements.

It is assumed that EPS presence will be minimised at all times and therefore each site based activity would be completed by an individual engineer and associated driller / sub-contractor where applicable.

TRAVEL

As far as possible, EPS will aim to assign specific company vans and associated field equipment to individual field engineers in order to minimise cross use. Cleaning and sterilising materials will be located in all vans and at the company stores and should be used when equipment / vehicles are booked out and also when returned.

Driving to Work

Wherever possible workers should travel to site alone using their own transport.

If workers have no option but to share transport:

- Journeys should be shared with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time

- Good ventilation (i.e. keeping the windows open) and facing away from each other may help to reduce the risk of transmission
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces

Driving at Work

When travelling at work or between site locations, workers should travel alone. If workers have no option but to share a vehicle, then they should:

- Share with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time
- Wherever possible maintain a distance of two metres and avoid touching their faces
- Maintain good ventilation (i.e. keeping the windows open) and face away from each other during the journey
- Wash their hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available before entering and after getting out of the vehicle
- Regularly clean the vehicle using gloves and standard cleaning products, with particular emphasis on handles and other surfaces which may be touched during the journey.

Operating Procedures by Specific Site Based Activity for locations where any other workers, subcontractors or the general public are present (or are reasonably likely to be):

Site Based Activity	Additional Covid-19 Operating Procedure
Site Walkover & Site Meetings	Where site reconnaissance cannot be achieved remotely, site walkovers and site meetings should only be conducted where the social distancing and hygiene measures outlined above can be implemented. Where at all possible, EPS Engineers should not arrange to meet clients' on site, even just for arranging access and should aim to conduct video calls from site.
Borehole Drilling	An exclusion zone should be created around proposed drilling location which is large enough to accommodate drillers and EPS engineer while maintaining 4m social distancing. If that is not possible due to site constraints then an exclusion zone should be created within which the drilling crew and rig can be safely operated and all generated drill cores taken away and handled at a separate exclusion zone at the EPS.
Trial Pitting	Once set up at trial pit location and excavator is orientated, create an exclusion zone around the rear of the excavator at a minimum distance of 4m from safe working distance from trial pit edge using traffic cones and high visibility barrier tape. The excavator driver should remain within the vehicle with windows closed.

Sample handling, field testing and labelling	An exclusion zone should be created using traffic cones and high vis barrier tape around the rear of the EPS Vehicle, within which all drill cores and samples can be appropriately inspected, tested and sampled.
Groundwater Sampling	Use the EPS vehicle to form one side of a defensive barrier and create a 4m exclusion zone using traffic cones / barriers and barrier tape from the rear of the vehicle around the sampling location within which all activities can be undertaken.
Sample Collection	Delivery and collection of Soil and Groundwater sample containers / cool boxes will be organised directly from the laboratory to and from the engineers home address.

PLEASE NOTE: If, upon arriving at the site, risks cannot be adequately managed the engineer must leave site and re-arrange the visit or planned site work and find alternative methods of reconnaissance or site based working practices (this may well involve discussion with other site personnel / contractors on how they can concurrently undertake their own work to ensure EPS maintains adherence to these Site Operational Procedures.