

CORONAVIRUS ALERT

BIOSECURITY AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

v.1.7: 03/04/20

FINAL EDITION – SUPERSEDED BY CV-HRA v.1.3+

1. Risk of Infection/Business Disruption

At work, PBA staff might be considered a relatively low risk of Covid-19 infection and associated business disruption. Our main offices are located in a relatively isolated rural area of the Yorkshire Dales. Settle is a small market town and we anticipate knowing quickly about any new Covid-19 in the local area. Our staff mostly live locally and are likely to have a relatively low risk of infection. We still travel to project sites, but these are mostly in rural areas. At present, we do not use public transport.

As a business, we have well-established procedures to help ensure business continuity and the resilient provision of our services. We have sophisticated and well-equipped IT resources that enable us all to work productively at home. At the offices, we have also installed a sophisticated video conferencing room that will enable more business meetings; with associated document viewing and transfer to be conducted remotely.

As a business, we have well-established biosecurity facilities and associated procedures. Since the first case of Covid-19, we have also further developed (and rigorously applied) additional office hygiene and biosecurity procedures. This will help to protect our business continuity and our clients' interests. PBA works routinely with the providers of critical national infrastructure. We have made significant adjustments to our business to enable PBA to continue working safely throughout this emergency.

2. UK Govt's Coronavirus Action Plan

Phase 1: Containment – trying to catch cases early and tracing all contacts to try to prevent the disease taking hold in this country for as long as is reasonably possible.

Phase 2: Delay – “Social Distancing” as the number of cases begins to rise dramatically, Govt will attempt to delay the spread of the illness, considering measures such as additional self-isolation, encouraging people to work from home, closing schools, postponing large-scale gatherings *etc.*

Phase 3: Research – Govt is funding research into effective treatments and developing a vaccine, though this is likely to be some months off.

Phase 4: Mitigate – Virus considered widespread, retired NHS staff could be called back to duty.

3. UK Timeline

31/01/20	First two UK cases confirmed, recently arrived into the UK.
03/03/20	NHS declares major incident, Govt issues Coronavirus Action Plan.
06/03/20	First UK death confirmed; increasingly apparent the elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions are most at risk.
12/03/20	UK moves to Phase 2 – Delay. Advised anyone with symptoms to self-isolate.

16/03/20	UK Govt introduces stringent new measures including no unnecessary travel, social gatherings, events etc. The most vulnerable are advised to self-isolate for 12 weeks. Home working is encouraged where possible.
20/03/20	All UK schools and colleges are to close until further notice.
23/03/20	UK lockdown begins...

Current projection is that UK cases are likely to peak at some point this spring, before declining into the summer. However, this problem is likely to persist (and our ways of working are likely to be affected) until either: (i) an effective vaccine has been developed and rolled out; or, (ii) sufficient immunity has developed in the UK population. Over time, we might though anticipate improved outcomes for those most severely affected by the virus, as more effective treatments are developed.

4. Early Symptoms and Spread

Do not assume the disease is not present just because people are not showing unusual symptoms.

It appears that people can transmit the disease without showing any symptoms or whilst feeling only mildly unwell. However, people are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic.

Patients usually begin to show symptoms about 5 days following infection, with a new persistent cough and a high temperature. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do.

Most patients experience mild symptoms and will recover within a few days. Those over 70 and those with underlying health issues are more likely to develop severe symptoms, feeling very unwell and require hospitalisation. UK medical and scientific advisors estimate a mortality rate of 1% (the mortality rate of seasonal flu is between 0.1 to 0.2%).

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:

- between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 2 metres); and,
- through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

The virus may also be spread hand to mouth/nose/eye. Hence, a primary method of control is hand hygiene – washing hands with hot soapy water for at least 20 seconds, then drying thoroughly with a paper towel. On clean hands, 60% alcohol hand gel is also effective. It is well-established that people who wash their hands at least 5x a day have fewer flu-like illnesses. Avoid touching mouth/nose/eyes or eating/drinking unless your hands are freshly sanitised.

5. Protecting PBA Staff and Others from Infection

Operations Manager (and Deputy OM) empowered to ensure the following standards of biosecurity are maintained.

a) PBA Staff

- PBA is now working to a dispersed working plan – most of us are home working, whilst colleagues deployed to work from the offices are now separately accommodated.
- All staff must remain 2m away from each other and also 2m from other people outside their own household.

- Staff must wash hands thoroughly every time they arrive at the offices and also regularly during the day. Signs are displayed on exterior doors and close to all sinks. Hand hygiene is promoted by hand washing facilities, alcohol-based hand gel and paper towels.
- Catch all coughs and sneezes in a fresh tissue each time, or the crook of your elbow.
- No sharing of keyboards, mobile phones, desks office chairs or standard PPE etc.
- Deliveries are to be treated as potential sources of infection. Delivery drivers must wait at the door and a no-contact delivery/collection box is provided outside the main office.
- There are unexpected visitors to PBA Offices – signs are displayed on exterior doors requiring visitors to phone.
- At least daily cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as telephones, keyboards, door handles, desks, tables, kettle, milk bottles, fridge handle etc. Spray disinfection and alcohol wipes are provided.
- Crockery and cutlery must be cleaned with warm water and detergent and thoroughly dried with paper towel.
- Ensure food is not left open for communal sharing unless individually wrapped.
- If staff feel even mildly unwell – go home immediately, self-isolate for 7 days and let us know. A deep clean will then commence for all areas, vehicles and equipment used.
- If staff believe they might have come into contact with someone showing symptoms they will be required to self-isolate and work from home for 7 days.
- Staff with members of their household showing symptoms will be required to self-isolate and work from home for 14 days

b) PBA Vehicles

- PBA vehicles are allocated for the sole use of named individuals only. No-one else is permitted within allocated PBA vehicles.
- The use of each vehicle is logged to allow traceability.
- Unless approved by NW, all operational vehicles must be parked at PBA office every night.
- Frequently used surfaces (steering wheel, gear stick, hand break, door handles) are disinfected after each use.
- PBA vehicles are deep cleaned every Friday (including disinfect all floor mats).
- When refuelling, PBA staff required to maintain at least 2m distance from other people, use disposable gloves and cashless payment. Only use a freshly sanitised PBA pen for signing.

c) Away from the Office

- In line with CIEEM guidance, we make a case-by-case judgement to ensure that each planned journey and site-based work we undertake during this period:
 - is strictly necessary;
 - complies with PBA's Coronavirus Health Risk Assessment (v.1.3+);
 - could not be postponed until after the emergency; and,
 - there are no alternative approaches that would achieve the required objectives.
- Only plan work away from the office where the risk of not being able to maintain 2m distance from other people on site is judged to be very low.
- Clients' procedures will be requested before visiting a site; these will be followed or exceeded.

- When on work business, PBA staff are required to travel alone in their allocated PBA vehicle. There must be no use of public transport and no overnight stays.
- Prior to (and during) each and every journey, carefully consider how best to minimise any risk associated with toilet breaks during the day. Select the option that will best ensure maintaining at least 2m distance from other people and maintaining the required standards of hand hygiene prior to return to vehicle.
- Maintain at least 2m distance from other workers on site.
- Upon noticing any person (whether on site or nearby) with either a persistent cough or appearing to have a high temperature, return to PBA vehicle and report to FinOps Team.
- Maintain a high level of hand hygiene standards.
- Avoid touching nose/mouth/eyes with uncleansed hand.
- Do not shake hands.
- Do not attend clients' offices, site cabins or non-PBA vehicles.
- Do not attend meetings in person if it would be possible to attend remotely or phone call.
- Any physical meeting must be sanctioned by the Operations Manager (or Deputy OM). Sanctioned meetings would be outdoors and would involve the minimum number of participants who shall remain at least 2m apart.

6. Business Continuity

- PBA Business Continuity Plan has been reviewed, updated and tested.
- PBA finance procedures manual has been reviewed and updated.
- Financial resilience of the business has been tested against all likely scenarios.
- Key roles within the business have been identified, as have those with transferable skills to cover others.
- Remote working facilities VPN/laptops have been sourced and setup. Staff have access to their usual server areas using secure remote systems, enabling work to continue productively.
- MD's offsite office has been mobilised and has an allocated PBA vehicle.
- From Mon 16th March, business critical staff commenced home working, which was then extended to most of the operational team.
- Subsequent team meetings *etc.* are conducted either remotely or outdoors.
- Staff who self-isolate or are ill are also retained on full pay for up to 14 days.
- Operations Manager (or Deputy OM) is empowered to make day-to-day decisions.

7. Don't worry

Our business is located at an isolated location, within a rural area that has a strong local community. We have worked together as team to develop this Plan, and to keep it up to date. We have tried to cover all the possible considerations during this outbreak. We have also now developed a comprehensive Coronavirus Health Risk Assessment, the most recent (1.3+) edition of which now superseded this current Plan.

Whilst the current low risk is likely to increase significantly over the next few weeks, it is then likely to reduce again into summer months. This problem is likely to be with us for some time. However, the more time that passes, the more doctors and scientists learn about this new virus, how to control the risk of infection, how to treat the illness and who in society are the most vulnerable to serious illness.

This Plan (plus PBA Coronavirus Health Risk Assessment) will help to protect PBA staff & others, business continuity and the interests of our valued clients and community.

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