

Working Safely in Hairdressers and Barbers

From the 4th July 2020 hair salons and barbers, including mobile businesses can reopen. We are contacting you to ensure that you are aware of the current guidance that is available to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your business can only offer hairdressing and barber services from the 4th July 2020 and must not offer services which remain prohibited in the regulations including nail, beauty and tanning services. Information on the businesses and venues that can open in England from the 4th July 2020 and services which remain restricted is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/opening-certain-businesses-and-venues-in-england-from-4-july-2020>

Guidance for businesses that offer close contact services, including hairdressers and barbers is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services>

This document may be updated over time and you should check for updates at www.gov.uk/workingsafely.

It is important that as a business or an employer you continue to comply with your existing obligations relating to health & safety and other employment legal responsibilities.

1. Continue to work from home, if you can

Businesses and workplaces should make every reasonable effort to enable working from home as a first option.

2. Check the maintenance of your premises and equipment.

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has published information on work equipment and machinery during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including on air conditioning and ventilation. Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/index.htm>

If your business has been closed for any length of time check the safety of your water supply and prevention of Legionella. Links to guidance are available on the Think Sandwell website for managing Legionella

<https://www.thinksandwell.com/coronavirus-support-for-sandwell-businesses-returning-safely-to-work/>

3. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment, in consultation with employees or trade unions.

Employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have guidance on working safely during COVID-19 and how to undertake a risk assessment on their website:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

- Assess the risks of COVID 19 in your specific workplace.
- Put in COVID 19 control measures
- Communicate with your employees, agency workers, contractors, customers and other people.
- Monitor the control measures, review and update your risk assessment making improvements where necessary.

The HSE has guidance on their website for talking to your workers at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/talking-with-your-workers.pdf>

4. In every workplace, you should increase the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning. Reinforce cleaning processes.

Workplaces should be cleaned more frequently, paying close attention to high-contact objects like door handles, telephones, keyboards etc. and frequent cleaning of work / break / customer waiting areas and equipment between uses, using your usual cleaning products. Employers should provide handwashing facilities or hand sanitisers at entry and exit points. Encouraging clients to use hand sanitiser or handwashing facilities as they enter the premises or before treatment.

Employees should wash their hands more frequently for at least 20 seconds. Use signs to remind employees.

If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then refer to the specific guidance at

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

If you do use new cleaning chemicals, then please ensure that these are included in your COSHH assessment.

5. Maintain 2 metres social distancing, wherever possible

You must maintain social distancing in the workplace whenever possible. Think about how you will need to re-design workspaces to maintain 2 metre distances between people; for example: staggering start times, creating one-way walk-throughs, opening more entrances and exits, changing seating layouts in break rooms/waiting rooms, appointment times, using signage/floor markings, minimise the number of unnecessary visits to the workplace, use signage and markings. Each business needs to consider what will work for them.

6. Where people cannot be 2 metres apart, manage the transmission risk.

When providing close contact services, the nature of the work is such that maintaining social distancing will not usually be possible when actively serving a client. In these circumstances, both employers, employees and the self-employed should do everything they reasonably can to reduce risk. Mitigation actions may include keeping the activity time involved as short as possible, using screens or barriers to separate clients from one another, using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible or using a consistent pairing system if workers must be in close proximity. Each business needs to consider what will work for them.

No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment.

7. Protect your employees, including clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable individuals.

Further guidance can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Monitor the health and wellbeing of employees to make sure individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19, those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms and those who are advised to self-isolate as part of the government's test and trace service.

Further guidance can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

If there is more than one case of COVID-19 associated with a workplace, employers should contact their local health protection team to report the suspected outbreak. More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance>

8. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, you should continue to do so.

In hairdressers and barbers, it is likely to be difficult to maintain social distancing, as employees need to work in close proximity to their clients, usually for an extended period of time. An extended period of time refers to the majority of the working day, irrespective of the number of clients served during the day. The person providing a service (such as hairdressers, because of the period of time spent in close proximity to a person's face, mouth and nose) should therefore wear further protection in addition to any that they might usually wear. This should take the form of a clear visor that covers the face and provides a barrier between the wearer and the client from respiratory droplets caused by sneezing, coughing or speaking. Visors must fit the user and be worn properly. It should cover the forehead, extend below the chin, and wrap around the side of the face.

The most effective methods of preventing the transmission of COVID-19 are still social distancing and regular handwashing. These steps must still be followed as much as possible, even when practitioners are wearing protective equipment.

9. Accidents, security and other incidents

In an emergency, for example, an accident, provision of first aid, for or break-in, people do not have to comply with social distancing guidelines if it would be unsafe. People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands

Other resources which you may find useful:

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) You can contact HSE by phone on 0300 790 6787 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 8pm) to get advice on protecting people from coronavirus in your workplace. Alternatively you can use their Working Safely Enquiry form found at <https://hsegov.microsoftportals.com/workingsafelyenquiries/>

The **Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)** resources which can be found at <https://www.cieh.org/policy/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Business Representative Organisations and Trade Associations

The Government are providing links to business representative organisations and trade associations guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-support-from-business-representative-organisations-and-trade-associations>

St John Ambulance have produced guidance for providing first aid during the COVID-19 pandemic which can be found at <https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/>