

CC03: COVID-19 – A toolbox talk for construction workers

Overview

During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic it is essential to ensure the workforce is protected to minimise the risk of the infection spreading.

This toolbox talk is designed to be delivered to your workforce (construction workers). It has been approved by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) and should be used in conjunction with the CLC guidance document on *Site operating procedures*: <https://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk>

The CLC has also released guidance on the use of face coverings in a construction environment. The following information should be included in your toolbox talk, where appropriate. *Where workers on site are not required to wear Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) and their workplace (which may include welfare and changing facilities, site offices or site meeting rooms) meets all of the criteria below, their employer should make face coverings available and they should be worn:*

- *in an enclosed space;*
- *where social distancing isn't always possible; and*
- *where they come into contact with others they do not normally meet.*

Canteens and rest areas

A canteen is a place that serves food. Face coverings must be worn, except when seated at a table to eat or drink. Government guidance on *Keeping workers and customers safe during Covid-19 in restaurants* should be followed.

A rest area is a place where no food is served but which has facilities to prepare and eat food and a means of boiling water. Please follow the link to the CLC website (above) for more information.

Social distancing

Workers should maintain a distance of two metres, or one metre with risk mitigation where two metres is not viable.

The toolbox talk applies to general site operations, where social distancing measures of two metres can be applied. Where social distancing measures of two metres cannot be applied, each activity should be specifically assessed. The results of your specific assessment(s) should then be included in the 'Close working' element of the toolbox talk.

CC03: COVID-19 – A toolbox talk for construction workers

Communication

Good communication is essential for health and safety management on construction sites. It is vitally important that contractors, managers and supervisors engage and consult with workers, as it is an effective way of identifying hazards and controlling risks.

Willing and effective worker participation will be achieved when workers:

- are consulted
- have confidence in their managers and supervisors
- know their ideas and concerns will be listened to and, if required, acted upon
- have sufficient knowledge to recognise when something is not safe or could be harmful to their health
- have been trained in the skills necessary to deliver effective feedback.

Preparing and delivering a toolbox talk

It is important that you prepare in advance for any toolbox talk. Think about the location for delivery of the talk. Is the area set up so that:

- social distancing rules can be applied
- there will be no distractions
- it is suitable for using any equipment that will be demonstrated?

A toolbox talk shouldn't be just one-way communication. It is important to engage people in discussion and allow time for questions.

Notes

There are four forms in this range.

- CC01: COVID-19 Site operating procedures compliance checklist.
- CC02: COVID-19 Health, safety and environmental risk assessment template.
- CC03: COVID-19 A toolbox talk for construction workers.
- CC04: COVID-19 Weekly site operating procedures checklist.

It should be ensured that the latest version of the CLC guidance is being used on site. This toolbox talk is based on Version 7 of the CLC *Site operating procedures*.

Any additional, site specific content should be delivered under the relevant toolbox talk heading.

This is a rapidly developing situation – please ensure that you follow the latest Government guidance as it is published.

CC03: COVID-19 – A toolbox talk for construction workers

COVID-19 – A toolbox talk

Reason	COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease that can have severe effects on people, especially those who are vulnerable. The virus is likely to pass from person to person in communal areas and where it is not possible to maintain safe distances between persons. If a person is infected while working it can be passed on through families and other contacts. You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms. The measures necessary to minimise the risk of spread of infection rely on everyone taking responsibility for their actions and behaviours.
Outline	This talk covers the ways to maintain your health while working on construction sites.

Getting to work

1. Wherever possible travel to site alone using your own transport (for example, a car or bicycle).
2. If you need to use public transport, face coverings are now mandatory. Try to avoid peak times: 05:45–08:15 and 16:00–17:30.
3. Wash your hands before and after using any form of transport. Ensure you make use of facilities such as showers and lockers on site.

On site

1. Wash your hands when you arrive on site, regularly throughout the day (especially if you sneeze or cough, and before and after eating or handling food, using any shared equipment or tools, and using toilet facilities), and again when you leave site.
2. You should follow social distancing guidelines whilst on site (for example, keep at least two metres away from other workers), unless you are working under specific activity risk assessment measures, which might allow for closer working.
3. Social distancing guidelines also apply during breaks and mealtimes.
4. Do not share items such as cups or refillable drinking bottles. Use disposable crockery, eating utensils, cups, etc. where possible. All rubbish should be disposed of in the bins provided.

Close working

Note: Close working should **only** be carried out under specific activity risk assessment. Before you start, consider whether there is any other way you can complete the activity in order to avoid close working and, if you have another solution, talk to your supervisor.

The following points should be reinforced, in addition to the site and activity specific control measures.

1. Work requiring skin-to-skin contact should not be carried out.
2. If you are using reusable PPE, it should only be used by you, and should be thoroughly cleaned after use.
3. You should dispose of single use PPE so that it cannot be reused.

CC03: COVID-19 – A toolbox talk for construction workers

Cleaning

If you are involved with the additional cleaning being carried out on site, it should focus on the following areas.

1. Access and egress points, gate handles, entry systems, scanners, turnstiles and screens.
2. Taps and washing facilities.
3. Toilet flush and seats.
4. Door handles and push plates.
5. Handrails on staircases and corridors.
6. Lift and hoist controls.
7. Machinery and equipment controls.
8. Food preparation and eating surfaces.
9. Seats, seating areas and locker room surfaces.
10. Telephone equipment, keyboards, photocopiers and other office equipment.

What to do if you think you are ill

1. If you become ill, develop a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell while at work, you should:
 - report this to your supervisor or manager
 - avoid touching anything
 - cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin or, if you do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow
 - return home immediately, ensuring that you follow site specific procedures.

Both you, and the people you live with, should get a COVID-19 (Coronavirus) test.
2. You must then follow the guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until you have received a negative test result or, in the event of a positive test result, your period of self-isolation has been completed.

Self-isolation

If you meet any one of the following criteria, do not come to site and follow the guidance on self-isolation.

- If you have a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell.
- If you have received a positive Coronavirus (Covid-19) test result.
- If a member of your household or support bubble showed symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) or received a positive test result.
- If you have returned from a country that is not on the travel corridors list.
- If you have been contacted by the NHS Test & Trace Service (England and Wales; or Test and Protect (Scotland); or the Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland).

It is a legal requirement to self-isolate in the event of a positive test result or when told to do so by NHS Test & Trace (or its equivalents).

Site policy

Now inform your workers of the site-specific procedures with reference to COVID-19. Procedures should include areas such as: use of company vehicles, close working, reporting ill health and emergency response.

Make sure you are following the site-specific distancing rules at all times.