

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Barbers and Hairdressers

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, barbers and hairdressing businesses must take reasonable steps to protect workers, clients and any other persons visiting the premises. Following this guidance will help you keep everyone safe. This guidance is an accurate reflection of the advice in place at the date of publication (01.07.2020). However, the situation is very fluid and businesses should check reliable sources regularly for any updates and changes, or contact Environmental Health.

The government has published national guidance 'Keeping workers and clients safe during COVID-19 in close contact services', and should be used in conjunction with this guidance:

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

General Information

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The virus is transmitted to persons primarily through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. A person can also become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

Each business will need to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19 for both staff and clients. If you have not already done so, you must carry out a **COVID-19 risk assessment** as soon as possible as this is a **legal requirement**. A good risk assessment will consider all the matters in the guidance and put in place a combination of different measures and practical steps to manage the risk. As your whole team will be involved in the day to day running of the salon, it is important to consult them on the health and safety measures you now need to carry out.

If your business has five or more employees, then the risk assessment must be documented. However, even if you have fewer than five employees, or the salon has workers who are not classed as employees, we strongly recommend the risk assessment is documented, as this will make it more effective.

Managing the risk in barbers and hairdressers – 5 key principles to make workplace COVID-19 secure

The health and safety of your workers and clients can be protected by working through these steps in order:

1. Ensure both workers and clients who feel unwell **stay at home** and do not attend the premises. In addition, have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.
2. **Increase** the frequency of **handwashing and surface cleaning**.
3. Make every reasonable effort to comply with the **social distancing** guidelines set out by the government (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable - you should consider and set out the mitigations you will introduce in your risk assessments).

4. Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and if so, **take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission.**
5. Clearly, when providing close contact services, it is often may not be possible to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m apart with risk mitigation, is acceptable). As a result, **personal protective equipment in the form of a visor will be required to mitigate the risk.**

Keeping clients and visitors safe

- Keep a temporary record of your clients and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This is to help contain clusters or outbreaks.
- Encourage clients to use hand sanitiser or hand washing facility as they enter premises.
- Set capacity limits for clients based on maximum number that can follow social distancing guidelines. Take into account floor space, pinch points and busy areas.
- Ask client to attend on their own if possible when booking appointment.
- Use a variety of ways to inform clients of the COVID-19 measures in place, in advance.
- Ensure measures in place to reduce congestion and contact between clients in premises, for example, queue management or one-way flow.
- Where available, use outside spaces for queuing safely.
- Review the way the business operated - operate an appointment-only system as much as possible.
- In waiting areas, arranging seating and maintaining social distances. When capacity is reached, consider moving to a 'one-in-one-out' policy.
- Review working practices to minimise the duration of contact with the client. For example, minimise the length of appointment for treatments such as braiding.
- Ask clients the three COVID-19 screening questions ahead of their appointment – if symptoms client advised to stay at home and reschedule appointment.
- Provide clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to clients on arrival, for example with signage and visual aids.

Protecting high risk workers

- Ensure those workers classed as extremely vulnerable follow current public health guidelines – not to come to work.
- Ensure those workers who are clinically vulnerable, are supported in taking extra care and offered roles that are the safest to be able to maintain social distancing.
- Individuals who are advised to stay at home and isolate, and do not come to work.

Social distancing for workers

- Maintain social distancing in all parts of the workplace wherever possible.
- When actively serving a client, and social distancing not possible, mitigate by:
 - Further increasing the frequency of hand washing surface cleaning.
 - Maintain social distancing between the chairs.

- Use screens or barriers to separate clients from one another and between workstations.
- Reduce congestion when coming to and leaving work, for example, by having separate entry and exit points.
- Implement physical changes like barriers or screens in reception areas.
- Providing floor markings and signage to remind workers and clients to maintain social distancing, especially in busy areas.
- If workers are working in close proximity to one another, using pairing system; for example, a stylist and apprentice.
- Minimising contacts around transactions, for example, encouraging contactless payments.
- Use disposable items as much as possible, and ensuring non-disposable items are cleaned effectively between clients.
- Minimise movement of workers to common areas by ensuring all essential equipment such as scissors and brushes are available in the workstation area.
- Maintain 2 m social distancing or 1 m where this is not possible, in all parts of the salon: entrances and exits, break rooms, retail areas, washbasins, waiting areas etc.

Cleaning the workplace and hygiene

- Space appointments to allow for frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including door handles, reception areas and staff handled devices
- Clear workspaces and remove unnecessary items such as reading materials in waiting areas
- Sanitise reusable equipment, such as client chairs, and equipment such as scissors, after each appointment, and at the start and end of each shifts. Include screens and barriers.
- Use disposable gowns for each client. Otherwise use separate gowns (and towels in the normal way) for each client, washing between use at 60 °C.
- Staff to wear work uniform or overall only at work, to change on a daily basis and to wash immediately after use.
- Maintain good ventilation in the workplace – keep windows and doors open, ensure mechanical ventilation systems are working effectively.
- Improve the circulation of air and prevent pockets of stagnant air in occupied spaces. This can be achieved by simple methods such as using ceiling fans, desk fans or opening windows.
- All staff instructed to wash hands properly, and increasing hand washing in between clients
- Tissues available for clients and informed to use when sneezing or coughing.
- Provide reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards.
- Enhanced cleaning for busy areas.
- For handling goods, deliveries etc. establish picking-up and dropping-off collection points where possible, rather than passing items hand-to-hand.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Workers in close proximity to a client's face, mouth and nose wear a clear visor that covers the entire face. The visor may be disposable or re-usable – if latter, must be cleaned and sanitised regularly.
- Clients and workers who want to wear a face covering, will be allowed to do so, but face coverings is not an alternative to wearing a visor. If face covering worn by workers, remind them to wash hands before putting them on, before and after taking them off.
- When clients are not having a treatment, both staff and client to maintain social distancing.

Workforce management

- If workers are split into teams or shift groups, or assigned to specific tasks, fixing these teams or shift groups, so that contacts are reduced.
- Limiting roles and tasks, to allow a worker to remain in same workstation.
- Stations to be assigned to one individual as much as possible. If they need to be shared, they are be shared by the smallest possible number of people.
- Staggering work start times, and minimising worker congregation such as near entrances.
- Keep a record of worker shift patters for 21 days to assist with NHS Test and Trace.
- Provide clear, consistent and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working.