Guidance for Managers & Staff
Social Distancing in the office workplace

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THIS GUIDANCE APPLIES AT THE FOLLOWING MAIN OFFICES:

Property	Location	Managing Service
County Hall	Ruthin	HFES (FMU)
Caledfryn	Denbigh	HFES (FMU)
Russell House	Rhyl	HFES (FMU)

AND THE FOLLOWING ANCILLARY OFFICES:

Property	Location	Managing Service
DCC Resource Centre, 19 Bedford Street	Rhyl	CSS
Brickfield Pond Unit, Ffordd Derwen	Rhyl	PPPCS
Botanical Gardens Depot	Rhyl	HFES
Rhyl Library	Rhyl	CC
Bodelwyddan Kinmel Depot	Bodelwyddan	HFES
Fleet Workshop, Expressway Business Park	Bodelwyddan	HFES
Corporate Store	Ruthin	HFES (FMU)
Lon Parcwr Depot	Ruthin	HFES
The Old Gaol	Ruthin	BIM/PPPCS
Loggerheads Country Park/Plas Newydd	Loggerheads/Llangollen	PPPCS
Y Capel, Castle Street	Llangollen	CC/PPPCS

Introduction & General Principles

This guidance set out measures to maintain social distancing requirements in the council's office buildings in order to reduce the possibility of transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace, as and when lockdown restrictions are eased. The lockdown was implemented to reduce opportunities for transmission through social contact, and as far as possible we should continue with the principal of reducing social contact until such time as the government advises otherwise. As such, this means:

- **Wherever possible, staff should work from home**

- **When staff cannot work from home, they should minimise the number of days they work in an office setting**

- **Staff who have received a letter advising them to "shield" should <u>not</u> attend the workplace until advised otherwise by national government and/or their GP**

- **Staff, or anyone living in their household, who are displaying any COVID-19 symptoms should <u>not</u> attend the workplace and self-isolate in accordance with the latest government's advice**

- **Where staff are required to attend the office workplace, social distancing of 2m (6 ft) should be adhered to at all times, including breaks**

What to do if staff develop COVID-19 symptoms

To reduce the risk of infection, staff are encouraged to self-monitor in relation to symptoms of COVID-19 – fever (37.8°C) or a new continuous cough.

- **Staff who develop symptoms outside the workplace <u>should not</u> attend work, and should notify their supervisor/manager**

- **If a worker's symptoms start at the workplace, they must advise their supervisor/manager and return home without delay to start self-isolation**

In the latter case, if well enough, they can drive their own vehicle. Alternatively they should request a member of their household pick them up immediately. If neither is possible, the worker can take public or private transport home directly to start self-isolation.

If they are so unwell that they require an ambulance, phone 999 and let the call handler know you are concerned about COVID-19. Whilst you wait for advice or an ambulance to arrive, try to find somewhere safe for the unwell person to sit which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If possible and it is safe to do so, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a meeting room. If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze, and then put the tissue in the bin. If no bin is available, put the tissue in a bag or pocket for disposing in a bin later. If you don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.

Basic infection prevention measure

All staff should adhere to the following infection prevention measures in the workplace:

- **Stay at home if you are feeling sick or exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms**

- **Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly**

- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a disposable tissue or into the crook of your elbow**

- **Do not shake hands – use other non-contact methods of greeting**

- **Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace (desks, keyboards, phones, etc.**

- **Do not prepare food or drinks for any colleagues in the workplace, and immediately clean and put away any plates, cups, cutlery, etc. after use**

At Work Guidelines

1.	**Car Parking**
1.1	Whenever possible staff should leave one bay clear each side of their vehicle when parking.
2	**Entrances**
2.1	Staff are advised to wash their hands or use hand sanitisers/gels after use of door handles in and out of buildings (as well as within buildings). These will be provided by FMU by visiontime screens and/or close to main entrances, but staff are also encouraged to bring and use their own personal supply of hand sanitiser/gel.
3	**Visiontime**
3.1	Where possible, staff should use their personal computers to log into visiontime rather than using the communal screen. Some visiontime screens will be removed/closed off where all staff within the building have alternative means of logging on and off.
3.2	Where this is not possible and visiontime screens remain, staff using the communal screen should immediately use sanitiser to clean their hands immediately after touching the screen and logging on (sanitisers to be provided by FMU at each visiontime screen).
4	**Stairs, Lifts & Corridors**
4.1	Strict 2m social distancing should be observed when using stairs. In some cases, FMU may designate some stairs as either "up" or "down". Where this is the case they will be clearly signed and all staff should abide by this requirement. Where stairs are not designated "up" or "down" then staff should wait if any person is using the stairs in the opposite direction (i.e. coming down when you need to go up or vice versa) for that person to complete their use of the stairs.
4.2	Lifts should only be occupied by one person at a time, and should only be used if absolutely necessary (e.g. Because of a mobility problem or transporting heavy items.
4.3	Where corridors are wide enough to maintain a 2m distance, staff should keep left when passing others using the corridor. Where corridors are too narrow to maintain a 2 m distance, then staff should wait if any person is using the corridor in the opposite direction for that person to complete their use of the corridor. In some cases, FMU may designate some corridors as one-way. Where this is the case they will be clearly signed and all staff should abide by this requirement.
4.4	Fire doors should not be wedged open. Handles will be cleaned regularly by FMU/housekeeping.

5	**Workstations/Desks**
5.1	In order to maintain social distancing, there should always be at least one empty workstation/desk between occupied workstations/desks. Equally, where desks are arranged in "banks" the workstation/desk directly opposite an occupied workstation/desk should not be occupied (diagonally opposite is allowed). Consideration must also be given to adjacent "banks" of workstations/desks that back onto others to ensure a strict 2m distance (which may require discussion and agreement with other teams).
5.2	Workstations/desks should be cleaned by the member of staff using it prior to commencing any work, and at the end of the working day. Cleaning materials will be provided in each office by FMU. In order to maintain the highest level of cleanliness, a **clear desk policy** should be enforced to ensure no documents or other unnecessary paraphernalia is left on the workstation/desk surface at the end of the working day.
5.3	If possible (i.e. if there are sufficient workstations/desks for each individual member of staff), supervisors/managers should allocate each member of staff with an individual workstation/desk, and **clearly label** this, and the associated chair, with the member of staff's name. No other staff member should use a labelled workstation or chair designated for a particular staff member.
5.4	Where all staff in a team have a dedicated workstation/desk, it is the responsibility of the supervisor/manager of that team to schedule staff attendance at the workplace to ensure that the alternate workstation/desk requirement detailed in 5.1 above is strictly adhered to. This may mean introducing a rota system or staggered hours. This may also require discussion and agreement with other teams using adjacent workstations/desks to ensure rotas coordinate between teams and the required 2m social distancing requirement is maintained.
5.5	Where a rota system is introduced, consideration should be given to reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using "fixed teams or partnering" (so each person works only with a few others).
5.6	Where the number of staff in a team is greater than the number of workstations/desks, supervisors/managers will need to consider the most appropriate way of managing this situation and maintaining social distancing. This may be a mixture of dedicated (and clearly labelled) workstations/desks and chairs for members of staff who regularly attend the office, and shared workstations/desks for staff who attend less regularly. Where desks are shared, the most straightforward way of managing this would be to assign one workstation/desk to no more than two people, and label both the workstation/desk and chair with the name of the two allocated individuals. In this situation, the attendance of the two individuals who share a workstation/desk will need to be managed so that they do not attend the workplace at the same time. For such shared workstations/desks, the requirement for members of staff occupying the desk to clean at the outset and end of the working day as detailed in 5.2 above should be **very strictly** adhered to.

5.7	Wherever possible "corridors" between workstations/desks should be at least 2m wide to enable the required social distancing when individuals are walking past workstations/desks. Where this is not possible, any person walking through should politely request anyone using a workstation/desk less than 2m distance away to temporarily move aside in order that the person can pass at a safe distance.
5.8	If changes are required to desk allocations whilst social distancing requirements are still in place, the workstations/desks should be thoroughly cleaned before reallocating, and once reallocated should be clearly labelled with the individual(s) names as detailed in 5.3 and 5.5 above. Wherever possible, individuals should retain the same chair prior to any reallocation, but where this is not possible the chair should be thoroughly cleaned before reallocating.
6	**Hot-desking**
6.1	All dedicated hot-desking areas will be closed and not available for agile working. These can be reallocated as dedicated desks for staff members through arrangement with FMU, but where this is the case the workstation/desk should be **clearly labeled** this with the member of staff's name.
7	**Phones**
7.1	Where a staff member has a dedicated workstation/desk (see section 5), only the person assigned to this workstation/desk should use the equipment on it (phones. keyboards, etc.), but even in this case staff are encouraged to use a mobile phone or their personal jabber headsets rather than the desk phone.
7.2	No desk phones will be provided on workstations/desks that have not been allocated to an individual officer. Staff using these workstations/desks are required to use a mobile phone or their personal jabber headsets.
7.3	All phones (and other frequently touched equipment such as keyboards) should be routinely cleaned.
8	**Meetings**
8.1	Avoid face to face meetings wherever possible by using alternative means such as videoconferencing. Only absolutely necessary participants should attend meetings and should maintain 2m separation throughout.
8.2	Meeting room capacities have been reduced to ensure the 2m social distancing requirement can be adhered to by removing chairs, and in some cases tables. The maximum capacity of the room (i.e. the number of chairs in the room) **must not** be exceeded, and additional chairs or tables should not be brought into any meeting room.

8.3	Meeting room tables should be cleaned by a member of staff involved in the meeting prior to commencing the meeting, and then again at the end of the meeting. Cleaning materials and hand sanitiser will be provided in each meeting room by FMU. Avoid transmission during meetings, for example, avoid sharing pens and other objects. No documents or other paraphernalia should be left on the table/in the room at the end of the meeting.
8.4	When practicable, open windows in meeting rooms to improve ventilation (or even consider holding "walk & talk" or other outdoor meetings if possible).
9	**Print Rooms**
9.1	Print rooms should only be occupied by one person at a time.
9.2	Printers should be cleaned prior to use, and then again at the end of use. Cleaning materials will be provided in each meeting room by FMU.
10	**Toilets**
10.1	Toilets should only be occupied by one person at a time. Signage will be provided by FMU to indicate whether the toilet is engaged or not. Staff using the toilet will need to change the sign as they enter and exit the toilet.
11	**Staff Rooms/Areas/Kitchens (including lunchtime arrangements)**
11.1	The capacity of staff rooms and other staff welfare areas have been reduced to ensure the 2m social distancing requirement can be adhered to by removing chairs. The maximum capacity of the room (i.e. the number of chairs in the room) **must not** be exceeded, and additional chairs should not be brought into any staff rooms or welfare areas.
11.2	Where kitchen rooms/areas are provided, they should only be used by one person at a time. Staff should wash their hands before and after using the kitchen areas.
11.3	All crockery and cutlery has been removed from kitchens and kitchen areas. Staff should bring in and use one dedicated cup/mug/crockery/cutlery that is personal to them for any drinks and or food. This should be immediately washed up and put away in a personal locker or other personal storage space after use, and not left in the sink or on the draining board. Kitchen cupboards should no longer be used for storing crockery and cutlery, and may be removed if left there.
11.4	Staff should not prepare drinks or other refreshments for other members of staff or visitors.
11.5	Food and drink items placed in the fridge should be clearly labelled with a name and date. Staff should ensure they wash their hands before and after they place items in the fridge.
11.6	Staff are encouraged to bring in their own packed lunches rather than going out to buy food. Where a staff member has a dedicated workstation/desk (see section 5), meals

	should be eaten at this workstation/desk, or on benches outside where these are present (maintaining a 2m social distance). Where staff do not have a dedicated workstation/desk, they should eat lunch at the workstation/desk they have been assigned for that day. Ideally workstations/desks should be cleaned before and after meals.
11.7	Staff who leave the office during lunchtime (or any other time during the working day) should maintain social distancing requirements, and should not go in groups greater than 3 people. Staff should wash their hands before leaving and on returning to the workplace.
12	**Reception and Waiting Areas**
12.1	Separate guidance will be developed for reception areas and other areas where there is an interface with the public.
13	**Commuting and Business Travel**
13.1	Where practicably possible, staff should travel in their own vehicles rather than use public transport. Lift sharing should be avoided at all times.
13.2	Carefully consider whether travel is required to avoid all non-essential travel. Consider using videoconferencing for work related meetings.
13.3	The use of pool vehicles should be minimised, and ideally pool vehicles should be allocated to one person or a very limited number of people. Staff using a pool vehicle should wash their hands thoroughly both before and after using the vehicle. It is also advised that sanitising wipes are provided in pool vehicles to wipe down the steering wheel, other controls, doors, handles, etc. before use. Use gloves when filling a vehicle with fuel.
14	**Face Coverings & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
14.1	The evidence suggests that wearing a face covering does not protect you, but it may protect others if you are infected but have not developed symptoms. Wearing a face covering in the workplace is not required, but staff may choose to wear one as a personal choice. If you do choose to wear a face covering: - Wash your hands thoroughly before putting a face covering on, and after removing it. - When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands. - Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it. - Continue to wash your hands regularly. - Change and wash your face covering daily - If the material is washable, wash in line with the manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste. - Practice social distancing.

14.2	There is currently no requirement for staff to wear PPE in the office setting. This will be continually reviewed and revised in line with government recommendations.
15	**Emergency Evacuations**
15.1	If an emergency evacuation of the workplace is required, try to maintain the social distancing rules if possible. However, if there is a clear an immediate risk to life and limb through fire, bomb threat, etc., the absolute priority is to evacuate the building rather than maintain social distancing.
15.2	One way systems and up/down stair signs can be ignored in the event of an emergency evacuation and the nearest exit should be used.
15.3	Social distancing should be practiced at Fire Assembly Points.