

## Operating a Convenience Store during Covid-19

Dear Food Business Operator

**Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Section 2 & Section 3**  
**Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, Section 7**  
**Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014**

We are writing to you to advise you on the action you need to take in response to the Caronavirus Covid-19 threat.

You, as the business owner must take all reasonable steps to ensure that your staff and customers / delivery people who come into your shop are not exposed to the virus and controls are in place to control the spread of the virus.

It is with this in mind that we are contacting you with advice on the action (or equivalent) that you need to take. This must be carried out as soon as possible.

We have included posters for you to display at the till and at the entrance to the shop / front of the queue. I recommend that you laminate the posters or place each one inside a clear plastic pocket so that you can wipe them and they are protected.

### Formal action

As always, we prefer to work with businesses and to support you. This letter with the leaflet, check list and posters provides you with the information you need to provide safe systems within your shop.

However, if you fail to take adequate action to safeguard yourself, your staff and your customers and we assess the risk as unacceptable then we have the power to take formal action to secure the necessary improvements. If need be, we can close your business until adequate steps are taken to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Should you wish to discuss any matters relating to the above or require further information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Community Wellbeing Team

### ***Freedom of Information***

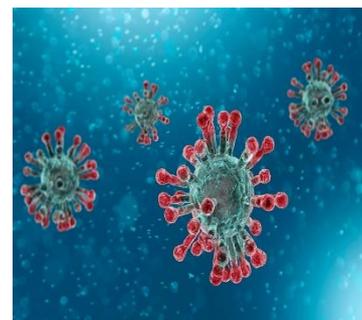
*Please note that, subject to limited exemptions provided for in the Data Protection Act, full details of inspections including reports and findings may be shared with members of the public requesting this, including the press under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.*

## Covid-19 infection Control for Independent Retail Stores

You are required to ensure the safety of yourself, your employees and your customers who visit your shop.

The Covid-19 virus is **HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS** and it **STICKS TO SURFACES** (eg packaging, counter top, money and skin) and can survive for up to 3 days.

It easily passes from one person to another through the air; if a person coughs, the virus is catapulted onto surfaces (that is why you must cough into the crook of your elbow or into a tissue then wash your hands immediately).



**If someone is too close**, you will breathe in the infected droplets & become ill.

**If you touch a contaminated surface**, your hands become contaminated. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and you may become ill.

Remember: if you touch a surface that someone else has touched, there's a risk of infection

When you are deciding what controls are needed, assume that you, your staff and your customers may all be infected and assume everyone's hands and money may be contaminated.



The rules are simple, you **MUST** ...

- Stay 2m apart
- Wash your hands before touching your face
- De-contaminate surfaces regularly\*; wash the surface then disinfect it. Use alcohol wipes if you have them, if not use a sanitiser (spray onto the surface and wipe, spray again and leave for 5 mins).



If possible .....



Do not touch surfaces with your hands. You may decide to wear gloves – these can be tricky to get on and off.



\*An effective way of decontaminating surfaces is to use a

bleach solution but care must be taken when handling this chemical. Wear protective gloves.

Mix 10ml (about 2 capfuls) of thick bleach with 1 litre of water.

## **Social distancing**

In line with government advice, everyone must be 2 metres apart (2 yards). This is to reduce the transfer of the virus from an infected person to another person (sometimes people have the virus and feel well so they don't realise they are infected)

In order to maintain this rule you must make sure that staff and customers (and delivery personnel) are kept apart.

### Poster at Entrance

1. Place a poster at the entrance to the shop. We have enclosed a poster for you to use which says "Social distancing To protect our customers and staff at this time, we are actively managing the number of customers who can come into our premises at any one time. Please make sure you stand 2m (6 feet) apart using the marked lines on the floor. When at the front of the queue, wait behind the line until called forward. Thank you for your understanding & co-operation"

### Limit the number of people in the shop

2. If the shopping area is too small or narrow to allow social distancing then only one customer can be in that space at any one time. If the space is large enough to allow social distancing you can allow more. It is recommended that you have no more than one customer in each aisle and you ensure a one-way system operates through the shop. Ideally, put arrows on the floor and/or display posters

### Floor marking

3. To help customers to keep their distance, mark lines on the floor 2m apart (starting at the till). You can buy yellow and black floor tape on line (several businesses sell this).

### Stewarding

4. At busy times a member of staff must guide customers and limit entry.

### Shop Doors

5. In order to minimise the surfaces that could become contaminated we recommend that you keep the shop door wedged open so customers do not need to touch it.

### Entrance and Exit

6. If you have 2 doors, one should be the entrance and one for the exit. If you only have one shop door, the customer leaving the shop **MUST** be 2m away from the waiting queue so ensure the waiting queue is a safe distance away.

### Restocking of Shelves

7. When staff are restocking shelves, a 2m distance must be respected. In order to comply with this requirement you can close off the aisle or put up barriers around the worker or briefly close the shop. A poster is enclosed which says "Keep your distance 2m away"

## **Personal hygiene and hand washing**

It is essential that staff are able to wash their hands frequently.

### Hand washing facilities

8. Ensure the area where the hand washing facilities are sited is clean and hygienic. This is usually by the staff toilet so this area and facilities must be disinfected at the start and end of the day.

9. The hand drying must be a single use disposable towel eg paper towel or blue paper roll. This should be placed in a dispenser which is fitted to the wall. A reusable cloth towel is NOT acceptable.

10. Liquid soap must be available at the wash hand basin. Make sure you have a plentiful supply.

### Effective hand washing

11. Ensure that staff wash their hands properly (using the correct technique and for, at least, 20 seconds – see the link to a video at the end of this letter). This must be done before starting work, after coughing or sneezing or blowing their nose, before and after restocking shelves, after a break or touching their phone and before leaving the shop.

Note: You and your staff must wash your hands properly after blowing their nose or coughing into their hand BEFORE they touch any other surfaces. Hand sanitiser is no substitute

### Healthy hands

13. You should provide hand moisturiser and / or barrier cream to reduce the risk of dermatitis

### Clothing

14. You and your staff should wear a clean uniform which they ideally change into when they arrive at work and take off before leaving work or be provided with an apron. Bear in mind that the virus may survive on clothing for up to 3 days.

### Hand hygiene for customers

15. Provide hand sanitiser for customers to use before entering the shop. We recommend that customers sanitise their hands again as they leave the shop and you should provide sanitiser at the counter for their use.

16. A poster is enclosed for your use which says "For the safety of everyone, please use this hand sanitiser before entering. Do not enter if you are ill"

17. The basket handle and the trolley handle must be sanitised each time before they are used by the next customer. The sanitiser and disposable paper must be provided and we would suggest that a member of staff is allocated this role to ensure that the customers' hands are not contaminated by a previous customer via the handle. The same member of staff will be responsible for limiting the number of people in the shop (see above)

### Contamination of food and packaging

18. Ready to eat foods such as bakery products must be protected if they are not packaged. You must protect the foods. You should provide a sneeze screen and gloves for staff who handle the product.

### Paying at the till

It is difficult to maintain social distancing between the customer and the till operator when paying.

19. The most effective way of keeping staff and customers safe is to install a sneeze screen barrier. It needs to be wide enough and high enough to be effective. It is suggested that you put a barrier at the counter with a gap to pass through money. The screen will need to be about 1m x 1m. (You can purchase free-standing screens on line for around £60 with free postage and can be delivered within days).

An alternative may be to create an exclusion zone around the till area with a customer notice "Please stand behind the line while being served". You could place boxes in that area to discourage customers from straying into that area. However, the counter will need to be cleared and long enough for customers to load their shopping and put it into bags 2m away from the operator. **At no time should customers be directly in front of the operator if there is no barrier.**

20. In order to maintain the 2m distancing while customers are putting their goods onto the counter, you will need to create a sufficiently large area near the till. I suggest you have an open container on the counter that can slide along the counter to the till for scanning (like the ones used in airports at baggage checks). A large tray may be useful until you can provide something better. The shopping can then be transferred to another container and pushed along the counter for the customer to load their bags. The containers must be disinfected at the beginning and end of the day and whenever they appear dirty.

### Taking money and giving change

21. Most people can make contactless payments. Put the enclosed poster at the till which says "Please use contactless payment if you are able to do so. Contactless payment is available for purchases up to £45"

22. (a) At the till the operator should wear a glove to take money (assume the money is contaminated).

(b) Put the money into a quarantine box and leave it there untouched for 3 days (the virus can survive for 3 days on money), or disinfect the money.

(c) Remove the glove and give change from the till using your hand.

(d) Place the money in a dish and push it towards the customer. Disinfect the dish at the beginning and end of each day.

(e) Remove the glove when not at the till ("easy glove" is good for this <https://www.easyglove.co.uk/>).

23. You should wear different gloves in the shop. Provide separate gloves for each worker (a coloured sticker on the easy glove can be used).

24. Provide a plastic washable cover for the keys on the till to enable thorough cleaning. Disinfect the cover at the beginning and end of the day. (covers cost £20-30)

## **Management**

25. Make sure staff know what the procedures and supervise them. You should write this down and use it to train your staff.

26. Review your start-up checks and closing checks to include checking if there's enough soap, check dates on the money quarantine box, check there's enough soap, hand drying and hand sanitiser and plenty in stock. Check you have enough gloves and order before stocks are low. Check the posters are in place and not damaged, check floor tape is in place and not damaged.

27. Review your cleaning schedule to include the disinfection of all hand-contact surfaces such as the till cover, trolley / basket handles, shopping container at till (used by customers to place their shopping in when paying), the dish at till (used to give change), door handles of shop door and toilet door and push plates on doors, toilet area, wash hand basin, taps and dispensers (soap and paper towels), card machines.

28. The start-up checks, closing checks and cleaning schedules must be dated and signed. Check they have been done correctly.

### **Further Advice and information on Coronavirus Covid 19**

If you have access to the Internet you can now e-mail your queries to the food team at [community.wellbeing@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:community.wellbeing@gloucester.gov.uk)

Guidance for food businesses on Coronavirus (Covid-19)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses/guidance-for-food-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19#maintaining-social-distancing-in-specific-food-business-settings>

A quick guide to safe shopping during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

<https://www.cieh.org/media/4080/covid-19-safe-shopping-guidelines.pdf>

Food delivery and takeaway guidance

<https://www.cieh.org/media/4070/covid-19-food-delivery-and-takeaway-guidance.pdf>

How to hand wash (video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3v521MTjio&feature=youtu>

# Checklist

This checklist will help you to put in place safe systems in your shop and to check your systems are working effectively



<b>Personal hygiene and hand washing (assume hands are contaminated)</b>	✓
Are staff wearing clean uniforms? (this is a daily start-up check)	
Are hand washing facilities accessible?	
Is liquid soap and paper towels / blue roll (in dispenser) at wash hand basin in staff toilet compartment?	
Is the toilet area and wash basin clean and ready to use?	
Has hand sanitiser been provided at the counter for staff.  Note: you and your staff must <u>wash your hands properly</u> after blowing their nose or coughing into their hand BEFORE they touch any other surfaces. Hand sanitiser is no substitute	
Have posters been affixed in the shop (one by the till – that encourages contactless payment) the others at the entrance?	
Has hand sanitiser been provided for customers at the entrance to the shop?	
Has sanitiser spray and wipes been provided for customers / staff to clean the basket / trolley handle	

<b>Social Distancing (assume everyone may be infected)</b>	
Have lines been marked on the floor 2m apart (starting at the till)?	
What limit has been placed on the number of people in the shop?  How have you decided this?	
At busy times does a member of staff guide customers and limit entry?	
How are customers kept apart during shopping?	
Do you have a one-way system?	
Have you put arrows on the floor or displayed posters to guide customers?	
When restocking shelves a 2m distance must be respected; what system have you adopted?  Close off the aisle / put up barriers around the worker / briefly close the shop  Is it effective?	

<p><b>Paying at the Till (assume people may be infected and hands and money might be contaminated)</b></p>	
<p>How have you protected you / your staff when operating the till?</p> <p>Have you provided a sneeze screen barrier at the counter (with a gap to pass through money) or an equivalent system (eg an exclusion area)? Has this been marked out and a poster displayed reminding customers not to over step the line?</p>	
<p>Do customers face directly at the till operator (without a barrier) at any time?</p> <p>(assume customers are infected)</p>	
<p>How can customers place their shopping on the counter and stay 2m away from the till operator?</p> <p>Have you cleared the counter area to create a surface for customers to place their goods?</p>	
<p>Do you use a tray / container to slide the shopping towards the till?</p> <p>If not, how are goods scanned without compromising the 2m rule?</p>	
<p>At the till, are you / your staff operating a safe system to receive contaminated money and give change?</p>	
<p>Do you sanitise your hands then wear the glove to scan shopping and receive money?</p>	
<p>Is a quarantine box being used to store money for 3 days? Are the boxes dated?</p> <p>Are the boxes disinfected?</p> <p>If this system is not used, what system is in place? is the money disinfected?</p>	
<p>How is change given? Is the glove removed and money taken from till by hand and placed into the change dish?</p> <p>Is the change dish disinfected?</p>	

Is the glove removed when operator is not at the till ("easy glove" is good for this).	
Are gloves worn in the shop? You should wear a different one in the shop. Do you?	
Are separate gloves provided for each worker (a coloured sticker on the easy glove can be used).	
Has a washable cover been provided for the keys on the till?  Has it been disinfected?	

<b>Access and Exit (assume everyone may be infected)</b>	
Has the shop door been wedged open so customers do not need to touch it?	
Do you have a safe entrance and exit system? If you have 2 doors, one should be the entrance and one for the exit. If only one door, the customer leaving the shop MUST be 2m away from the waiting queue.	
Does the cleaning schedule include the twice daily disinfection of the counter tops, till cover, quarantine box, shopping container, dish for the change, trolley / basket handles, hand-contact surfaces to staff toilet, wash hand basin taps, light switches, card machines, conveyor belts at till, shop door handles and push plate.	

<b>Management</b>	
Has the cleaning schedule been followed, signed and dated?	
Have the start-up and closing checks been completed? Has this been signed and dated?	
Has hand moisturiser and / or barrier cream been provided for staff?	
Record any concerns and action taken	

For the safety of everyone, please use hand sanitiser before entering.

Do not enter if you feel unwell, or have a cough or you're sneezing (even if you think its hay fever).

# Social distancing.

To protect our customers and staff at this time, we are actively managing the number of customers who can come into our premises at any one time.

Please make sure you stand 2m (6 feet) apart using the marked lines on the floor.

When at the front wait behind the line until called forward.

Thank you for your understanding & co-operation.

## CUSTOMER NOTICE

While queueing for the till please keep **2 metres**

between yourself & the person in front of you.

We aim to serve you as soon as possible.

Please use contactless payment if you can



Contactless payment is now available for purchases **up to £45**

# Keep Your Distance

## 2m away

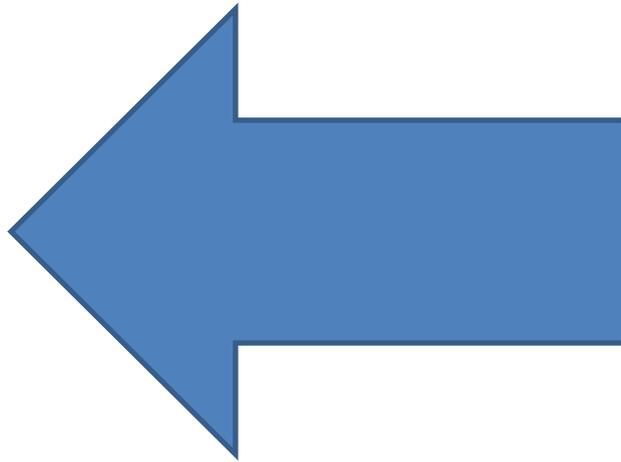


## CUSTOMER NOTICE

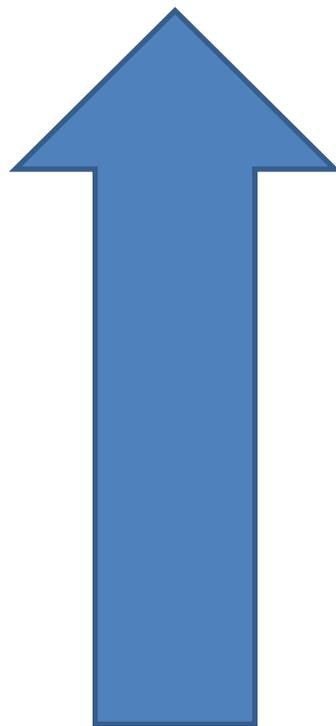
Do not enter the  
exclusion zone  
around the till

Please place your  
shopping into the  
container on the  
counter

Follow the  
arrow this  
way



Follow the  
arrow this  
way



Follow the  
arrow this  
way

