Managing Covid-19

Emergency procedures developed for managing the risk of Covid-19. This will temporarily form part of the Group Health and Safety Management System.

Devonshire Group policies and procedures and legal requirements

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
RIDDOR 1995

Background

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

The Devonshire Group will develop procedures to minimise the risk of Covid-19 using the following guiding principles:
1. The health, safety and welfare of our colleagues, visitors and our local communities is paramount in the decisions we make
2. We will embody the Devonshire Group core values of *Decency*, *Being Inclusive* and *Always Improving* in everything we do
3. Our colleagues will be involved and informed at every stage
4. We will continue to work with and support our tenants, our stakeholders and the communities in which we operate
5. Our approach will be flexible, adaptable, cautious and careful - our plans will need to change and, more than ever, we must be nimble in our decision making and in the way we operate

With these guiding principles in mind the following objectives will apply across all Departments:
1. Staff will work at home wherever possible. We will monitoring the wellbeing of people who are working from home and help them stay connected to the rest of the workforce, keeping in touch with their working arrangements including their welfare, mental and physical health.
2. Where staff cannot work from home the principles of social distancing are applied while at work. This will include revising visitor arrangements to ensure social distancing and enhanced hygiene arrangements.
3. Where it is not possible to socially distance in full, and we have deemed the activity needs to continue for the business to operate, we will take mitigating actions to reduce the risk of transmission between employees or visitors, including:
    * Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning.
    * Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible.
    * Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other.
    * Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible.
    * Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering' (so each person works with only a few others).
4. We will implement enhanced cleaning routines of frequently touched surfaces to avoid transmission of the virus.

5. We will protect our employees that are most vulnerable. Those in the clinically extremely vulnerable group (and advised to "shield"), or employees deemed to be in the clinically vulnerable group, should not return to work at the moment as a safety measure.
6. We will monitor the new procedures and make improvements where required.

The management system for General office safety

1. **Trustees and Chief Executive must:**
   - Ensure that the arrangements for managing Covid-19 are in place across the Group
2. **Devonshire Group Managers must:**
   - Ensure that the arrangements for managing Covid-19 are adapted within their specific Departments
3. **Heads of Department (HoD)/ General Managers must:**
   - Ensure that the procedures for managing Covid-19 are implemented and practiced as required
4. **Managers/Supervisors must:**
   - Support HoD in managing the Covid-19 risk
   - Ensure extra training for staff where necessary
   - Supervise and monitor staff to ensure that Covid-19 controls are being observed
   - Provide the required PPE for staff
   - Feedback to site management any failings in Covid-19 procedures
5. **H&S Team must:**
   - Ensure that all Group procedures are up to date in line with Government advice and available to all Departments.
   - Support the DGM to provide suitable procedures and resources to manage the risk of Covid-19

What documentation is required

- Department specific risk assessment
- New staff signage
- New visitor signage
- Work from home advice, including checklist for setting up home working
- Return to work advice and self-cert process
- Updated first aid advice during coronavirus
- Updated Safety Skills Sheets