

Background to Coronavirus Disease 2019

The outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has evolved rapidly and the Department of Health is leading the Government response to this national public health emergency.

Employers are taken advice and guidance from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). These organisations provide expert scientific advice relating to the novel coronavirus.

The Covid-19 pandemic has major implications for all workplaces. Managing the risk of spread in the workplace is important in the relation to the health of the workers but also as part of general efforts to control the spread and protect the most vulnerable.

Symptoms of COVID-19

COVID-19 can cause illness ranging from mild to severe and, in some cases death. Symptoms are similar, to cold and flu and can take anywhere between 2-14 days to appear.

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- A fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above).
- A cough – this can be any kind of cough not just dry.
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Fatigue.
- Aches and pains.
- Sore throat (sometimes).
- Headache (sometimes).
- Runny or stuffy nose (sometimes).
- Feeling sick or vomiting (rare).
- Diarrhoea (rare).
- Loss of smell and/or taste (sometimes).

How COVID-19 Spreads

Contamination occurs when a person touches their eyes, nose, or mouth after touching an object or surface that has been contaminated by an infected person. The virus is spread when droplets of fluid from an infected person's nose or mouth lands on surfaces or objects. Droplets are spread through coughing, sneezing, or speaking. COVID-19 can also be spread if droplets from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, or mouth of a person standing close to them.

It is not known how long the virus survives on surfaces in different conditions, therefore, thorough, and regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is essential. If disinfection is required, it must be performed in addition to cleaning **NEVER** as a substitute for cleaning.

People are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms. Current information suggests that some infected people spread the virus prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves.

Best Work Practice

The following measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of staff and clients. These measures are in line with guidance from the Government and the HES and must be adhered to by staff and clients to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. These measures include, but are not limited to the following, and at anytime are subject to change.

Staff Guidelines:

- Allow a limited number of clients into the salon in line with social distancing rules.
- Restrict waiting areas, so social distancing can be maintained.
- Ensure all clients wash their hands with soap and water or sanitiser prior to treatments.
- Ensure all staff wash or use hand sanitiser before and after each treatment.
- Sanitise all surfaces that clients and staff are in contact with including nail tables, pedicure stations, couches/massage tables, chairs, and reception tables between every client visit.
- Door handles, light switches, and toilet facilities to be sanitized between every client visit.
- All tools and equipment be safely and correctly disinfected or discarded after every treatment.
- Wear a facemask and facial visor during treatments and when dealing with clients.
- Do not allow clients to touch retail or tester products. Any product/equipment/tool that is touched must be safely and correctly sanitized.
- Staff must practice social distancing and proper respiratory, coughing and hygiene etiquette.
- Lunches must be prepared at home and all cutlery must be brought from home. Used cutlery must be stored away and brought home and the area cleaned and sanitised.
- Staff must wear a freshly laundered uniform daily. (All black – trousers, tunic, shoes, cardigan)
- Keep up to date on Government and HSE information surrounding COVID-19.
- Carry out a daily COVID-19 cleaning routine and sign off.
- Provide clients with a COVID-19 Assessment Form and make them aware of the salon's contact tracing policy.
- Inform management if they have been in contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.
- Staff must complete a COVID-19 Assessment Form daily.

Client Guidelines:

- Clients must adhere to social distancing.
- Clients must follow proper respiratory, coughing and hygiene etiquette
- No food, drink or use of mobile phones allowed in the salon.
- Clients must attend treatments alone.
- Clients must wear a face mask when appropriate.
- Clients are required to complete a COVID-19 Assessment Form. Information provided will determine if treatments can proceed. Clients need to be made aware that information may be used for contact tracing purposes.

Salon Guidelines:

- PPE gear provided must be worn by all staff.
- Safety protocols adhered to by staff.
- A strict hygiene regime regarding sterilisation of equipment, tools, towels, surfaces etc adhered to and signed off by staff.
- Assigned designated isolation area.
- The COVID-19 Action Plan provided for suspected COVID-19 cases.
- The COVID-19 Cleaning Protocols implemented after each treatment.
- The salon will no longer provide tea, coffee, or magazines.
- Salon Management to keep abreast of any Government or HSE information/advice relating to COVID-19.
- All appropriate COVID-19 signage correctly displayed.
- Social distancing, respiratory, cough and hygiene etiquette adhered to.

What to do if an employee becomes unwell at work?

If a member of staff becomes ill at work they should be removed to an area (ideally a designated isolating room) at least 2 metres from other people and provided with tissues and a mask. (proper disposal of these items should be ensured) The person should call their doctor on their mobile and outline their symptoms. While waiting for medical advice and or assistance they should avoid touching surfaces and objects.

Inform the suspected COVID-19 staff member that management will notify any health concerns to other employees or members of the public who through your establishment they could be at risk.

If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19

- Ensure the employee stays at home
- Carry out a risk assessment to decide what further measures must be taken to ensure the health, the safety and welfare of the workforce. The assessment must follow the guidelines on possible self-isolation of close contacts.
- Reissue hygiene practises to the team.

COVID-19 Etiquette

The best way to prevent person-to-person spread of COVID-19 is to user proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and practice physical distancing.

Hand Hygiene:

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19.

Employers must:

- Ensure that appropriate hygiene facilities are in place to accommodate workers adhering to hand hygiene measures.
- Make available advice and training on how to perform hand hygiene effectively.
- Display posters on how to wash hands in appropriate locations

Employees must:

- Ensure they are familiar with and follow hand hygiene and advice.
- Wash their hands with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer and in particular
 - 1) After coughing and sneezing.
 - 2) Before and after eating.
 - 3) Before and after preparing food.
 - 4) If in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms.
 - 5) Before and after being on public transport.
 - 6) Before and after being in a crowd.
 - 7) When arriving and leaving the workplace/other site.
 - 8) Before having a cigarette or vaping.
 - 9) When hands are dirty.
 - 10) After toilet use.
- Avoid touching their eyes, mouth, or nose.
- Have access to facilities to support hand hygiene.
- Not share objects that touch their mouth, e.g. bottles or cups.
- Use own pen.

Respiratory Hygiene:

Good respiratory hygiene and etiquette is also important.

Employers must:

- Provide tissues as well as bins/bags for their disposal.
- Have bins emptied at regular intervals.

Employees must:

- Adopt good hygiene and cough etiquette.
- Ensure they are familiar with and follow respiratory and cough hygiene guidance.

Physical Distancing:

Physical distancing is recommended to reduce the spread of the virus. The recommended distance between people is 2 metres.

Employers must:

- Provide for physical distancing across all work activities and this may be achieved, in a number of ways.
 - A) Implement a no hand shaking policy.
 - B) Arrange breaks to facilitate physical distancing.
 - C) Put in place use of card payment methods.