

# Result of COVID-19 Risk Assessment for the Competition and Markets Authority's [CMA] demise at 36 Whitefriars Street, London [Whitefriars]

Version 1.1 Last updated: 29/07/2020

## Introduction

On 11 May 2020 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy published [guidance](#) to help employers, employees and the self-employed in the UK understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Revised guidance was issued on 23 July 2020. This guidance instructs all employers to carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment and consult with the health and safety representative selected by a recognised trade union, or, if there isn't one, a representative chosen by workers.

This document sets out the results of the COVID-19 site risk assessment for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) facility at 36 Whitefriars Street, London [Whitefriars], London, to support those colleagues who will need to work from the office at least some of the time. It highlights the measures in place to ensure any CMA staff, visitors or contractors that need to work in the building can do so safely.

Risk assessments will be completed for other CMA offices, which are shared sites with other organisations, ahead of any CMA staff returning to work at those locations.

## 1. Thinking about and managing risk

The risk assessment reflects the '[Working Safely during COVID-19 in offices and contact centres guidance](#)' and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) risk assessment good practice guidelines. It was completed in consultation with the CMA's Staff and Union Representative Executive (SURE), comprising recognised Trade Union and Staff representatives, alongside the COVID-19 risk assessment undertaken by the CMA's facilities management team, in conjunction with the Boutique Office Company management team which is responsible for providing facilities management services to the CMA's demise at Whitefriars, to ensure all appropriate control measures are in place. The results have also been shared with all staff.

The CMA's Head of Risk worked in partnership with the CMA's facilities management team in assessing these risks. The CMA's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) also received a copy of the risk assessment to assure that the risks are sufficiently reduced for initial reoccupation.

The risk assessment will be reviewed and updated as necessary, particularly as guidance on controlling the spread of COVID-19 changes.

The following notice is displayed in the building to show that the CMA has followed the guidance.

# Staying COVID-19 Secure in 2020

We confirm we have complied with the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19

## • FIVE STEPS TO SAFER WORKING TOGETHER •

- ✓ We have carried out a **COVID-19 risk assessment** and shared the results with the people who work here
- ✓ We have **cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures** in line with guidance
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **help people work from home**
- ✓ We have taken all reasonable steps to **maintain a 2m distance** in the workplace
- ✓ Where people cannot be 2m apart, we have done everything practical to **manage transmission risk**

Employer [REDACTED] Date 28 July 2020

Who to contact: Natalie Starkings (0203 738 6470)  
(or the Health and Safety Executive at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) or 0300 003 1647)

## 1.1. Identified hazards and risks

The hazard identified for this risk assessment is coronavirus.

The following 11 key risks associated with this hazard have been identified through the risk assessment. These risks are applicable to CMA staff, visitors and contractors resulting from the pandemic.

- *Risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 infection*
- *Risk of infection to high risk (including clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals) groups*
- *Risk of infection during travel to and from the office and other work-related travel*
- *Risk of infection from shared office premises*
- *Risk of infection from using workspaces and workstations*
- *Risk of infection from using shared equipment*
- *Risk of infection from waste streams*

- *Risk of infection due to a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19 in the workplace*
- *Risk of injury from accidents, incidents and security incidents*
- *Risk of infection from handling incoming and outgoing goods*
- *Risk of mental health and wellbeing impacts*

The remainder of this document identifies the key measures in place to control these risks and ensure that any CMA staff, visitors or contractors that need to work in the building can do so safely.

## **2. Who should attend the office**

This section addresses three of the risks identified:

- *Risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 infection*
- *Risk of infection to high risk (including clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals) groups*
- *Risk of mental health and wellbeing impacts*

The expectation for all civil servants is that they should be conducting their work in line with the latest safer workplace guidance which, at this time remains that people should continue to work from home wherever possible. The vast majority of our workforce in the CMA will continue to do this as our technology allows them to do so safely and effectively.

There will be some staff who will need to be in the workplace for at least some of the time, but the number of people in Whitefriars will initially remain very low compared to our normal workforce in this building. In line with the [Working Safely during Coronavirus guidance](#), those coming into Whitefriars will be those who are unable to undertake their role, or specific tasks required of their role, such as access to systems which cannot be achieved remotely, or for those who are unable to work from home due to their home or personal circumstances.

The CMA supports the ability of all our staff to work as safely as possible, whether remotely or in the office. During the first phase of our gradual return to office-based working, staff will be required to obtain management approval that their need to attend the office is in line with these criteria and existing risk assessment processes will be followed where necessary for individuals who are in vulnerable groups.

All staff requiring reasonable adjustments for a disability are considered under the Equality Act and have a specific assessment to identify the reasonable adjustments they may need. We take our duty of care as an employer incredibly seriously and we want to protect all our people, especially those who may be more vulnerable as we learn more about the nature of the disease.

Individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable (high risk) will not be permitted to return to office working until shielding measures cease. As an additional safeguard, those staff who are clinically vulnerable (moderate risk) will not be permitted to return to office working until shielding measures cease.

CMA members of staff who are too ill to work will receive sick pay in line with the CMA's policy.

Individuals must not come into the office if they have symptoms of coronavirus, however mild and should follow the government's '[Stay at Home](#)' guidance. Anyone who is advised to self-isolate as part of the government's [Test and Trace service](#) should also not return to the office until they are no longer self-isolating.

The CMA supports the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff. Managers are encouraged to check in regularly with their teams and all staff are advised to contact their manager, or the coronavirussupport inbox, in the first instance to discuss any anxieties or other wellbeing concerns which they may have. The CMA has trained Mental Health First Aiders and staff also have 24/7 access to an employee assistance programme to discuss issues or concerns.

### 3. Social distancing at work

This section addresses the following identified risks:

- *Risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 infection*
- *Risk of infection during travel to and from work and other work-related travel*
- *Risk of infection from shared office premises*
- *Risk of infection from using shared equipment*
- *Risk of infection from using workspaces and workstations*
- *Risk of injury from accidents, incidents and security incidents*

Measures have been put in place to ensure that social distancing (2 metres) can be maintained wherever possible and where this is not possible, other control measures have been put in place by the Boutique Office Company, the serviced office provider. This includes while arriving at and departing from the building and whilst working and moving around the building.

Anyone coming to the building will be expected to follow the latest [safer travel guidance for passengers](#) and only use public transport when absolutely necessary. Onsite cycle storage is available.

To control the flow of people in the building, staff will be encouraged to stagger their arrival and departure times to reduce crowding at entrances and exits.

The building has been marked with one-way systems where possible, with guidance signage on maintaining social distancing where not, and there will be reduced capacity in the lifts and in other communal service areas such as washrooms, toilets and kitchen areas.

During the first phase of our return to office working, staff coming into the office will be allocated a designated workstation, which will be at least 2 metres distance from anyone else, in one of the designated areas open for use.

Signs, floor markings and posters reminding individuals of the required social distancing and hygiene standards have been installed throughout the building and hand sanitiser has been made available throughout the building. Cleaning equipment is provided close to each work area, and staff are encouraged to wipe down their workstation regularly, including before and after use, in addition to the regular cleaning that takes place, outlined in section 5.

Most meetings will take place virtually but where in-person meetings are essential, they will be carried out in designated meetings rooms, ensuring at least a 2 metres distance between participants can be maintained. The maximum occupancy for each meeting room will be clearly signposted. All designated meetings rooms are equipped with hand sanitiser and cleaning products and staff are encouraged to wipe down surfaces before and after use, in addition to the regular cleaning outlined in section 5.

Any communal seating areas have clear signage regarding social distancing requirements.

The maximum occupancy for shared communal areas including washrooms, kitchen areas, print areas and shower and changing facilities will also be clearly signposted. Signs are in place where shared equipment is used reminding staff to use the cleaning products provided to wipe them down before and after use.

Amended building security and emergency evacuation procedures are in place. In the case of an emergency, staff are not expected to stay 2 metres apart. Staff who have personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) will have the necessary support to evacuate if they are in the office.

Should an individual become unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 whilst in the office it should be reported immediately to a first aider or the Senior Responsible Person on site who will arrange for them to be isolated within the First Aid Room until they are able to travel home safely. Once home, they should follow the government's '[Stay at Home](#)' guidance and any advice from the government's [Test and Trace service](#) if appropriate. Information on how areas of the office will be cleaned in these circumstances is outlined in section 5.

All CMA first aiders, including security staff are provided with personal protective equipment (gloves and face masks), including for use by the person receiving care. First aiders are reminded of the need to pay particular attention to hygiene measures.

## 4. Managing visitors and contractors

This section addresses the following identified risk:

- *Risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 infection*

As the majority of meetings can be carried out virtually, external visitors to the building will be by exception and only by prior arrangement.

Where there is an essential need for external visitors, they will be hosted in designated meeting rooms, with social distancing in place. All external visitors will receive a guidance document ahead of their arrival setting out the arrangements within the building and expectations of individuals, which they will need to confirm they have read and understood.

Plastic screens have been installed and other appropriate measures put in place in reception areas, where visitors (and staff) are received and registered, to ensure the safety and protection of everyone.

Any contractor staff working in the building will be made aware of our operating protocols as well as any specific measures put in place by their employer.

## 5. Cleaning the workplace

This section addresses the following identified risks:

- *Risk of infection from shared office premises*
- *Risk of infection from using workspaces and workstations*
- *Risk of infection due to a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19 in the workplace*

Before wider reoccupation of the office, all building systems have been checked, cleaning has taken place and hand sanitiser has been provided.

Signage has been installed to provide reminders to maintain personal hygiene standards, including good handwashing technique and the need to increase handwashing frequency.

The Boutique Office Company will operate a regime of frequent cleaning of common touch points throughout the day as a preventative measure. This includes communal areas, toilets, showers, tea points, door handles (including fridges), light switches, handrails, security gates, lift buttons etc.

After a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, cleaning will take place in line with [Public Health England guidance](#).

## 6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

This section addresses the following identified risk:

- *Risk of contracting and passing on COVID-19 infection*
- *Risk of infection from waste streams*

The risks of COVID-19 in the CMA are managed through social distancing, hygiene and protocols where appropriate. In line with the [Working Safely During Coronavirus guidance](#), the CMA does not encourage the use of PPE beyond that which individuals would normally use for their work, with the exception of first aiders (outlined in section 3).

The wearing of face coverings is optional and is not required in the building. However, we recognise some individuals may prefer to wear one and will support them in doing so. Labelled bins have been provided in the building for individuals to safely dispose of any disposable face coverings (washable face coverings are encouraged).

Individuals will be reminded of good practice advice regarding face coverings such as washing their hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or using hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it; avoiding touching their face or face covering whilst wearing it; changing the face covering if it becomes damp or if they've touched it and continuing to practise social distancing wherever possible.

## 7. Workforce management

This section addresses the following identified risks:

- *Risk of infection from shared office premises*
- *Risk of infection from using workspaces and workstations*
- *Risk of infection during travel to and from work and other work-related travel*

Where possible and relevant, those now attending the office more regularly will be organised into distinct groups to reduce the number of contacts each individual has and ensuring that where contact is unavoidable it happens between the same people. Where individuals are returning to the office less regularly (e.g. for a short period to undertake a specific task) they will be given clear guidance as to which areas of the building are open for use.

Work-related travel has been minimised as much as possible. Where work-related travel is essential, a business case will need to be signed off by the appropriate Executive Director. CMA staff are given guidance on the safety arrangements they need to follow to protect themselves and others whilst travelling.

Staff will not be permitted to stay in overnight accommodation during the initial phase of reoccupation.

A full communications and engagement plan for the return to the office for CMA staff has been developed. Staff will receive regular updates through a variety of digital channels (emails, intranet, virtual meetings) and physical channels (signs and posters in the building).

## **8. Inbound and outbound goods**

This section addresses the following identified risk:

- *Risk of infection from handling incoming and outgoing goods*

To minimise deliveries, only essential supplies are being accepted to Whitefriars which does not include mail. Deliveries received by Boutique Office Company are held in quarantine prior to release with smaller items being wiped clean. Critical outbound goods are being collected by a courier and social distancing protocols are in place for delivery and pick up.