

Information and explanation of the Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Risk Assessment

COVID - 19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe, or fatal.

Below is a **generic risk assessment** for dealing with the current COVID - 19 situation in the workplace. It is not likely to cover all workplace scenarios and each organisation should consider its' own unique work areas and procedures. This risk assessment can be altered and changed to suit your own organisations requirements.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires organisations to conform to certain general legal duties. Regulation 3 requires every employer to make a "suitable and sufficient" assessment of risks to employees, contractors, members of the public who might be affected by the organisation's activities.

A **risk assessment** is an identification of the hazards present in an undertaking and an estimate of the extent of the risks involved, taking into account whatever precautions are already being taken.

A **hazard** is the property of a substance, article or situation which has the **potential** to damage people, plant, materials, or the environment.

A **risk** is the **probability** that a hazard will cause damage to people, plant, materials, or the environment.

Evaluating a risk and likelihood and severity of harm.

When the hazards have been identified it is then necessary to evaluate the risks that the hazards pose to everyone. For each hazard, an informed judgement is required to decide the likelihood and severity (consequence) of the hazard causing actual harm, damage, or loss.

Severity – i.e. risk of death, major injury, and minor injury, damage to plant, equipment, product, or environment.

Likelihood – the hazard may be present at all times but what are the chances of the hazard being realised.

For each risk it is necessary to decide its probability of occurring and probable consequence. Risks can then be ranked. This helps to prioritize what actions need to be taken and in which order and even if further action is required to eliminate or reduce the likelihood and severity of harm to those exposed to the hazards. To do this many organisations use a risk rating method to rate and rank risks according to the likelihood and consequence of the loss resulting from the hazard.

Risk rating is the severity of the remaining risk after current controls have been considered.

Risk rating = severity x likelihood.

To do this different severities and likelihoods are usually assigned a numerical value.

Severity		Probability				
		1. Unlikely	2. Low	3. Medium	4. High	5. Certain
1.	Minor	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Low	2	4	6	8	10
3.	Medium	3	6	9	12	15
4.	High	4	8	12	16	20
5.	Major	5	10	15	20	25

The risk rating is then classified:

- 1 – 3 Low.
- 4 - 9 Medium.
- 10 - 14 High.
- 15 - 25 Very high.

Residual risk is the risk which remains when controls have been decided and acted on.