

# ARDS BUSINESS HUB



## COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT



## **INTRODUCTION**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in people and many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats.

Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people such as with MERS-CoV, SARS-CoV, and now with this new virus (named SARS-CoV-2).

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a new (novel) Coronavirus virus called Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.

Current evidence suggests that the virus is significantly more infectious than the flu that circulates every winter.

Viruses can be easily spread to other people and patients are normally infectious until all the symptoms have gone. COVID-19 may survive on surfaces for up to 72 hours. A combination of good personal hygiene and management of social distancing can protect from infection. This is at the core of this document.

## **SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS**

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of -

- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours. If you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual.
- A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back. You do not need to measure your temperature.
- Loss or change to sense of smell or taste

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.

## **HOW CORONAVIRUS IS TRANSMITTED**

To date it cannot be confirmed how Coronavirus is transmitted from one person to another due to the fact it is a new illness. However, similar viruses primarily spread through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

It is very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food.

## **SURVIVAL PERIOD**

It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. Studies suggest that coronaviruses, including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus, may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment.

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus also protect yourself and others. Clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

## **TREATMENT FOR CORONAVIRUS**

- Currently there is no specific treatment for coronavirus
- Antibiotics do not help, as they are ineffective against viruses
- Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness
- You will need to stay in isolation away from other people until you have recovered.

## **HOW TO AVOID TRANSMISSION OF AND CONTRACTING THE VIRUS**

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus.

Everyone in Northern Ireland should now be social distancing.

### **DO:**

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and workplace
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hands, when you cough, or sneeze and put used tissues in the bin immediately.  
Always wash your hands afterwards
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus
- Only travel on public transport where absolutely required
- Work from home, where possible
- Use phone, online services, or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NH service.

### **DO NOT:**

- **Touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands**
- **Do not have visitors to your home, including friends and family**

## **ADVICE FOR PEOPLE CONSIDERED TO BE AT HIGH RISK**

If you are considered or have been advised by your Medical Practitioner etc. that you are at high risk of getting seriously ill from coronavirus, there are measures you or your Employer may take to ensure your safety in the workplace.

### **You may be at high risk from coronavirus if you:**

- Have had an organ transplant
- Are having certain types of cancer treatment
- Have blood or bone marrow cancer, such as Leukaemia
- Have a severe lung condition, such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma
- Have a condition that makes you much more likely to get infections
- Are taking medicine that weakens your immune system
- Are pregnant and have a serious heart condition

Advice should be sought from your Doctor as to whether you are classified as High Risk

Current Guidance advises where possible Employees are to work from home, however those who are categorized as vulnerable or shielding should seek Medical Confirmation as to whether they should come to work or not.

Ards Business Hub has a robust Risk Assessment and Management System in place to ensure all Employees are safe in the workplace.

**Please note this guidance is being updated regularly and Government Websites should be reviewed regularly for further updates.**

## **LIMITING SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

All Tenants can help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by reminding everyone of the public health advice.

There are a wide range of resources available for Organisations including Posters, Leaflets, and online resources.

It is considered good practice for Employers to -

- Maintain open communication lines with Employees and keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure in the workplace.
- Ensure Employees who are in a vulnerable group are strongly advised to follow social distancing guidance.
- Ensure all Employee contact details and emergency contact details are up to date.
- Ensure Managers know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and are clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting and sick pay, also procedures in case someone in the workplace is potentially infected and needs to take the appropriate action
- Ensure that there are places to wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and water, also encourage everyone to do so regularly.
- Provide hand sanitiser and tissues for staff and encourage them to use them.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

To ensure compliance with The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 2000, Ards Business Hub have a responsibility to conduct a risk assessment of the communal areas of all buildings and ensure the risk of transmission of Covid-19 is minimised to as low a level as reasonably practicable.

This Risk Assessment is only concerned with the Communal and External Areas of the properties which may include but is not limited to the following –

- Hallways
- Stairwells
- Lift Lobbies
- Toilets
- Plant Rooms
- Meeting Rooms

Tenants are responsible for the Management of Health & Safety within their own demise and are therefore responsible for documenting their own arrangements and communicating these arrangements to their Employees to ensure they are compliant with The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 2000.

## **ARDS BUSINESS HUB RECEPTION STAFF.**

- Monitoring Occupants of the Building within Common areas and ensuring Social Distancing is being carried out.
- Providing direction to Visitors to the Building.
- Controlling access for Contractors and ensuring Contractors are complying with Social Distancing requirements and Covid-19 Hygiene Control Measures.
- Ensuring Sanitisers are replenished as required
- Monitoring numbers of Occupants using the Passenger Lifts and ensuring preference is given to Occupants with disabilities.
- Ensuring signage remains visible to Occupants of the Building.
- Signing in and out of Contractors and Visitors to the Building as required and where applicable.
- If implemented, request Visitors to the Building to complete a Covid-19 Self-Declaration Form.

## ARDS BUSINESS HUB COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT

### Calculating Risk Factor

The following method describes how the business determines those risks which pose risks to health and safety, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially. These risks are known as significant Safety Risks. The selection test is based on the criteria outlined below.

Score	Severity
1	Negligible - Very slight injury / No injury / No First Aid
2	Marginal - Slight injury / Minor First Aid
3	Slightly Dangerous - Some injury, not serious
4	Dangerous - Serious injury likely
5	Critical - Potentially fatal / death

Score	Probability
1	Improbable - Unlikely to occur
2	Remote - May occur at any time
3	Possible - Likely to occur at some time
4	Probable - Likely to occur
5	Very Probable - Will occur at some time

When the appropriate number is selected from each of the criteria the results are multiplied together giving an overall total score.

The total score determines the level of significance of the risk.

#### Severity of Effect –

An assessment of the ‘seriousness’ of the effect in terms of its potential to cause serious, irremediable damage to health and safety.

Ranking 1-5

#### Probability –

The probability that the effect will result from a particular activity.

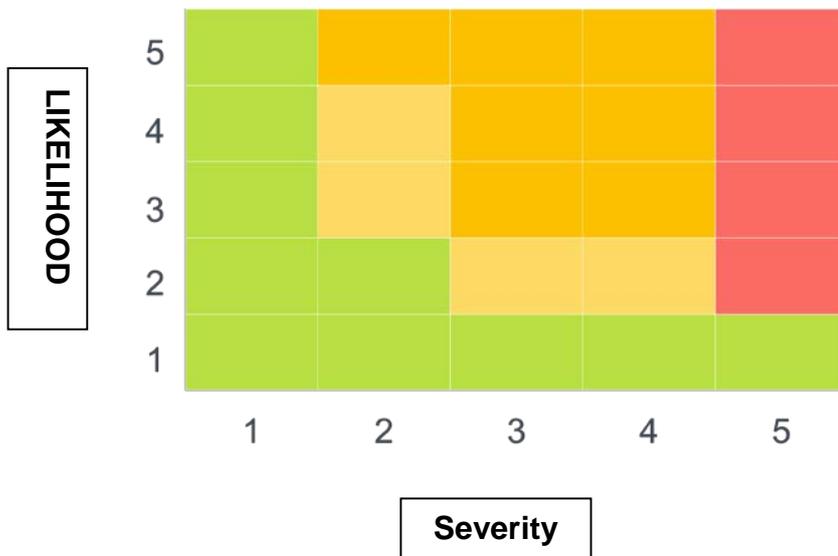
Ranking 1-5

**The Risk Factor is defined as - RF = Severity x Probability.**

The Risk Factor therefore ranges from 1 (no effect) to 25 (effect with highest possible risks and liabilities).

**A score of 12 has been taken as the threshold.**

**Any risks with a score of 12 or above will be identified as a significant risk.**



Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
1	Spread of Covid-19 within Common Areas.	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration should be given to 'Deep Cleaning' the premises prior to full occupancy.</li> <li>• Signage displayed at all entrances to the premises and within the sitting area. Signage should be displayed advising Occupants of the Symptoms of Covid-19, Actions to be taken if they are displaying symptoms, Handwashing Techniques and Social Distancing requirements.</li> <li>• Final Exit Doors should have mag locks deactivated, if Tenants are agreeable and there are no Security issues, to reduce contact with door handles.</li> <li>• Tenants should be advised to consult with their Staff regarding work starting and leaving times to avoid 'Pinch Points' being created.</li> <li>• Reception Staff should sign in all Visitors to site as required with the use of their own pen, no common pens should be left at Reception and Visitor's Book should be maintained behind Security Desk.</li> <li>• Visitors and Contractors are required to comply with Social Distancing requirements within the building.</li> <li>• Signage is required to be displayed outside Passenger Lifts advising 1 person in Lift at any one time.</li> <li>• Where possible, stairs should be used</li> </ul>	2	4	8

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
1	Spread of Covid-19 within Common Areas.	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	<b>25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Touch Sanitiser Stations should be installed at entrance points to the building and inside all toilets.</li> <li>• Cleaning regime should be enhanced to ensure that all Hot Spots such as Door Handles, Keypads, Toilet Flushing Levers, Lift Touch Controls, Stair Bannisters etc. are all cleaned and disinfected a minimum of twice a day.</li> <li>• Where possible, one-way systems should be implemented and communicated to Tenants and their Staff</li> <li>• Ards Business Hub have a 'Clear Desk' Policy in place which all Staff are required to comply with</li> <li>• Furniture in any Reception Areas should be reconfigured / removed to allow Visitors to Social Distance.</li> <li>• All non-essential items should be removed from the Reception Area including newspapers, magazines and brochures.</li> <li>• Out of Action Notices should be displayed on alternate urinals and basins to avoid people standing beside each other.</li> <li>• Contactless Hand Sanitiser Units to be provided in Each Toilet Block</li> <li>• Signage should be displayed advising Occupants to stay to the left-hand side of stairwells and where possible wait until stairwell is clear before entering.</li> </ul>	2	4	<b>8</b>

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
1	Spread of Covid-19 within Common Areas.	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	<b>25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular checks will be completed on Toilet Blocks to ensure adequate supplies of Soap and Hand towels.</li> <li>Consideration should be given to requesting Visitors to the Building to complete a Self-Declaration Form.</li> <li>All cutlery, crockery etc. will be removed from Common Kitchens. Tenants are advised to recommend to their Staff to bring their own utensils etc. into work</li> <li>All Coffee Docks will be removed from use</li> <li>Meeting Rooms will currently not be in use. (This will be reviewed regularly)</li> <li>Ards Business Hub Employees have been provided with their own Stationery and are not permitted to share items of Stationery</li> <li>Employees are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting their desks and also ensuring any common items they use are effectively cleaned and disinfected prior to returning, for example keys, using the photocopier etc. Antibacterial / Antiviral Wipes / Spray and Paper towels will be provided for this purpose</li> </ul>	2	4	<b>8</b>

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
2	Fire Safety Systems	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	<b>25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All relevant Fire Safety Equipment and Systems to be tested before the building becomes re-occupied.</li> <li>• This should include - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A full functional test of the Fire Detection and Alarm System using multiple Call Points across the premises.</li> <li>➤ Ensuring all Emergency Lighting is working correctly and illuminated correctly.</li> <li>➤ A visual inspection of all Fire Extinguishers to ensure they are correctly located, full and no obvious damage is observed.</li> <li>➤ Checking all Fire Escape Routes are not obstructed.</li> <li>➤ Checking Final Fire Exit Doors are operational.</li> <li>➤ Checking all internal Fire Doors are closing properly.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2	4	<b>8</b>

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
3	Water Systems	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Systems to be flushed through and disinfected.</li> <li>Conduct Temperature Checks on designated outlets (Sentinel Points) to ensure system is operating as expected.</li> <li>All Toilets to be flushed through</li> <li>Tenants advised to ensure they flush any taps within their demise.</li> <li>Showers to be flushed through, shower heads should also be descaled and disinfected.</li> <li>Restarting Plant and Equipment may require electrical and mechanical isolations to be reconnected, fluids to be refilled</li> </ul>	2	4	8
4	Restarting Plant and Equipment	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Also plant and equipment to be re-energized in a specific sequence or order. Where required, Contractors will be engaged to carry out these tasks.</li> <li>All Statutory Inspections remain in place such as LOLER, Gas Inspections etc. These are legally required to be completed.</li> <li>Any non-essential maintenance that was put on hold will be completed prior to occupancy or as soon as possible thereafter.</li> <li>Boilers and pumps should be tested to ensure they are functioning properly prior to the building being re-occupied.</li> <li>All Air-Con Units and Mechanical Ventilation Systems should be operated at the maximum setting to increase air exchange cycles per minute.</li> </ul>			

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
5	Confirmed Case of Covid-19 in Building	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a confirmed case is identified in the premises the Public Health Agency will consult Ards Business Hub for Tracking and Tracing purposes. Advice will then be provided to Tenants who will communicate with any Employee who was - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ in close face-to-face or touching contact.</li> <li>➤ talking with or being coughed on for any length of time while the other employee was symptomatic.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Also, with -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Anyone who has cleaned up any bodily fluids.</li> <li>➤ Close friendship groups or workgroups.</li> <li>➤ Any employee living in the same household as a confirmed case.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible an 'Isolation' Room should be provided where any Visitor to the Building Common Areas such as a Contractor can be isolated if they present with Covid-19 Symptoms.</li> </ul>	2	4	8

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
6	Cleaning Spaces Following Suspected / Confirmed Case	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is recommended cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after a suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) case has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people</li> <li>All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact will be cleaned and disinfected, including – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids.</li> <li>➤ All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2	4	8

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
------	--------	---------------------------	-------------------------------	--	--	------------------	----------------------------	--	--

			P	S	R		P	S	R
7	Waste Management	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenants are responsible for safely disposing of waste. Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been including, disposable cloths and tissues, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bag and tied. It should be put into a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known.</li> <li>Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.</li> <li>If the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste.</li> <li>If the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste.</li> </ul>	2	4	8

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
8	Exposure of Personnel to Covid-19 Transmission	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glass is fitted around Reception Area to offer protection to Personnel from Members of the Public etc and consequently transmission of Covid-19.</li> <li>• Main Office is Access Controlled to prevent unauthorised entry.</li> <li>• Staff directly employed by Ards Business Hub should be provided with their own supply of Disposable Gloves, Masks, Visor and Aprons where they may be required to come in contact with potential suspected cases of Covid-19.</li> <li>• Staff directly employed by Ards Business Hub should be provided with their personal supply of Hand Sanitiser.</li> <li>• Placing barriers, guide rails, printed Footstep signage etc. in front of Reception Areas to ensure Social Distancing between Visitors and Security Personnel and Visitors is adhered to.</li> <li>• Staff within Offices will be positioned to ensure Social Distancing can be achieved</li> <li>• Individual Staff Members are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces and equipment they come in contact with or use, e.g. Photocopier, Kettle, Fridge Door, Microwave etc.</li> <li>• Staff will not use each other's phone handsets.</li> <li>• All Staff are required to being in their own mugs, cutlery, plates etc.</li> </ul>	2	4	8

Ref.	Hazard	Who might be harmed? How?	Risk Assessment (No Controls)			Control Measures	Risk Assessment (Controls)		
			P	S	R		P	S	R
8	Exposure of Personnel to Covid-19 Transmission	Members of Public Tenants Contractors Visitors Couriers etc.	5	5	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only one Member of Staff will be permitted in the Kitchen at any one time. Breaks will be staggered to ensure all Staff are facilitated.</li> <li>A Member of Staff will be designated to ensure the main entrance door, keypad and stairwell bannister are all cleaned and disinfected following any delivery</li> <li>All Staff will complete a Self-Declaration Form prior to returning to work.</li> </ul>	2	4	8

## SIGNAGE EXAMPLES

The following signage can be utilised to provide information and guidance to Tenants, Visitors and Contractors.



# COVID-19 PREVENTION MEASURES



Avoid close contact with people who are sick



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid shaking hands



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available



**STAY HOME** if you are feeling sick



Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve or a tissue, toss the tissue and wash your hands



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



If traveling be extra cautious

## Coronavirus

High temperature or new continuous cough or loss of taste or smell?

You can now get tested.

