



## MINIMISING COVID-19 TRANSMISSION RISK FROM DRIVERS AT LOGISTICS DEPOTS

The UK's response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has been to put sweeping social distancing measures in place to minimise contact between people in an effort to slow infection rates. For businesses in nationally critical roles, such as those involved in maintaining the UK's food supply, work must continue whilst striving to reduce virus transmission where at all possible.

This note sets out measures all warehouses and depots can take to minimise the transmission risk from driver's arriving from the UK and Europe to their sites. A business must assess its specific operational challenges and transmission risk points before implementing changes in policy, ensure any measures taken do not contradict UK Health and Safety policy and are clearly communicated to customers and staff.

### Drivers arriving at the gatehouse

Businesses should prepare key Covid-19 related questions to ask drivers before accepting a delivery, allowing them to take a measured view on how to deal with the consignment. Possible questions include:

- Where have you come from?
- Is there anyone else in the cab/rig?
- Are you, or any passengers, exhibiting any symptoms of Covid-19?
- Explain procedures in place to minimise transmission risk

### Drivers exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 on arrival

It is an individual businesses decision on whether to allow a driver showing symptoms of Covid-19 onto their premises, however in most cases it is likely that the driver/consignment will be refused. Actions to be considered in this scenario include:

- Notification to customer that their driver reported to the gatehouse with symptoms.
- If the load is critical, shunts or a spare cab could be used to exchange the consignment – this must be clearly communicated with the customers.
- Calling for medical assistance, or advice, on 111 if there are concerns over the safety of the driver returning to their base depot.
- If a driver has been granted access to a site and then found to be exhibiting symptoms, always ensure a minimum of 2m distance from the driver and process the load as a



priority to allow the driver to leave as soon as possible. The driver should remain in their cab, unless they require bathroom facilities.

## Key Exchange

Key exchange is still recommended where appropriate to prevent driveaway, however measures can be taken to minimise contact:

- Driver to place keys on a chain provided by the warehouse and hang from outside of cab
- Keys to be placed in a ziplocked bag or similar to avoid contact of the actual keys by depot staff
- Warehouse staff to wear disposable gloves to handle keys
- In exceptional circumstances, a business may decide to avoid all contact with keys – measures to prevent driveaway during unloading such as ensuring no one is allowed in the driver's seat and ensuring the trailer brake is applied must be implemented

## Document Exchange

Exchanging of documents (eg. receipt of goods) should be viewed as a non-essential activity during the current pandemic. Businesses should explore and agree alternative measures with their customers, such as:

- Proxy signing, which should be implemented where possible, this should be discussed with customers now to get procedures in place.
- Emailing of paperwork.
- Mobile phone photographs could be utilised as receipt of delivery, subject to customer approval/specification
- Where signing is absolutely necessary, measures could be implemented to minimise interaction, such as:
  - Ensure drivers have their own pens
  - Maintaining of a 2m distance between driver and warehouse admin (eg. placing paperwork on a desk and stepping away whilst it is signed)



## Driver welfare

It is imperative that all businesses continue to provide basic driver welfare services, this is a legal requirement under UK Health and Safety law.

## Bathrooms

Public Health England has stated there is no health reason to restrict access to toilets for drivers not showing symptoms of Covid-19 – it is a legal requirement to have these available to drivers.

- Changes to bathroom access should only be initiated in exceptional circumstances, eg. if a driver has entered the site and is subsequently suspected of showing Covid-19 symptoms, or a site has a specific reason for requiring a change to usual driver bathroom facilities (eg. unique layout challenge, high chance of interaction with depot staff). In these circumstances only:
  - Business must ensure that any alternative bathroom facilities provided, either indoors or 'Portaloos'. These must be subject to regular 'business as usual' cleaning and have adequate provisions for handwashing (running water, soap, anti-bac gel, drying facilities)
- It is recommended that UK Government advisory posters on handwashing protocol should be displayed in all bathroom areas.

## Rest areas

Driver rest areas should continue to be provided, however it is not mandatory for drivers to use these facilities. If a driver prefers to stay in their cab this should be accepted (subject to safe management of potential driveway etc.)

- Additional checks may be necessary to make sure driver's stick to pedestrian walkways etc. when using bathroom facilities.

Businesses with their own drivers could consider providing them with hand sanitisers to wipe down cabs following shift changes.