Maintaining a comfortable healthy & safe workplace

Solutions for safely navigating Covid-19

CO-WORKING | SCALING | ENTERPRISE

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GTC – Covid-19 Workplace Safety *(update September 2021)*

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GTC – Workplace Safety – Covid19 – September 2021

The Government has signalled that they expect employees will be permitted to return to their offices this autumn. The current Covid-19: Recovery and Resilience: The Path Ahead phase of the reopening of society and the economy hinges on the success of the vaccination rollout.

GTC continues to manage the building in line with the current level of restrictions in place. We will adapt to any changes in the restrictions and manage the building accordingly to ensure that we are taking immediate and necessary steps to ensure that the building is safe for all our members.

With this in mind, we ask that all our members wear a mask while moving throughout the building.

Much of the information in this document remains unchanged but **we would encourage you to familiarise yourself with it again and ensure that all your team members are aware of our recommendations.**

We recognise that distancing may be part of our new normal for now, collaboration and connections are important, and it is vital that people have a safe place to work and feel comfortable in. That is why we are making changes to our building and services to protect our team and members so that they can continue to work in a safe, healthy environment.

Strong communication and a shared collaborative approach are key to protecting our members in the workplace and to successful implementation of this protocol. We advise all our members to appoint one person whose responsibility it is to ensure that Covid-19 measures are adhered to.

01 GTC Health and Safety Review - ongoing

We are regularly monitoring communications and updates that the government and HSE are issuing considering the Covid-19 pandemic.

The GTC website outlines the many supports and measures available to companies, many financial, but others in relations to HSE and government guidelines. https://www.gtc.ie/2021/01/14/the-covid-19-vaccine-is-here/

In June 2021, we carried out a further Health and Safety Review of the facilities and assessed any risk areas that needed to be addressed considering the current situation.

Return to Work Safety Protocol

We have undertaken a full review of the national protocol and have incorporated its recommendations into our measures. The Work Safely Protocol - DETE (enterprise.gov.ie) can be read here. The protocol incorporates current advice about measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in the community. As advice evolves, this document may also change. Therefore, it should be noted that the attached measures are non-exhaustive and are subject to change.

Just as important as knowing when to return to work, is knowing when not to return. If you are.

- Displaying any symptoms of Covid-19
- Self-isolating or restricting your movements
- Or have not spoken to your employer

It is advised by the HSE to not return until these matters are resolved. For full details on advice from the HSE, go to https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/returning-to-work-safely.html

Some of the 'Do's' for returning to work are as follows:

1) **Follow the measures put in place by GTC for Social Distancing**
2) **Practice Good Hygiene**
3) **Wear a mask while circulating in the public spaces of GTC**
4) **Use your own pen for signing in (Digital Sign In, in progress).**

02 The work environment – GTC Building

We have made space and service updates to maintain hygiene safety and physical distancing best practices:

Access Control

The building will continue to be accessible to all GTC members by fob.

Access to the building to the public will be restricted.

We ask that all GTC members ensure that their visitors are compliant to GTC Covid 19 Guidelines. Visitors must sign in with the date and time of their visit at reception and identify the company that they are visiting. This requirement ensures that we can identify, and contact people should the need arise. **Therefore, we must insist that all members adhere to this requirement.**

Deliveries will be accepted. Couriers will be asked to arrange drop-off of all packages either at reception with client, or with GTC staff at reception. It is up to GTC members to be available for deliveries, or to make alternative arrangements.

Automatic Doors

GTC have installed automatic doors at the main entrance to the building in a bid to reduce touch points. They function in conjunction with our existing access control, so all existing fobs will continue to support member access to the building.

Behavioural Signage

Throughout the building in strategic locations, appropriate signage has been positioned to remind members of what is expected of them regarding practices of social distancing and hygiene.

We expect that all members adhere to the recommendations for the benefit of all members.

Increased Cleaning

Cleaning services will continue as was the practice before the lockdown.

Additional to this, we have employed our cleaners to carry out more frequent cleaning of 'high touch' areas to ensure the health and wellbeing of our members.

If any member or company requires additional cleaning services for their unit, please speak to GTC management, and we can recommend either our own cleaning service company, or a similar party that can meet your specific needs.

03 Revised Expectations – The new 'normal' for members

Social Distancing Plan

While distancing may be part of our new normal, collaboration and connection remain more important than ever—and having a safe place to do that is essential. We want our members to know that GTC have taking steps to ensure that the communal spaces provided have been arranged and organised to suit new social distancing measures.

The strategic placement of sanitisation stations, along with behavioural signage will emphasise the expectations as to how the building will be utilised. This may mean that there will be reduced occupation in some areas (i.e. meeting rooms, common spaces, etc.).

One-way system for moving through the building

A 'one-way traffic' system for people to move around the building has been implemented, this will reduce contact between people on staircases and in corridors. Please follow directional signage.

Mask-Wearing

We require all visitors and contractors to the building to wear masks while in public spaces.

We recommend that all GTC members wear masks in public spaces while moving throughout the building.

Prioritising Personal Space

We have modified our common shared spaces with reduced/staggered seating and Phone Booths. This allows members to continue to operate in the workplace while still maintaining a healthy physical distance from colleagues and fellow members.

Communications

We will continue to update our members of any changes to operations of the building or the expectations we have of members because of HSE and government guidelines. It is important that we all work together to ensure a safe and healthy work environment. This document will act as the basis for our updated policies and expectations.

We are in this together and everyone has a part to play - we ask that our members communicate with GTC on any measures taken should be added to.

04 Enhanced Standards – Cleaning and Revised Use of Space

High Touch Cleaning

Our cleaning services will continue as was the practice before the lockdown.

In addition to this, we have put in place additional daily cleaning of 'high touch' areas to ensure the health and wellbeing our members. 'High touch' areas will consist of, but not be exclusive to, door handles, railings, communal tables, and counter spaces.

If any member or company requires additional cleaning services for their unit, please speak to the GTC team, and we will recommend either our own cleaning service company, or a similar party that can meet your specific needs.

Additional Cleaning facilities

Throughout the building, there are key locations in which additional sanitisation products are placed.

These facilities will be reserved for the communal spaces, so we ask that you refrain from removing these products as they are to the benefit of all our members.

Revised Use of Space

The key to ensuring a safe, healthy work environment is in working together to ensure the spaces are utilised in the appropriate fashion. This is something that we must all work together to ensure, by following the best practice guidelines below:

Front Door:

New automatic doors have been installed at the main entrance which will facilitate hands free entrance/exit to/from the building.

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Main Entrance:

Hand Sanitization Station within the main entrance of the building.

Sign-in sheet within the main entrance to the building. All non-GTC members are to sign in, including name, time of visit, reason for visit (company visiting), and contact number. (Digital Sign-in , in progress).

Reception desk:

Stickers on the ground to ensure appropriate social distancing when speaking to GTC staff.

Hand Sanitization Station at reception

Reception Lobby:

Seating at reception lobby will be limited and positioned to ensure social distancing guidelines are adhered to.

Foyer Seating:

Seating will be limited and positioned to ensure social distancing measures are adhered to. In addition there will be Phone Booths in the mid foyer for short virtual meetings etc

Tables regularly sanitised by GTC cleaning services.

Lift:

One person at a time to use the lift. Lift signage and usage guidelines in place.

One-way System in operation:

To allow social distancing we have implemented a one-way directional system for movement of people throughout the building. We have installed directional signage. Please ensure that you follow the guidelines:

1. Main Staircase: UP ONLY
2. Staircase at Mezzanine Toilets: DOWN ONLY
3. O'Briens Staircase: UP ONLY
4. Staircase at Canteen Toilets: DOWN ONLY

The One-Way System is in operation on all corridors – please note directional signage and follow the guidelines.

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Mezzanine:

Couches to be used by one member at a time.

Seating at tables reduced to ensure social distancing measures are adhered.

Hand Sanitization Station to be positioned at the top of the stairs, servicing the mezzanine and the toilets in the area.

To reduce usage of the canteen, GTC have provided a **communal water supply** for all members.

Additional touch free bins will be placed outside on the mezzanine for disposal of refuse.

Think Tank:

Hand Sanitisation Station.

To reduce usage of the canteen, GTC have provided a **communal water supply** for all members.

Corridors:

Please refrain from congregating in the corridors.

One-Way system in operation, please follow directional signage.

Social distancing measures should be adhered to within the corridors where all possible.

Toilets:

Hand Sanitisation Stations have been placed at the entrance to all toilet facilities.

We ask that all members to sanitise their hands both before and after utilizing the toilet facilities.

After utilising the toilet facilities, all members are asked to wash their hands in accordance with HSE guidelines.

All toilets contain **anti-bacterial hand wash.**

Purehold Pull **self-cleaning antibacterial door handle covers** have been installed on all toilet lobby pull exit doors. Silver Ion technology on the coating kills bacteria and viruses.

Canteen:

Seating in the Canteen is limited with additional seating available on the mezzanine area. Please follow social distancing guidelines.

A Hand Sanitisation Stations has been placed at the entrance to the canteen.

A one-way system will be in operation for the canteen kitchen area.

Hot water, and filtered water will still be accessible. The canteen will be operated on a one-way system. We ask that members enter via the entrance closest to the toilets and exit the opposite doors (adjacent to unit 6). This will clearly be marked.

Use of kitchen utensils and delph will be restricted. All members are asked to either utilise their own keep cups or avail of disposable cups placed in the kitchen.

All members must disinfect and clean their table after use. Cleaning sprays and gloves are in the canteen:

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Please do not congregate in Canteen or in the surrounding corridors, as it will restrict other members movement.

O'Briens:

O'Briens are open for take-away and indoor dining, along with additional seating externally in accordance with government guidelines.

Hand sanitiser at the entrance.

Hand wash facilities also at exit.

One-way system in place with marked floor stickers to maintain physical distancing.

Full Perspex screens have been installed for everyone's protection.

Meeting Rooms:

As shared, collaborative spaces, the meeting rooms have been provided with sanitisation spray and paper towels. Please clean any surfaces before and after use.

** Video Conferencing Equipment fitted in both meeting rooms.

To maintain social distancing requirements, the usage of the rooms will be restricted:

- 2 users in Meeting Room 1 (behind reception)
- 4 users in meeting room 2 (behind the canteen).

'House Rules' will be displayed in all meeting rooms.

Please ensure that you complete the contact tracing log in meeting rooms following use.

*** Note on short term parking: The space directly across from the building is set down only, being monitored by Apcoa Parking Services – cars parked in this area for longer than 15 minutes are liable to clamping

Member Amenities:

Airconditioning and Heating Systems – all offices are equipped with individual systems. All systems throughout the building have fully serviced and cleaned with new filters added.

Each unit has individual heating / cooling units, air is not circulated between units.

Bicycle Shed - Sanitise hands before and after accessing.

Hot Water Boiler – we ask that all members sanitise hands before utilising.

Fridges – the canteen fridge can be used. We ask that all items stored are clean be removed at the end of each day. Sanitise hands before utilising the fridge.

Microwave – we ask that all members sanitise hands before utilising.

Photocopier and Shredder (lobby) – we ask that all members sanitize hands before utilising.

Post Boxes: Sanitise hands before and after accessing.

Showers: As with all our spaces, showers will undergo more frequent cleaning. Sanitisation spray will be provided for members to clean the showers before and after use and 'house rules' and covid-19 signage will be displayed.

Water – Filtered water stations provided in Canteen, Mezzanine and in the Think Tank areas. These will be cleaned at regular intervals.

Waste Bins – Any members utilizing the waste bins in the alleyway are asked to sanitize hands before and after.

Appendix 1 - SUPPLIER LIST

Company	phone	email	website	Standout areas
CW Distributers	091 757 555	sales@cwd.ie	www.cwd.ie	Hand sanitiser dispenser, 5lt bottles of sanitizer
Elwoods	091 730 077	sales@elwood.ie	www.elwood.ie	Office Supplies, screens, partitions
ElectroDirect	090 64 9444		www.electrodirect.ie	Automatic hand wall dispenser
Collins Plastic	096 70 913	info@collinsplastics.com	www.collinsplastics.com	Sneeze Guards
Sanitization Solutions	01 462 5060	support@flyingelephant.ie	www.sanitizationsolutions.ie	Sanitiser, Sanitization stations, black/yellow floor tape, plexi-solutiosn
A1 Signs	091 756 855	info@a1signs.ie	www.a1signs.ie	Signage, Sanitiser Stations, Plexiglass
iSupply	091 755 705	sales@isupply.ie	www.isupply.ie	signage relevant to Covid-19, stands, face-shields
Snap	091 767 626	galway@snap.ie	www.snap.ie	signage relevant to Covid-19
Cleaning Companies				
Allpro			http://allpro.ie/	
Flexicleaners			https://flexycleaners.ie/	
BidVestNoonan			www.bidvestnoonan.com	
Crystal Clean			www.crystalcleanservices.net	

Appendix 2 – SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT

COVID-19 Return to Workplace Checklist - sample document for employers:

Issue: 6th Oct 2020

This checklist can be applied to workplaces that have not been in use- or have had reduced usage. A comprehensive review of the physical building should be conducted.

1. Compliance

	YES	NO	Action
Has the employer appointed someone in the workplace to manage compliance to COVID-19 requirements?			
Has the employer appointed someone in the workplace to monitor compliance to COVID-19 requirements?			
Are the employees aware of who they can report safety concerns to?			

2. Physical/Social Distancing

The two-metre physical distancing guideline will undoubtedly be a key feature of any return to work plan. It cannot be overemphasised that employees will be safer in their own home so returning employees to the workplace must be justified.

	YES	NO	Action
Can capacity in the building be reduced? Consider all options.			
Are Workstations/Office spaces/Desks compliant with the 2 metre distance?			
Are Physical Screens or Guarding required?			
Can workstations be redesigned or reconfigured?			
Are controls in place in the canteen? e.g. supervision, staggering use, removing chairs, tables etc			
Are lifts being controlled? Encourage stair use?			

Are water dispensers controlled?			
	YES	**NO**	**ACTION**
Are controls in place to reduce capacity in meeting rooms? e.g. signs posting maximum capacity, remove chairs etc			
Have access controls been considered for the Reception Area? e.g. To manage numbers, monitor entry etc			
Can close contact with Reception staff be eliminated or reduced? e.g. screens, marked out waiting area.			
If cash is being handled, can it be replaced with electronic contactless payments?			
Is there appropriate HSE Covid-19 Social Distancing signage in place?			
For employees using public transport- are flexible working times being considered/offered?			
Access into and leaving the building: Can distancing be implemented for both staff and visitors arriving at similar/same times?			
Visitor/Customer self-declaration form? Is it held in line with GDPR requirements?			
Are control measures applied in locker room/showers/other welfare facilities?			

3. **Cleaning**

This applies to in-house cleaners or contract cleaners. Visible housekeeping in the workplace has been noted as an important feature for inspiring trust and confidence amongst employees.

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Are existing cleaning arrangements fit for purpose?			
Have contact points been identified for more frequent cleaning?			
Are cleaning materials appropriate for use? Are new materials added to the chemical list?			
Are Hand Sanitisers provided at appropriate locations?			
Is there a clean desk policy in place?			
Are local desk and IT equipment cleaning materials available? (e.g. phones, keyboard, desk)			
Have cleaners been re-inducted and/or re-trained?			
Is there adequate supervision of cleaning arrangements?			
Is there appropriate HSE Covid-19 signage in place?			
Should soft furnishings in common areas be removed? (e.g. cushions)			
Should other items at contact points be removed? (e.g. ornaments)			
Can touchless technology be introduced at contact points such as entry points?			

4. Building Management Systems

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Is the PPM Schedule up to date?			
Are Life Safety Systems tested and in operational order? (e.g. fire alarm systems)			
Have HVAC systems been inspected? Filters changed? Are upgrades required?			
Are water systems flushed and sterilised?			
Can additional bicycle storage facilities be provided?			

5. Managing Third Parties: Contractors, Visitors, Customers

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Is the Contractor Management procedure fit for purpose? e.g. consider how contractors will adhere to new site/building requirements.			
Have actions been considered when contract or contingency staff become unwell/symptomatic/identified as a close contact?			
Have third party notices been considered? e.g. to cover visitors, delivery management, couriers, mail providers, customers etc			
Are suitable Hand Washing facilities and/or sanitisers available?			

6. Emergency Response

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Fire Procedures- are changes required to reflect new staff numbers, new layout etc?			
Occupational First Aid: Are changes required to ensure adequate coverage?			
Are First Aiders aware/briefed on new COVID-19 requirements?			
Is PPE available to First Aiders? Note: PHECC protocol.			
Can employees who become symptomatic in work be isolated?			
Are training certifications still valid for Emergency Response Team members?			

7. COVID-19 Case Management

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Is there a COVID-19 illness policy/protocol in place?			
Do all employees know what the policy/notification process is and the consequences if they do not follow the policy notification procedures?			
Does the absence policy/procedure need to be reviewed?			
Is the responsibility for tracking absence assigned?			
Is the responsibility for approving return to work assigned?			
Is the responsibility for conducting contact logging assigned?			
Is the responsibility for liaising with the HSE assigned?			
Is there a contract in place with an Occupational Health Service?			
Are staff aware of their role in ensuring the Health and Safety of the workplace and the consequences for breaches in this?			

8. Managing Mental Health

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Are there supports in place for employees who are experiencing existing or new Mental Health issues such as anxiety?			
Have the employees been informed/reminded of these supports?			
Do existing procedures need to be reviewed and updated?			
Is there an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in place?			

9. Training

CHECKLIST	YES	NO	ACTION
Has reinduction/retraining been considered			
Have training plans been reviewed?			
Are existing training delivery systems (including online systems) fit for purpose?			

Note:

- The workplace should prepare for changes to government policy. If the restrictions are reintroduced, employers should prepare for another short notice closure.
- The list is non-exhaustive, and it should be used a prompt only. Employers can customise it as they see fit.