



'Covid Secure' Risk Assessment

(Field)



Date reviewed
6 January 2021



Next review Date
6 April 2021 and review based
on any updated Government
guidance.

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1 Risk Assessment

Title:	Coronavirus (COVID – 19) Risk Assessment (Field)	Revision No:	1.5
Location of Works:	Orbit Field agents conduct face to face customer visits in many geographical areas throughout the UK. Our employees are typically provided with accounts to visit within one hour of their home address. On occasions however, they may be required to work further away from their home address. If working over 1 hour to 1.5 hours away, then the agents will be offered a hotel. However, if an agent is working over 1.5 hours away from home, then agents must stay in a hotel. The overnight stays will be in a hotel that has a robust Covid-19 policy and risk assessment, and the agents will need to follow the hotel’s guidance and practices whilst on the premises.	Start Date:	6 January 2021
Scope & Description of Works:	<p>Orbit works on behalf of the majority of the UK Water Utility organisations and this Risk Assessment relates to the face-to-face customer visit element of our services. We have c100 Field agents who will visit customers at their home addresses. Our Field agents will be provided within the region of 80 customer accounts each week that have been route optimised using appropriate software and will be required to conduct an initial, socially distanced, face to face interaction with customers with a view to discussing their water accounts and resolving any outstanding balances and/or issues via a mobile phone call from their vehicle. Typically, our Field agents will spend in the region of c10 minutes on the doorstep with a customer and will resolve the account via a phone discussion.</p> <p>In the context of COVID-19, this means working through the control measures within this document and ensuring that all safe operating procedures are always practiced. Safe Methods of Working are at the base of this assessment.</p>		

Persons Exposed	Employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Contractor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Young Person	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expectant Mother	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visitors and/or Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trespassers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frequency of Exposure	Continually	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hourly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yearly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duration of Exposure	Less than 1hr	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	3-4 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	5-6 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	7-8 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	More than 8 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>

Probability (Prob)	5= Very Likely, 4= Likely, 3= Quite Possible, 2= Possible, 1= Unlikely	Low	0-8	Low risk.					
Severity (Sev)	5= Catastrophic, 4= Major, 3= Moderate, 2= Minor, 1= Insignificant	Medium	9-15	Medium risk ensure adequate controls are in use.					
		High	16-25	High risk stop operation and implement adequate control measures.					
	Task / Hazard	Initial			Control Measures	Residual			Extra Controls
		Sev	Prob	Risk		Sev	Prob	Risk	
1.	Contracting the Coronavirus (COVID-19)	5	5	25	<p>Colleagues have been made aware that any person who is classified as a vulnerable person is advised to follow government guidance.</p> <p>Agents have been made aware that any person who is in self-isolation or living with a vulnerable person are advised to follow government guidance.</p> <p>Orbit has increased the frequency of hand cleaning and sanitation of vehicles and equipment provided.</p> <p>Agents will not work with other agents and will not have any passengers in the vehicle as per the company's Driver Policy.</p>	5	2	10	

				<p>This will continue until government guidance changes surrounding social distancing.</p> <p>If an agent needs to be consolidated or trained, this action will be approved with the SLT nominee prior to taking place. This will require the two field agents travelling in separate vehicles.</p> <p>Agents will conduct the initial interaction on the door and then retreat to their own vehicles. The agents will then join a 3-Way call with the customer on the line so call monitoring can continue to take place. Once the call is completed, the agents will call one another via Teams so feedback can be provided, and screen share can take place.</p> <p>Both agents to wear face masks/shields during visits.</p> <p>When dealing with customers, agents are advised to not directly face the customer, whenever possible ensuring the 2 metre rule is achieved. They are advised to spend the shortest amount of time as possible with the customer and in any event, try to keep interactions to less than ten minutes. Although the 2-metre rule has changed to 1-metre by Government, Orbit agents will continue to maintain a 2-metre distance to complete an arrangement at the customer's door.</p> <p>Agents are to complete a Dynamic Risk Assessment for every premises visited including specific a COVID-19 risk</p>				
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				<p>assessment. This will include but not limited to; the size of communal areas in flats and potential congestion from other building users, ability to socially distance whilst at the door without increased risk to agents, minimise contact with hard surfaces in and around the property and number of persons outside the address at the time of visit.</p> <p>Should the customer explain that they or someone at their address is self-isolating due to symptoms or Track & Trace, then the agents will not be required to complete ID&V in person, will obtain a phone number and retreat to the vehicle to conduct the call/interaction.</p> <p>Agents will not enter a customer's property once they have knocked on a door or rung a doorbell and will immediately step 2 metres away from door to wait for an answer. If there is a Risk to Life, the Agent will make a Dynamic Risk Assessment and activate their Lone Worker device (if necessary) and deal with the risk calling the appropriate emergency service. After the incident, they will immediately sanitise their hands and when back at the vehicle wash their hands thoroughly and sanitise all equipment. They will then contact their Team Leader and await instructions.</p> <p>Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, Orbit will assess and consider whether that activity needs to continue for the</p>				
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				<p>business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission.</p> <p>Following the government guidance, Orbit does provide face masks or face coverings for colleagues. Agents will wear a face mask or shield when attending at a customer's door unless they have a medical exemption or disability which makes it impossible to safely wear a mask or shield. If the agent has a medical exemption, a badge will be worn to this effect, but it is not required by law.</p> <p>Orbit also reserves the right to assess any agent's ability or capability to conduct field visits if they have a medical exemption preventing them from wearing a face mask/shield. They will conduct a separate assessment with H&S and HR Departments on each individual case.</p> <p>If an agent displays a symptom or symptoms such as a persistent dry cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste and/or sense of smell, they should immediately cease work and comply with Government and Company guidance.</p> <p>If an agent is contacted by Track & Trace, then they will notify their Team Leader immediately and begin to self-isolate and comply with Government and Company guidance.</p>			
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2.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Social Distancing at Work & Vehicles</p>	5	5	25	<p>You must maintain social distancing in the workplace wherever possible.</p> <p>Information is shared across the group via communications, posters and signage. Regular colleague communications is issued from Operational Management.</p> <p>Workplace guidance is issued on the importance of hygiene, and social distancing are communicated daily. Wallpaper and iPad lock screen picture may be used to reinforce these messages.</p> <p>Guides are issued to line managers on COVID-19 symptoms and what to look out for/steps to take.</p> <p>Social distancing applies to all parts of a business, not just the places where agents attend customers premises and have most contact with other people, but also when taking refreshments, breaks and driving, including fueling vehicles. If possible, agents are to pay at the pump to reduce interaction and use a glove when fueling and sanitise hands after.</p> <p>Providing additional waste disposal facilities for vehicle which will be disposed of regularly.</p>	5	2	10	
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3.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Starting Work and Finishing Work</p>	5	5	25	<p>Agents will monitor stock levels of PPE daily and will contact the Field Support team when PPE is at less than 50%. They will have contact with their team leader on a weekly basis informing them of stocks of sanitising gel, antiseptic wipes, soap, and paper towels etc.</p> <p>Agents to sanitise van prior to starting work and at regular intervals during the working day, concentrating on high contact areas such as door handles, gear stick, keys, steering wheel, iPad and iPhone.</p> <p>Agents need to adhere to signage displayed when entering buildings or any offices regarding face masks and sanitising hands and equipment.</p> <p>Signage to encourage colleagues to use wipes for desktops/computer keyboards/phones at regular intervals throughout their shift. This would be relevant for any Field agents visiting / working in Orbit offices.</p> <p>Providing alternatives to touch signature on iPads.</p> <p>Defining process alternatives for entry/exit points where appropriate, for example, deactivating turnstiles, requiring pass checks in favor of showing a pass to security personnel at a distance.</p> <p>Cards to be written in a sanitised environment at home or in the vehicle and away from the customers premises.</p>	5	2	10	
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4.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Moving around Buildings and utilising Welfare facilities and multi contact areas</p>	5	5	25	<p>Agents are to reduce congestion by following social distancing measures introduced by landlords at premises they visit using markings and following one-way flow at entry and exit points.</p> <p>When attending, communal doorways or operating intercom to flats and gated communities or multi contact points, agents to utilise the Dynamic Risk Assessment and if they enter this environment, they are to sanitise hands immediately before and after with disinfectant wipes/sprays. Sanitiser/disinfectant soap and water containers are provided to ensure that colleagues can increase sanitisation processes after attending these properties. Agents must ensure that Face masks/Shields are worn whilst in any communal areas within buildings or high traffic areas outside.</p> <p>Agents to be made aware, any person showing symptoms of COVID-19, as per Dynamic Risk Assessment and will immediately leave the location, add the account to do not revisit list, and inform the client of the risk. Extra caution should then be taken to sanitise when leaving the premises.</p> <p>Communications and signage on handwashing.</p> <p>Soap/water/paper towels in all vehicles.</p> <p>Whenever possible, the agent should avoid using lifts and utilise stairs, where safe. If lifts are used, agents should sanitise hands immediately and adhere to the maximum occupancy indicated by the Landlord.</p>	5	2	10	
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					<p>Encourage Agents to have pre-prepared food and refillable drinking bottles to reduce the use of supermarkets or take away premises.</p> <p>When using any business premises for a refreshment/comfort break, face masks/shields must be worn and the business premises guidance on Covid-19 must be followed or adhered to.</p> <p>Using safe outside areas for breaks is promoted.</p> <p>Spot check monitoring for compliance by agents carried out to ensure that they are following the government guidance via call assessment with team and team leaders, reviewing audio recordings.</p>				
5.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Carrying out Visits</p> <p>Manage contact</p>	5	5	25	<p>Agents will utilise self-sealing envelopes for cards.</p> <p>Minimise contact times at each premises, maintain a 2-metre social distance and immediately stepping back after knocking at the door. The agent will obtain a current phone number from the customer, retreat to their vehicle and complete the arrangement over the phone.</p> <p>Maximise use of iPads and client's cards delivered to customers to be written and sealed in a sanitized environment.</p> <p>Agents are to wear face masks or shields when attending customers addresses unless they are medically exempt or have a disability which prevents them wearing a face mask. Agents</p>	5	2	10	

					<p>will wash or sanitise their hands when removing the mask as per government guidelines.</p> <p>Agents may complete arrangements / visits away from customers houses using iPhone remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings at the customer's doorstep. Agents may complete the visit at the doorstep but must always adhere to 2 metre distance, and to not enter the house or property.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser or hands washed after every visit or as often as reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Agents will not take any payments in cash until Government guidance changes.</p> <p>Record all visits as per company policy.</p>				
6.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Accidents, Security and other Incidents</p>	5	5	25	<p>If Agents are involved in an accident, they are to activate Lone Worker Device (if necessary, to the incident type) as per company policy. E.g., threatening, aggressive or abusive customers, physical attacks to agents/third parties, slips trips or falls and/or a severe vehicle road traffic collision.</p> <p>If Agent must render emergency First Aid, then social distancing rules do not apply as it would be unsafe to do so.</p> <p>First Aid packs are equipped with protective gloves and aprons. Where possible, when administering first aid, then face masks/shields must also be worn. Consider again the severity</p>	5	2	10	

					<p>of the incident and use Lone worker device if no other support is available to contact emergency services.</p> <p>Agents should pay attention to sanitation matters immediately afterwards including washing hands.</p> <p>If Agent encounters a verbally aggressive customer or is physically threatened, the agent should immediately leave the premises and activate their Lone worker device.</p> <p>If an agent is spat on or coughed on, they must immediately move away from the person, activate their Lone Worker device, and pay particular attention to sanitation. They must then immediately stop working and await management guidance and contact the Police.</p> <p>If agent is contacted by NHS under its Track & Trace procedures, they should immediately cease work and comply with Government/Company guidance.</p> <p>Maintain records of all incidents and accidents via company reporting procedures.</p>				
7.	<p>Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>Providing and explaining available Guidance</p>	5	5	25	<p>Agents will explain to customers the Social Distancing procedures undertaken by them to comply with Government guidance.</p> <p>Management and Team Leaders will provide briefing guides on a weekly basis with the assistance of screen prompts and instructions on Formworks.</p>	5	2	10	

8.	Spreading the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Communications and Training Return to Work Ongoing Communications and Signage	5	5	25	<p>Clear, consistent, and regular communications provided to all agents to improve understanding and consistency of safe systems of work.</p> <p>Orbit has engaged with all Agents and selected representatives to explain and agree changes in working arrangements for returning to work.</p> <p>Orbit has developed communications and training materials via eLearning for agents before returning to work.</p> <p>Orbit will maintain engagement with Agents and representatives to monitor any unforeseen impacts to changes in working conditions.</p>	5	2	10	
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9.	Health of Workers – Work Related Stress	4	4	16	<p>Regular communications to all colleagues to ensure that safety is communicated.</p> <p>HR support is available to all Agents and Team Leaders to assist and provide support for all colleagues.</p> <p>EAP available to all colleagues and is regularly promoted.</p> <p>Mental Health First aiders are trained throughout the business and contact details are shared with staff, including a regular communication about their availability.</p> <p>Regular engagement with staff following government guidance on those at High Risk (agent or family member) and in need of shielding.</p> <p>Agents’ personal circumstances are being assessed and any reasonable adjustments are being considered and approved in line with Government Guidance and HR support.</p> <p>Work plans & objectives discussed and agreed.</p> <p>Occupational Health reviews are now available to staff.</p> <p>Colleagues are trained how to do their job effectively.</p> <p>Flexible working patterns are available.</p>	4	2	8	
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					<p>Systems are in place to make sure visit targets are set at a reasonable level due to the current pandemic and Tier system for the area/region.</p> <p>Managers to take seriously any issues that are brought to them and try to resolve quickly.</p> <p>Company support mechanisms in place.</p> <p>Team structure and responsibilities are clearly defined.</p> <p>Honest and open communication with all colleagues at all times.</p> <p>Colleagues can speak confidentially to a Team Leader/Team Manager if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease about things at work.</p>				
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2 Action Arising from Risk Assessment

ACTION ARISING FROM RISK ASSESSMENT					
No	Risk Rating	Action Required:	Person (s) Responsible	Target Date	Date Completed
All	HIGH	Risk Assessment is to be reviewed in line with Government Guidance. Guidance to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely.	TS supported by DB		
All	HIGH	This risk assessment must be communicated to all colleagues.	TS supported by DB		

3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is not beneficial except in Emergency First Aid situations. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering, not through the use of PPE.

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical settings, or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

4 Face Covering

It is important to note that coronavirus needs to be managed through a hierarchy, or system of control, including social distancing; high standards of hand hygiene; increased surface cleaning and fixed teams or partnering. These measures are the best way of managing risk in the workplace but there are some circumstances when wearing a face covering may be marginally beneficial as a precautionary measure; these will largely protect others, not the wearer.

Orbit company policy is that agents are to wear face masks when attending customers doors, unless the agent has a medical exemption or disability which precludes the agent from wearing a mask. In these cases, the use of a face shield should be considered, an agent may remove his mask at the request of a customer who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate.

A face covering / mask can be very simple and may be worn in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible. It just needs to cover your mouth and nose. It is not the same as a face mask, such as the surgical masks or respirators used by health and care workers. Similarly, face coverings are not the same as the PPE used to manage risks like dust and spray in an industrial context.

When wearing a face mask / covering, you should wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for twenty seconds or sanitise your hands when putting on or taking off the mask. Avoid wearing it on your forehead or neck, only handle the straps, handles and ties. Do not give it to someone else to use. If reusable, wash it in accordance to the manufacturer's instructions at the highest temperature appropriate for the fabric.

Supplies of PPE, including face masks, must continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.

Wearing a face covering is extensively covered in Government guidance and is required in shops and indoor communal areas and public transport and may be required to be worn in further circumstances if areas are under further Covid-19 restrictions.

You can make face-coverings at home and can find guidance on how to do this and use them safely on GOV.UK.

5 Shift Patterns & Working Groups

Note: To change the way work is organised to create distinct groups and reduce the number of contacts each employee has.

Steps that will usually be needed:

1. As far as possible, a working group needs to be created to monitor the impact of the control factors and manage Government led changes to COVID-19 measures, this group needs to involve Managers, Team Leaders, selected Field Agents and the Facilities team.

6 Communication, Training & Returning to Work

Note: To make sure all workers understand COVID-19 related safety procedures.

Steps that will usually be needed:

1. Providing clear, consistent, and regular communication to improve understanding and consistency of ways of working.
2. Engaging with workers through existing communication routes and worker representatives to explain and agree any changes in working arrangements.
3. Developing communication and training materials for workers prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work.

7 Outgoing Communication & Signage

Note: To make sure all workers are kept up to date with how safety measures are being implemented or updated.

Steps that will usually be needed:

1. Ongoing engagement with Agents (through employee representative groups) to monitor and understand any unforeseen impacts of changes to working environments.

2. Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty. The government has published [guidance on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
3. Using simple, clear messaging to explain guidelines using images and clear language, with consideration of groups for which English may not be their first language.
4. Using visual communications, for example emails, screen shots or signage, to explain changes to schedules, breakdowns or materials shortages to reduce the need for face-to-face communications.
5. Communicating approaches and operational procedures to customers, to help their understanding of Orbit's approach.

Advice Control Measures - Set out your Safe Methods of Working Points for discussion.

Managing risk - Objective: To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

Orbit has implemented control measures across the group, at all sites, to ensure that the company has discharged its duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level. Colleagues must follow the guidance within the workplace so that everybody's health and safety is protected.

Everyone's safety is paramount during this difficult time, Orbit need you to follow some strict but simple guidelines:

- Wash your hands immediately on arrival to work and again before you start work, wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Ensure you have a supply of sanitiser to use.
- Use the sanitation when required during the working day, there are disinfectant wipes for keyboards, screens, iPhones, iPads and tools. Use the paper towels provided to wipe down any of the above along with the disinfectant spray.
- Follow the Supermarket/Takeaway rules for break times. The number of customers allowed in at any one time and 2-metre social distancing is mandator.
- Toilets are also restricted, there are signs that must be used to indicate that they are in use. Please make sure that the toilets seat is wiped clean before and after use if possible, use agents home addresses or hotel rooms for Welfare visits were practicable.
- No groups of people "herding", this includes smoking, brew breaks and group conversations. If you are unsure, simply ask your Team leader for guidance
- Risk assessments have been carried out; a formal document has been produced and must always be followed.

8 Simple Steps to Follow

- If you feel unwell you must not come to work and self-isolate as per government guidelines, if your symptoms are those included in the Government COVID-19 Guidance. (“I might be unwell but not in a COVID way”)
- Those who are deemed to be extremely vulnerable to COVID 19 according to government guidance will have received a letter, this will also involve the direct household that you live in, you must also stay at home as per government guidelines.
- Wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly, or use alcohol hand rub, or sanitiser, ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered.
- Follow the sanitation station guidelines.
- Wherever possible you should travel to work alone using your own transport unless you are with a family member that lives in the same household.
- Always use practical common sense.
- Keep yourself safe as well as everybody else around you.
- Colleagues are instructed to use a tissue to cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and then dispose of it as soon as possible.

9 Risk Assessment Acknowledgement

This risk assessment was completed under consultation with Orbit key colleagues with the inclusion of health and safety representatives across all sites; this information is held on file.