



## COVID19 Policy

This policy is intended to explain what covid19 is and to guide staff and clients on the how to enable a safe working environment whilst allowing for the ever-evolving status and restrictions of the Covid 19 pandemic. Employers have several common law and statutory duties in relation to health and safety at work. This document has been prepared to operate in tandem with the UK Government's latest advice and details the protocols we have put in place.

In addition to this policy, if any individual wants to know more of the UK Government's latest advice on making the working COVID-secure, they can familiarize themselves with current HSE Guidance [here](#).

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## Background

### Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in January 2020.

### Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- 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 loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Generally, the infection can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

### How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are most likely to be the main means of transmission.

There are 2 main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

- infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or possibly could be inhaled into the lungs.
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching doorknob or shaking hands then touching own face)

### How long the virus can survive

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors, for example:

- what surface the virus is on
- whether it is exposed to sunlight
- differences in temperature and humidity
- exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

Once similar viruses are transferred to hands, they survive for very short lengths of time. Regular cleaning of frequently touched hard surfaces and hands will, therefore, help to reduce the risk of infection.

## What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in the business or workplace they should go home and [Self Isolate](#) and ask for a test.

Instructions on how to get a test can be found [here](#)

### Halo Return Home Protocol

Below is the Halo response plan in the event of a staff member displaying coronavirus symptoms

**If they are at work**, we will send them home and instruct them to seek medical advice from the NHS and keep their line manager informed of developments.

We will have a designated isolation space in which to place them if suitable transport is not immediately available (this space will be deep cleaned immediately after each use)

**If they are at home**, they will be told not to report for work, seek medical advice from the NHS and keep their line manager informed of developments.

Other staff members or clients who are known to have been in close contact\* with a suspected or known case of Covid-19 while that individual was displaying symptoms will be contacted and instructed to follow UK Government guidelines and stay at home until safe to return.

In certain cases we may arrange private testing for a key staff member if they or members of their household show symptoms, to avoid unnecessary self-quarantine and delays in diagnosis.

\*'Close contact' – defined at the time of writing in the UK as below 2m for more than 15 mins or having had unprotected direct contact to respiratory secretions of the ill individual (e.g. cough/sneeze in the face)

## Self-Isolation

Self-Isolation is when you do not leave your home because you have or might have coronavirus (COVID-19)

### When to self-isolate

You must self-isolate if:

- You have any symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- You've tested positive for coronavirus.
- You live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus.
- Someone in your childcare or support bubble has symptoms and you've been in close contact with them since their symptoms started or during the 48 hours before they started.
- Someone in your childcare or support bubble tested positive and you've been in close contact with them since they had the test or in the 48 hours before their test.
- You're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace
- You arrive in the UK from a country that is not an exempt country. The list of exempt countries can be found [here](#)

### How to self-isolate

If you are self-isolating, you must not leave your home.

### **How long to self-isolate**

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

You usually have to self-isolate for 10 full days if you've tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or have been in close contact with someone who has it.

You might need to self-isolate for longer if you get symptoms or your symptoms do not go away. Full details of how long you should self-isolate, depending on your individual circumstances, can be found [here](#)

### **Getting a test when self-isolating**

You should get a test if you have any symptoms of coronavirus.

You will no longer need to self-isolate if the results of the test show you are not infected with coronavirus.

## **Testing**

The expansion of workplace testing will identify more positive cases of COVID-19 and ensure those infected isolates. This will reduce the spread of the virus and protect those who cannot work from home.

### **Daily declaration**

All staff are required to declare their state of health when on halo premises and clients are asked whether they are suffering from any COVID-19 symptoms when entering the building.

### **Temperature**

All staff and clients have their temperature taken on entering the premises. This is an easy and fast method for detection of COVID-19 but it is not especially reliable.

### **Lateral Flow Tests**

Lateral flow testing is a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

Halo has a stock of testing kits and regularly invite staff and clients to take a test in a safe environment based on the government guidelines. Results are recorded and shared with each individual via the government website as part of the wider testing programme.

The tests are easy to use and give results in less than 30 minutes. Lateral flow devices do not require a laboratory to process the test. They are designed to be intuitive and require minimal training to operate.

In some circumstances, tests can be arranged for individual groups, on request.

Those who test positive must immediately self-isolate to avoid passing the virus on to others.

## **Social Distancing**

Social distancing means keeping people apart to help reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Where possible individuals should keep 2m apart. If this is not viable, keeping 1m apart with risk mitigation is acceptable.

Risk mitigating actions includes:

- Using screens or barriers to separate individuals from one another
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face)
- Reducing the number of individuals each person has contact with.

## Safe Office Environment

Regardless of a visitor's personal attitude to risk, Halo's responsibility as an employer and service provider is very clear. We have a duty of care to everyone who works in our buildings. We maintain a systematic approach to safety, social distancing and the highest standards of cleanliness at all times.

### Cleanliness

Cleaning is no longer something that will happen in the morning and evening only. It will be a constant, ongoing focus for everyone on site. Our regular daily cleaning which includes an hourly process that maintains a clean and safe environment at all times is also supplemented by a specialist 'deep clean' service that is used when appropriate. All the same, it falls to every individual to make sure they behave in such a way as to make halo as safe as possible for all users.

### Entering the Building

Upon entering any of Halo's buildings every individual must use the anti-viral hand gel provided and have their temperature taken by the receptionist. If the receptionist is busy, please be patient.

We are asking all staff to declare daily whether they suspect they (1) might be experiencing coronavirus symptoms or (2) have knowingly been exposed to an infected individual. If a staff member answers 'yes' to either question or shows a temperature above 37.8 degrees (being the UK government's threshold for 'risk of fever' associated with coronavirus) they will be asked to leave the building and return home in accordance with [Halo's Return Home Protocol](#).

### Common Areas

Common areas are used by many people. The potential for spread of coronavirus is considered to be higher in these areas so special attention is given.

Whilst 2m social distancing may not be possible throughout all common areas within Halo we respectfully ask that a face covering be worn to mitigate the risk of spreading coronavirus when in common areas.

#### Reception

- No more than three visitors in reception at one time
- Additional regularity of cleaning surfaces and door handles
- Screen between the receptionist and individuals
- Deliveries carefully wiped down with anti-viral wipes by an experienced person.

#### Kitchens

- No more than one individual in a kitchen at one time
- Additional regularity cleaning of surfaces and objects (such as kettles and toasters)

#### Toilets

- Additional regularity of cleaning

We only occupy one building with a lift. Where possible, please avoid using it. Halo's Dean Street reception is on the 3rd floor, so taking the stairs is a feasible option. We would like to make sure lifts are prioritised for people who may have restricted mobility. Halo will make sure the lift buttons are cleaned regularly.

### Individual rooms and suites

Each individual room requires its own particular consideration to social distancing depending on the size and shape of the room. Halo has done a thorough risk assessment of every room to establish what is deemed an acceptable number of people in each room and bookings will be arranged in accordance with that assessment.

Halo will also provide floor-standing and desk shielding on request.

Offline suites will be given a deep clean between one client to the next.

We respectfully ask that clients observe sensible social distancing measures in their offline suites.

### Sessions with Creatives

Each colourist, online editor, mixer and sound editor has a specific suite to work in. Clients can attend sessions within the parameters that maintain acceptable levels of risk to all parties. Clients are required to wear a face-covering when attending a session.

If a client fails to follow Halo's guidelines and a member of staff feels they are being put at unreasonable risk, they are encouraged to stop the session and contact their line manager.

Finishing suites will be given an extra clean between one client to the next.

## Safe Halo Services

### Runner Service

Normal runner service has resumed.

Please also bear in mind the runners will be very busy with new responsibilities that prioritise safety over comfort which may cause delay.

### Tech Service

- Support will always be provided remotely whenever possible.
- Attendance to a suite will be provided when essential and under the following arrangements.
  - Please maintain a 2m distance from our technical assistants at all times when carrying out any support tasks in client attended suites. Clients and technical assistants should both wear a face covering that covers the nose and mouth whilst the assistant is in the suite.
  - Where this is not possible clients may be required to temporarily vacate the suite whilst any support or maintenance is carried out
  - Clients can wait in an area which will be defined by the technical assistant at the point of attending the suite.
  - Clients may return to the suite when they are given the 'all clear'.
- The technical support operative will give all surfaces a wipe down prior to leaving the suite.

## Training

Covid-19 safety training must be undertaken by all staff before returning to the workplace. This will cover best practice in general principles, (including safe use of PPE such as masks and gloves, hand washing, cleaning of surfaces, handling of equipment and disposal of waste) and department-specific needs - including particular instances of close-proximity working.

## Business continuity and Remote Working

First and foremost, management at halo are taking every precaution to ensure the business continues to operate. This is primarily achieved through preventing infection. As well as the above-mentioned advice and policy we keep a constant view of advice provided by the government, NHS and WHO. Regular advice, understanding and guidance is communicated to staff and clients to ensure an ongoing state of best practice is implemented.

We are also asking all our clients for an up-to-date version of their respective policies so that we may apply appropriate measures at halo.

Access to our Soho offices remains in place but in the event of another lockdown or restricted access Halo can switch to a remote working facility.

Almost all Halo services are now available remotely on request.

We are happy to discuss solutions available to enable remote working and are exploring options to develop our remote access solutions further. This offering very much depends on the services required as well as wider circumstances surrounding each project and their respective security restrictions. As a result, these solutions can only be considered on a case-by-case basis as opposed to a one size fits all approach but please rest assured it is rare that a service is unavailable. If you are interested in looking into the possibility of remote working, please get in touch with your halo contact for further information.

## Roadmap

The government has provided a roadmap out of lockdown with key dates that trigger changes in government guidelines and regulations. The dates are outlined below with the changes we expect to implement at halo

### 8th March

- Changes already implemented.

### 29th March

- Changes already implemented.

### 12th April

- Changes already implemented.

### 17th May

- Normal runner service has resumed.
- Safe number of individuals in finishing suites has been reassessed. Clients can find out from their halo contact how this might affect their production.
- Rules on [self-isolation](#) have been updated.

### 19th July

- We no longer require individuals to wear face coverings in common areas of the office but respectfully ask they continue to do so.
- Social distancing is no longer a requirement but is still encouraged.
- We will continue to offer testing on a regular basis.

### 16th August

- People who are double jabbed will no longer be legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive covid-19 case. Instead of self-isolating people are advised to get a PCR test as soon as possible. We also have a plentiful supply of lateral flow tests as an alternative option.
- Anyone who tests positive following the PCR or lateral flow test will still be legally required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status or age
- Individuals no longer need to wear a face covering when in a corridors or stairwells in the office
- Please always be mindful of others. Ask if someone would prefer you to wear a face covering and don't take issue if someone asks you to wear a face covering. We all have varying degrees of threat to ourselves and those we live with so please be considerate of that at all times

The government press release for changes to rules from 16<sup>th</sup> August can be found [here](#)

### 30th September

- All restrictions to be removed. However, all effort to maintain a clean and safe environment will remain in force for the foreseeable future.

The current status of the government roadmap can be found [here](#)

At no stage do we intend on implementing any requirement for a vaccine passport

## Other Considerations

### If in doubt

If you have any doubts about the policy or are unsure what to do in a specific circumstance, please ask your producer for assistance.

Halo management will keep on top of the latest news as it emerges and amend the advice accordingly and ensure it's shared with all halo staff. Due to the changing nature of the global infection this policy may be updated to reflect the latest situation. You will be advised of any changes to the policy as they are implemented.