



COVID19 Policy

This policy explains what covid19 is and provides a framework to staff and clients for working in a safe office environment whilst Covid 19 exists. 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 suggest a possible 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

COVID-19 is spread by airborne transmission, close contact via droplets, and via surfaces. Airborne transmission is a very significant way that the virus circulates. It is possible to be infected by someone you don't have close contact with, especially if you're in a crowded and/or poorly ventilated space.

Close contact with an infected person is also a significant way COVID-19 is spread. When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the virus that causes COVID-19. The particles can come into contact with the eyes, nose or mouth or can be breathed in by another person. The particles can also land on surfaces and be passed from person to person via touch.

In general, the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 is higher in crowded and enclosed spaces, where there are more people who might be infectious and limited fresh air.

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 any of these 3 coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms they should call reception immediately and arrange a lateral flow test as soon as possible:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- you've lost your sense of smell or taste, or it's changed

Halo Positive Test Response

Below is the halo response plan in the event of a staff member testing positive for covid

If they are at work, we will arrange for them to go home and follow our [Self-Isolation](#) guidance.

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 until it is safe to do so, in accordance with our [Self-Isolation](#) guidance.

Any staff who have been in close contact with a colleague who has tested positive will be tested regularly for the next few days until we are comfortable they have not contracted the virus.

Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, halo has implemented several processes to allow individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 to attend our premises safely. This will not always be possible but as we continually make progress toward living and working with COVID-19 we continue to explore new ways of operating safely in this regard.

Each situation will require a unique solution.

Most importantly if a production would like to arrange for an individual who has tested positive to attend halo premises, we must be notified at least one day in advance of attendance.

We will assess the particular situation and let you know what arrangements will be in place and what steps to follow to safely permit the individual on site.

Some circumstances will not have a safe option and in these cases, we will not be able to permit the individual to enter halo premises.

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 should self-isolate if:

- You've tested positive for coronavirus.

How to self-isolate

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

How long to self-isolate

If you have COVID-19 you can infect other people. You can pass on the infection to others, even if you have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. If you have COVID-19 you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

You should remain in self-isolation until you no longer test positive for COVID-19. Once you test negative, the risk that you are still infectious is much lower and consequently you can safely return to your normal routine.

How to safely return to your normal routine

While individuals are infectious there is a risk of passing on COVID-19 to others. These are simple things we encourage all staff do to help prevent the spread:

- keep your distance from other people you live and work with and spend as little time as possible in shared areas. This is particularly important if someone you live or work with is unvaccinated or at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system
- if you need to spend time in shared areas wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask. Ventilate the room by opening windows and leaving them open for at least 10 minutes after you have left the room. Leave extractor fans running for longer than usual with the door closed after use
- cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands or use hand sanitiser
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose and before you eat or handle food. Avoid touching your face
- if you can, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. If this is not possible try and use the bathroom after everyone else
- regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles and remote controls, and shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms

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 and clients must declare their state of health when on halo premises if they are suffering from any COVID-19 symptoms

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.

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.

Tests can be arranged for individual groups, on request.

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. We have also implemented a process of regularly cleaning surfaces, door handles and various commonly touched objects throughout the office throughout the day as well as toilets. 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 should 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 wearing a face covering is longer compulsory in most public places we ask that you remain considerate of those around you and wear a face covering when it is sensible to do so. 2m social distancing may not be possible throughout all common areas within halo. Wearing a face covering will mitigate the risk of spreading coronavirus when in common areas.

We have installed a protective screen at reception and will manage the number of people in the reception area at any given time.

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

Halo's runner service is operating as normal

Edit Support Service

- Support will be provided remotely whenever possible.
- Attendance to a suite will be provided when essential.
- In the unlikely event additional safety measures are required the operative will discuss the particulars with the client at the time.

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 and whilst the guidance is to work from home we are encouraging that to all staff and clients in as far as it is possible.

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.

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.