

COVID 19 –
External Safe Working
Procedure – on site and in
other people's homes

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■ Introduction

COVID-19 also known as Novel Coronavirus is a new strain of a respiratory condition which has never affected humans before. As with other respiratory illnesses, infection can cause mild symptoms including a runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever.

It can be more severe for some individuals, and lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties. Those with weakened immune systems, pre-existing medical conditions and the elderly or infirm appear to be more at risk of becoming severely ill with the virus.

AluK is fully committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its employees, all stakeholders and interested parties. We are continuing to follow all the Government guidance and, in response to this AluK (GB) Ltd has prepared the following guidance to be followed during this period.

Whilst AluK are operating during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic, we need to ensure we are protecting our workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection. This guidance is intended to introduce consistent measures, whilst our Employees visit sites and other people's homes, in line with the Government's recommendations on [social distancing](#).

These are exceptional circumstances and our industry must comply with the latest Government advice on Coronavirus at all times.

The health and safety requirements of our field engineering activities must not be compromised at this time. If an activity cannot be undertaken safely due to a lack of suitably qualified personnel being available or social distancing being implemented, it must not take place.

AluK are aware that emergency services are also under great pressure and may not be in a position to respond as quickly as usual.

AluK Management must remind our workforce at every opportunity of the COVID-19 Operating Procedures which are aimed at protecting them, their colleagues, their families and the UK population.

If we do not consistently implement the measures set out below, we may be required to shut down.

■ Scope and purpose

This policy applies to all AluK (GB) Ltd permanent or fixed term contract employees who are on the organisations payroll, third party contractors, visitors to the AluK (GB) Ltd site and principal contractors involved in external working operations.

This policy covers details of the AluK External Safe Working Procedure whilst the business is operating under the current Government Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidelines of safe working and social distancing.

This policy is to ensure the protection, safety, and wellbeing of all AluK staff, principal contractors and occupants whilst working on and off site.

Failure to adhere to the policy, will result in an employee being removed from site, and an investigation undertaken, which could lead to formal disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Company's disciplinary policy, up to and including dismissal.

Further information on Government Coronavirus advice and Public Health can be found at;

Wales;

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

<https://phw.nhs.wales/>

England;

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Scotland;

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/>

It is important to ensure that you are aware that different restrictions may apply to different areas of the country, and you must ensure that the appropriate guidance is followed.

Standard contractual terms and conditions remain the same as set out in your contract of employment.

■ General Health & Wellbeing

If an employee meets one of the following criteria they should not undertake work with any primary contractor:

- A high temperature above 37.8 °C or a new persistent cough and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) should follow the government guidance on self-isolation
- Is classed as a vulnerable person (by virtue of age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or are pregnant) as per the government guidance
- Are living with someone in self-isolation or a vulnerable person in line with the government guidance

If an employee develops a high temperature or a persistent cough whilst at work, they are required to;

- Return home immediately
- Avoid touching anything
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, cough, and sneeze into the crook of their elbow

And thereafter follow the Government guidance on self-isolation and not return to work until their period of self-isolation has been completed.

All employees are required to follow the standard AluK absence and attendance policy when reporting absence.

■ Key Considerations

Employees will notify the primary contractor to stipulate the control measures prior to attendance.

Employees will communicate with the primary contractor and/or households prior to any visit to discuss how the work will be carried out to minimise risk for all parties. Phone consultations with primary contractors and/or homeowners are the preferred method.

When discussing an appointment with the principal contractor, the employee will ask and confirm if any site workers/homeowners or any occupants are self-isolating, displaying any symptoms of COVID19, and/or have received a positive diagnosis.

No work is to be carried out in a site or household which is isolating.

Where the individuals/householders are not self-isolating, displaying any symptoms, and have not been diagnosed with COVID19, there is no reason not to undertake the planned work, whilst exercising general best practice in line with the latest Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

If individuals/householders are displaying symptoms, then there is a need to consider the nature of the work, and also the vulnerability of the householders. Additional precautions should be taken if the work is to proceed, which could include additional PPE, such as disposable overalls, disposable gloves, eye protection, and suitable face mask.

Government guidance is continually evolving but be especially vigilant of those persons currently identified as most at risk, such as the over-70's, and/or with underlying health issues.

As well as protecting yourself, and householders, you should also consider the welfare of any colleagues, especially if they fall into one of the vulnerable categories.

When working in a household where somebody is clinically vulnerable, but has not been asked to shield, for example, the home of someone over 70, prior arrangements will be made with vulnerable people to avoid any face to face contact, for example, when answering the door.

AluK will be particularly strict about handwashing, coughing and sneezing hygiene, such as covering the nose and mouth and disposing of single use tissues. Employees will also wear the appropriate face mask at all times.

■ **Practical steps to take when working in the field:**

On the day of the work, the employee must call ahead to the principal contractor to ask if they or any occupants have signs of the virus, have been diagnosed, or are self-isolating, and to check that they are comfortable with your visit to take place.

Employees must explain to the principal contractor what they will be doing, and why, and that they will need to maintain a safe distance from them (as per current Government advice), including when waiting for the customer to open the door.

Employees must not shake hands or make any physical contact with persons or other occupants.

Employees must communicate the "Staying COVID-19 secure 2020" certificate to the principal contractor and occupant.

Where possible, whilst within the home/site, activity time involved as short as possible and employees should use one-way routes within the home/site to separate employees from occupants. Employee will use of back to back and side by side working whenever possible

AluK will aim to reduce the number of homeowners each employee has contact with, and should face to face working be carried out for a sustained period an assessment will be carried out to establish if the task can safely go ahead.

Employees should ask if the occupants can stay in another room, away from the work area(s) whilst the work proceeds, and with permission ventilate the work area where appropriate, e.g. by opening a window. Employees should also request that households leave all internal doors open to minimise contact with door handles.

Employees should identify busy areas across the household/site where people travel to, from or through, for example, stairs and corridors, and minimise movement where possible within these areas.

Employees will arrange their own food and break arrangements, outside where possible.

AluK limit the number of workers within a confined space to maintain social distancing. If necessary AluK will utilise a fixed pairing system if workers must be in close proximity; For example, during two-person assembly or maintenance.

AluK will allocate the same employee if possible, to a household where jobs are repetitive. AluK will operate a fixed pairing to have the same individuals allocated to a household where jobs are repetitive in nature.

AluK will utilise where appropriate, remote working tools such as issued company mobile telephones to avoid in person appointments.

Employees will wash their hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds, at the start of the job and after (also during the work). It is recommended that employees carry their own hand-towel with their equipment. Wash/replace that hand-towel at end of each day/shift and sanitise the hand basin.

Employees will use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available, will avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth, and will wear suitable work gloves where appropriate.

If an Employee will feels unsafe or at risk at any point, they will undertake a personal risk assessment and leave the premises if necessary. Employees can re-plan for a future date if appropriate, after ensuring everything is made safe.

A Customer/Engineer signature will not be required as a Technical Report will be issued to the principal contractor.

Only where absolutely necessary will employees physically attend appointments and maintain 2m separation where possible, and will avoid transmission during appointments, for example, from sharing pens, documents and other objects. Such meetings should be held outdoors or in well ventilated rooms whenever possible.

In the unlikely occurrence of an incident employees will maintain social distancing. Employees will pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing hands.

■ Job Completion

Employees should wipe down any product, tools and instruments used within the premises, remove and place into a plastic bag any wipes, disposable gloves and overalls used, whilst trying not to cross-contaminate onto existing clothes or persons.

Employees should not touch their face, and ensure they clean/wash their hands, and where possible/appropriate any reusable PPE (e.g. safety glasses), using soap and water, or use suitable hand sanitizer on hands before moving to the next job.

At the end of each day and following the appropriate local waste regulations dispose of any bagged waste in line with any existing business process and/or Government guidance

■ Social Distancing

Employees should follow social distancing aids that are located inside and outside of any site.

■ PPE

Additional PPE measures have been implemented, as well as following strict social distancing of at least 2 metres, and strict hand washing regimes at all times whilst on the customer's site, the following is also applicable;

In addition to the AluK standard working PPE policy, the additional mandatory PPE should always be worn at all times, by all employees.

These include:

- o Face visor or
- o Face mask

All related PPE is to be replaced at the beginning of each new working day. Any queries or concerns should be raised with a supervisor or line manager.

All shared equipment must be sanitised before and after use.

Employees must also ensure that they wash their hands before and after any break, and/or visit to the toilet.

■ Cleaning & Hygiene

Along with the standard employee cleaning regimes, enhanced measures have been implemented which include increased cleaning of all high traffic areas and touch points including; tools, taps and washing facilities, toilets, door handles, handrails communal areas, and entrance and exit locations.

Additional hand sanitiser dispensers and cleaning materials, which include wipes and disinfectant spray are kept within the Employees vehicle.

Employees are required to wash their hands with soap and water for more than 20 seconds as per the Government guidelines or use the hand sanitisers on entry and exit of the building, before and after any break and after any toilet break.

Employees should not keep alcohol sanitiser products in the vehicle overnight.

All AluK vehicle touch points are to be wiped down before and after use.

■ Equality within the workplace

AluK understand and take into account the particular circumstances of those with different protected characteristics.

AluK involve and communicate appropriately with homeowners whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk

AluK will put in place any particular measures or adjustment to take into account duties under equalities legislation.

AluK will make any adjustments to ensure disabled persons are not put at a disadvantage.

Aluk will ensure that steps are taken that do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on certain groups.

Aluk will also take into consideration any arrangements of the homeowner.

■ **Working from home**

All employees that can work from home will continue to be asked to do so and are requested to adhere to the working from home policy.

■ **Deliveries**

Where loads allow it supplier delivery drivers are always to remain in their vehicles while being off loaded. Mandatory PPE should always be worn. This entails gloves and masks as outlined above.

■ **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed as required by Health and Safety/Human Resources, or in line with current legislation, to judge its effectiveness and must be updated in accordance with changes with the COVID-19 situation or to the law.

If changes are required, these will be implemented as soon as possible.