



UNISON Covid 19 General Risk Assessment

Area of Risk:	Covid – 19 Global Outbreak	Region / Location:	UNISON General Risk Assessment – Risks and control measures might not apply equally to all offices and this will depend on local arrangements, office layouts, etc.	Version:	17
Risk Assessment Conducted by:	Sonia Seoane - Staff Health & Safety Officer	Date:	15/07/2021	Next Suggested review date:	Fortnightly or as major changes take place

Despite the end to legal restrictions announced by the Government this week, we will still be taking a cautious approach and maintain our safety measures in place until at least the end of August, when these will be reviewed.

This Risk Assessment is specifically focussed on the risk of Covid – 19. The aim is to identify the appropriate control measures to:

1. ensure the health and safety of all Staff, Contractors and Visitors (to UNISON).
2. reduce the spread of the virus.

The following set out control measures will remain in place to ensure a safe return to the workplace of staff, visitors and contractors whilst conducting duties or works whilst at UNISON, these include but are not limited to:

- enhanced cleaning regimes for daily, monthly and emergency cleaning
- improved hygiene measures with sanitisation points and alcohol wipes throughout our buildings
- protective Perspex screens at reception desks and deli bar service points where needed
- maintain our Covid emergency plan, in the event of staff demonstrating Covid symptoms at work
- signage at entry points to buildings advising of social distancing, including signs to limit numbers at shared points such as lifts, kitchens, toilets and meeting rooms.
- guidance documents shared with staff prior to buildings re-opening
- one-way systems in stairwells, corridors and other communal areas where possible
- continue to maintain a conversation framework for managers to discuss with staff any concerns about returning to the workplace and identify anyone in a high-risk category
- conducting a separate risk assessments for those identified as high-risk during the conversation framework

Due to the rapidly evolving nature of Covid – 19 this is a live document and an interpretation of the relevant guidance as advised by the UK Government.

This document aims to include the robust protocols which UNISON is implementing, based on information issued by the government and will be regularly reviewed, as guidance evolves, and the government updates its advice and approach to tackling Covid – 19. We will review our risk assessment as and when the Government announces further phases of its Coronavirus response and update it accordingly, but as a minimum it will be reviewed fortnightly or as major changes take place.

This document sets out our assessment of the health and safety risks as a result of Covid-19, the controls we have in place and any further action we plan to take. We will consult with staff and union representatives regarding this assessment.

In line with Government expectations, we will publish this overarching risk assessment on our website.

The residual risk after control measures have been implemented is **GREEN**.

No office will re-open until this status has been reached.

KEY
Low - Tolerable
Medium – Moderate
High - Intolerable

What are the Hazards	Who might be harmed / how	Risk Before Controls			What are you already doing to control risk?	Additional control measures required	Risk After Controls			Responsibility	When is the action needed by?	Done
		Potential Consequence 1-5	Probability 1-5	Risk Rating 1-25			Potential Consequence 1-5	Probability 1-5	Risk Rating 1-25			
Infection / Spread / Cross contamination within UNISON premises.	Staff, visitors and contractors in the building using shared spaces (lifts, rooms, kitchens, toilets, etc.), touching surfaces (including equipment), getting too close to people they are visiting or working with.	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced numbers of staff in the office at any one time by introducing phased return approach via rotas and staggered start/finish Use signage to manage distancing around offices and adhere to sitting arrangements. Meeting room doors to display signs indicating they are closed, or with maximum capacity permitted. Provide hand sanitiser and hand washing facilities throughout the premises. Maintain virtual ways (online/teleconferencing) of conducting meetings where possible Increased frequency of cleaning of “touch areas” and monthly deep cleaning schedules. Limits on numbers of people in lifts, toilets, printer areas, meeting rooms, kitchens etc in place. Staff use their own cup and be responsible for cleaning it, storing it in pedestal, cabinet or taking it home at the end of the day. Anyone falling ill at work with Covid 19 related symptoms is to leave work, informing their manager and contacting NHS on 111 (do not attend the hospital or GP surgery) Staff are encouraged to wear face coverings in the office when moving away from their desk / around the building, where social distancing of 2 metres or 1 metre plus might not be possible, such as when using the lifts, kitchens, printer rooms, etc. PPE is provided for all outward facing staff (cleaners, caretakers, security, post, and engineering teams) as required Staff to occupy own desk with no hot desking Emergency sanitising protocol for our premises if a member of staff with symptoms has been in the workplace. Installation of screens at reception desks Staff to clear all items from desks, top of cabinets, disposing of their own rubbish in bins provided at the end of the day 		4	1	4	Facilities & Property teams / HR / H&S management	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
	Vulnerable groups - anyone disability or underlying health condition could suffer severe effects from the virus.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be discussed within the conversation framework for managers. Managers to conduct risk assessments for vulnerable members of staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be determined on individual basis as per conversation framework and follow up risk assessment. 	4	2	8	Line managers / HR	Before staff returns to buildings	w/c 29/07/2020
	Staff living with elderly or other high-risk dependants who could be affected.	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be discussed within the conversation framework for managers. Staff living with “at risk” or “very high risk” dependants or members of the family should discuss their concerns with their manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be determined on individual basis as per conversation framework. 	4	2	8	Line managers / HR	Before staff returns to buildings	w/c 29/07/2020
	Visitors and contractors who might contract the virus whilst attending our buildings and interact with our staff.	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide inductions on safety measures. Number of contractors limited to only those essentially needed. During loading/uploading, drivers should either be in their vehicles or waiting area where possible, maintaining social distances. Provide sanitising facilities for contractors if they need to enter our premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit number of people doing a task at the same time and try to pair up same teams where more than one person is needed. 	4	1	4	Facilities & Property	Ongoing	Ongoing

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Use of staff eating areas (restaurant, cafes, canteens, kitchens)	All staff and visitors getting too close to people they are visiting or working with, e.g. attending meetings, cleaning personnel cleaning the areas.	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using markers on floors to help people keep safety distances. Limit number of people using the facilities at any one time. Display information on safe procedures and educate to encourage hygiene. Provide hand sanitiser and hand washing facilities. Increase frequency of cleaning and arrange regular deep cleaning and sanitising schedules. Staff use their own mugs, each responsible for its maintenance and cleaning. Avoid food prep to be done in kitchen / tea points to reduce time spent in shared spaces. Reduce sitting in communal gathering areas, such as restaurant / staff canteens. Payment should be taken by contactless card, no cash. Reduced provision of catering services and tea point protocols Display signs advising staff of limited numbers allowed in shared spaces such as kitchens, lifts, toilets, printer rooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff eating at their desks or outside of the office. Surfaces to be cleaned by users with the provided sanitizing wet wipes and waste discarded in non-recycling bins. 	4	1	4	Facilities & Office managers	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
Lone working	Staff could suffer injury or ill health while out of the office or when in the office working alone.	3	2	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security staff to carry out floor walks during the day and just before locking up the building where available. Managers to ensure lone working is avoided where possible. Diaries to be kept up to date with whereabouts of field staff (if visiting client's sites) or lone workers. Regular communication maintained between staff and their line managers or team members. 		3	1	3	Line Managers / Security.	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
Travel	All staff that might come into contact with the virus during travel times.	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use own method of transport where possible and aim to walk or cycle instead when returning to the workplace. 		4	2	8	Facilities team/ Office managers	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
Changing facilities, showers and drying rooms.	All staff including cleaning personnel using and cleaning the premises.	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggered start/finish times to help avoid rush hour Enhance cleaning of all facilities throughout the day and at the end of each day. Limit number of people using the facilities. Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins with regular removal and safe disposal. Provide hand sanitiser in the shower areas Encourage staff to freshen up instead of showering using wet wipes or a wet flannel. Make staff aware they are using the showers at their own risk, as they cannot be cleaned between each use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular touched surfaces to be cleaned by users with the provided sanitizing wet wipes and waste discarded in provided non-recycling bins. Manage volume of users to allow for steam to disperse. 	2	1	2	Facilities team/ Office managers	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
Cleaning tasks	Cleaning personnel could become infected and pass on the virus to others if the correct safety procedures are not followed.	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training provided in safe systems of work, including use of PPE, cleaning techniques, COSHH training, safe disposal of waste and reporting of dangerous incidents and ill health. Reusable PPE to be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers. Single PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused. Toilets – staff to wipe over the facilities (all touch points including toilet seat, handles, push plates) prior to and after use. Staff to remove all items from desks and top of cabinets to allow cleaners to work efficiently and to reduce likelihood of contamination. External cleaning contractors to carry out cleaning if in house teams are not available or have not yet been trained on new safety measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular touched surfaces to be cleaned by users with the provided sanitizing wet wipes and waste discarded in provided bins. 	3	2	6	Facilities team/ Office managers	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020

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Unplanned evacuations	All staff, visitors, contractors who will struggle to exit buildings observing social distancing.	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing your incident and emergency procedures to ensure they reflect the social distancing principles as far as possible. Fire and Emergency evacuation plans to supersede any Covid safety measures in place. Security Supervisor to nominate evacuation roles to security staff on a rota basis. Staff continue to maintain safety distancing, face coverings to be worn where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team managers arrange for responsible persons to help in evacuations if evacuation wardens are not available due to reduced staff levels. 	4	1	4	Facilities / office Managers	Before staff returns to buildings	10/07/2020
First Aid provision	First Aiders and ill persons during first aid emergencies	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aiders and people involved in the provision of assistance to others should use available PPE and pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands. Rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation should not be performed in adults, perform chest compressions until help arrives using a defibrillator where available. Review numbers of first aiders and arrange training to suit rota needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a decision is made to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation in asphyxial arrest, resuscitation face shield should be used. Team managers arrange for responsible persons to call ambulance if no first aiders are available, due to reduced staff levels. 	4	2	8	Facilities / office Managers	Before staff returns to buildings	w/c 13/07/2020
Working environment	All staff, visitors, contractors using the facilities in the building	4	2	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All plant and equipment including the Air handling units and Air conditioning units are maintained regularly under a Pre-Planned Maintenance schedule to the highest industry standards. Maintaining a clean workplace with a reasonable working temperature, good ventilation, suitable lighting and the right amount of space and seating adhering to safe social distancing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report any issues to facilities as soon as possible so these can be rectified to avoid issues affecting anyone in the building. 	4	1	4	Facilities / Staff/ Staff/ Visitors	Before staff returns to buildings	Ongoing
Mental Health of employees	Mental health and wellbeing of staff affected due to isolation and anxiety about coronavirus	4	1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A COVID-19 Working Group meets regularly to ensure effective communications and key decisions relating to staff and a safe return to the workplaces are made, based on the latest information and Government guidance. Health and Wellbeing guides are available for staff to support them with both home and work lives during the pandemic Mental Health Risk Assessment to be carried out for staff that need additional help and support. Line managers are encouraged to maintain communication with staff and regular "Teams" meetings to provide support and help colleagues keep connected and part of a team. Confidential professional support available from our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all documentation created to support staff during the pandemic to ensure its accuracy 	3	1	3	Staff / Line managers/ DHSM's/ HR officers/ Staff H&S Officer	Before staff returns to buildings	Ongoing
Musculoskeletal disorders	Staff working from home might experience issues due to lack of appropriate workstation equipment	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Display Screen Equipment assessments available via Cardinus. High risk assessments are followed via telephonic / Teams assessments. Line managers to ensure ergonomic equipment is available at home and office locations (standard and non-standard equipment) while working from both locations. Line managers to maintain the conversation with staff, to identify if additional support is required. 		3	1	3	Line managers / Procurement	Ongoing	27/05/2020

Definition of risk levels

Risk Level	Actions - must be documented on RA, with date for completion.
LOW	Acceptable risk where hazards are not required to be actively managed but must be documented. If the risk can be resolved quickly and efficiently, control measures should be implemented and recorded.
MEDIUM	Risk requires a planned regular monitoring regime, to control hazards and avoid an increased level of risk. To be discussed at Local and National H&S committees.
HIGH	Unacceptable risk. Immediate attention is required to control the hazards. Tracking and monitoring required. To be discussed at Local and National H&S committees.

Definition of likelihood (with level of probability)

1 - Improbable	This will probably never happen / recur. Not expected to occur for years. <0.1% probability
2 - Unlikely	Do not expect it to happen / recur, but it is possible it may do so at least annually. 0.1 - 1% probability
3 - Possible	Might happen or recur occasionally, probably monthly. 1 - 10% probability
4 - Likely	Will probably happen/recur at least weekly. 10 - 50% probability
5 - Highly likely	Will undoubtedly happen/recur frequently , possibly daily. >50%

Probability →	1 - Improbable This will probably never happen	2 - Unlikely Do not expect it to happen/recur, but may do so	3 - Possible Might happen/recur occasionally	4 - Likely Will probably happen/recur, but not persisting issue	5 - Highly Likely Will undoubtedly happen/recur, possibly frequently
Consequence ↓					
1 - Very minor No injury / minimal financial loss	1	2	3	4	5
2 - Minor Minor injury or first aid treatment / medium financial loss	2	4	6	8	10
3 - Moderate Lost time injury <7 day / high financial loss	3	6	9	12	15
4 - Major Serious injury >7 day/ large financial loss	4	8	12	16	20
5 - Extreme Potential fatality / economic loss cannot be restored	5	10	15	20	25

Definition of consequences

1 - Very minor	No impact on health. Negligible economic loss, which can be restored. Might cause small reduction of reputation in the short run. No violation of law. No significant impact at team level and no noticeable effect on the level of service as an organisation.
2 - Minor	No direct impact on health or minor temporary impact. Minor economic loss which can be restored. No violation of law. Would have impact on performance but unlikely to make the difference between hitting or missing a commitment or deadline. Some attention from some of our members, but unlikely to have an impact on reputation.
3 - Moderate	Minor or temporary impact on health, with less than 7 days absence from work. Minor violation of regulation resulting in warning without a fine. Economic loss that can be restored. Impact could make a difference between meeting or missing deadlines. Could attract some attention from large number of member affecting their perception of the organisation.
4 - Major	Serious injury with over 7 days absence from work (RIDDOR). Violation of law which results in minor penalty or fine. Likely to have a significant impact on our ability to meet our commitments. Potential to change the perspective of the organisation amongst members considerably.
5 - Extreme	Death or permanent reduction of health (life changing injury). Considerable economic loss which cannot be restored. Serious loss of reputation which causes significant loss of affiliated members. Serious violation of law resulting in fine causing devastating impact on organisation.

Version control

Date Completed	Version	Assessment Update – Y/N
11/03/2020	1	Initial Coronavirus Risk Assessment, including reference to branch staff, activists, members and work as it was before the National Lockdown was implemented. - sent to all regions to use as a Template
17/06/2020	2	Covid General Risk Assessment collated with information from regional offices' individual risk assessments, to prepare for a return to the offices. - Draft
07/07/2020	3	Updated assessment for a return to the workplace to include: 1. First Aid Provision under hazards; 2. risk scoring calculated; 3. Updated under "region/location" the assessment covers all offices and not everything will apply everywhere.
09/07/2020	4	Updated to include "Staff able to work from home continue working remotely"
14/07/2020	5	Updated with review of hazard risk rating for Travel
15/07/2020	6	Updated to add an intro page with statement
16/07/2020	7	Updated to add "Risk After Controls" section, showing the residual risk after controls are in place. Uploaded to UNISON web page for the first time and shared with TUC.
04/08/2020	8	Updated to include risk assessment version control page and updated "next suggested review date" in header- No further amendments made.
04/09/2020	9	Updated information regarding use of meeting rooms and sections added to cover Mental Health; Use of showers; DSE (Musculoskeletal issues); Working environment and updated travel to reflect extending opening hours to help with staggered hours of work.
05/10/2020	10	Updated wording on use of face coverings in the office.
04/11/2020	11	Updated in light of second National lockdown from 5 th Nov 2020: Note on cover page around the mitigation of some risks in light of new restrictions; Changes to staff eating areas; Travel section refers to reduced opening hours for our offices; Working environment and Mental Health sections are reflecting buildings to remain open 2 days per week from Nov,
14/12/2020	12	Changes made during 2 nd National lockdown in Nov removed. Travel between Tier 1/2 & 3 to be avoided where possible and alternatives considered within the Conversation Framework and Risk Assessment process. Renamed document to match title.
21/12/2020	13	Update in light of latest Gov announcement, all offices closed from 20 th Dec.
13/01/2021	14	Update in light of new National lockdown effective from 4 th Jan 2021.
07/04/2021	15	"Additional control measures" that are in place have been moved into the "what are we already doing" column, i.e. signage in place, sanitation points etc. Reference to Tiers removed. Planned preventative maintenance is ongoing, reference to Jan plan to continue with these removed. Replaced specific time between users of showers to manage volume of users. Review of all documentation created to support staff mental health during pandemic.
13/05/2021	16	Front page update "Visitors allowed only for visitors are allowed for essential business meetings only". Minor updates as above, moving info from "additional control measure required" to "what are we doing to control risk" column, such as staff to occupy own desk with no hotdesking; Display signs advising staff of limited numbers allowed in shared spaces; Emergency sanitising of areas if member of staff with symptoms has been in the workplace, etc. Reference to face coverings provided or reimbursed by staff removed.
15/07/2021	17	Minor updates to reflect despite the lifting of legal restrictions, UNISON maintains a cautious approach in leaving safety measures in place. Visitors allowed back in.