

# **MEDWAY COUNCIL COVID-19 RETURN TO WORKPLACE INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT FOR HIGH RISK GROUPS – PART 1**

## **Information**

This Individual Risk Assessment for High Risk Groups is designed to help managers ensure the safety of employees falling into the high-risk categories in relation to assessing returning to the workplace following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The high-risk categories include those employees who have underlying medical conditions, who are aged 70 or over or who are from a BAME background. These risks will be considered further as part of this Risk Assessment.

This Risk Assessment takes into account Government Guidance, the safety of individuals and the operational needs of Medway Council. If used correctly risks to employees from high risk groups in relation to the Covid-19 virus should be eliminated or significantly reduced to an acceptable level.

The Assessment is supported by Medway Council's Corporate Risk Assessment which provides further detailed guidance on what measures have already been put in place to help protect the health and safety of all staff. This Risk Assessment is entirely tailored to the Covid-19 virus pandemic. It does not replace any other Risk Assessment in place but should be read in conjunction with.

The Risk Assessment should be completed jointly by the Line Manager with the employee before any potential return to the workplace is considered. This can be done on-line electronically via MS Teams for example or by telephone and once completed should be regularly reviewed.

**It is important to note that Medway Council's current default position remains that wherever possible staff should work from home.** Managers should arrange, facilitate and support home working for the employee concerned. If home working is not practicable for the officer concerned, or practicable or compatible with the needs of the service, managers are required to discuss the situation with the HR Team first and seek further advice.

**It is important to also note that those employees who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable and have received written confirmation from their GP that they are currently required to shield themselves from potential exposure to the virus should not be considered to return to the workplace at this time.** The situation should be regularly reviewed in light of Government Guidance. The Manager should ensure that the employee is supported to work from home where practicable and that they maintain regular contact with them monitoring their well-being.

**Please note that the government is advising that from 1 August that shielding measures will be paused. From this date, the government is advising people to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. In practice this means that from 1 August those shielding could then go to work, if they cannot work from home, as long as the business is COVID-safe. Further clarification is provided by the latest Government Guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>**

## **Underlying Health Conditions Associated With an Increased Vulnerability to Covid-19 Risk?**

The government is advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from Coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.

This group includes those who are shielding and those with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):

- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis

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- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- those who are pregnant

### **Demographic factors Linked With Increased Vulnerability to Covid-19**

There is currently growing evidence and data which suggests there are three key demographic factors that can impact people's vulnerability to Covid-19. These are Age, Gender and Ethnicity. Based on this data and guidance from national government, it appears that older people, men, and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities seem to be at greater risk from risks and complications related to Covid-19. The causes of these increased risk factors are not yet fully understood, and further research is taking place right now. However, it remains important for us to respond quickly to what the evidence is telling us.

#### **Age:**

The current evidence suggests that age is a clear risk factor to consider in relation to vulnerability to Covid-19. There are clear government measures already in place for those aged over 70 and therefore it is important that we make sure we are taking action to reduce older colleagues' exposure to Covid-19

#### **Gender:**

There is recent evidence that suggests an increased vulnerability for men of becoming seriously ill from the effects of Covid-19 and this vulnerability also appears to be exacerbated by age. We need to consider this carefully when assessing the risk from Covid-19.

#### **Ethnicity:**

There is an increasing amount of data and research which suggests that people from a BAME community/background have an increased vulnerability to the risks and complications of Covid-19, compared to others. Therefore, we must take colleagues' ethnicity into account when assessing their risk from COVID-19.

#### **Religion or Beliefs:**

The current situation is likely to coincide with religious events which may have an impact on the ability of individual members of staff to perform their role fully, especially if wearing the highest levels of PPE. Line managers should have a thorough and comprehensive conversation with the employee about how they will cope in these circumstances and consider what adjustments could be made.

### **How to Score the Assessment**

The risk rating should be calculated using the formula below:

- Slightly Harmful = 1
- Harmful = 2
- Extremely Harmful = 3
  
- Likely = 3
- Unlikely = 2
- Highly Unlikely = 1

Scoring- 5-6 = **high risk** -further work/action required or constant monitoring

Scoring 3-4 = **moderate risk** - review measures regularly

Scoring 2 - **low risk** - no further action unless circumstances change

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**When scoring the assessment it is important that managers make reference to the latest national government guidance relating to the risk factors and the measures already implemented at the office location to protect the health and safety of staff at the workplace. If managers have any questions or queries relating to the latest guidance please contact HR.**

## **MEDWAY COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT – PART 2**

Name of Employee:	Date of this Assessment
Name of Assessor:	
Site / Office Location:	Current Situation: e.g. working from home, shielding, self-isolating etc
Summary of High-Risk Categories Applicable to Employee (please tick all that apply)	
Aged 70 or over <input type="checkbox"/> Aged over 60 with pre-existing medical condition <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant <input type="checkbox"/> BAME background <input type="checkbox"/> Identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable <input type="checkbox"/> Identified as being clinically vulnerable <input type="checkbox"/>	

HAZARDS IDENTIFIED	NOTES ABOUT THE RISK TO THE EMPLOYEE, CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND WHAT YOU ARE ALREADY DOING	FURTHER EXISTING CONTROLS/MEASURES CURRENTLY IN PLACE	SEVERITY OF HARM			LIKELIHOOD/PROBABILITY			RISK LEVEL
			Slightly Harmful	Harmful	Extremely Harmful	Likely	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely	
1. General Covid-19 infection exposure and transmission	In this section assess the employee's current circumstances in relation to the hazards identified.  Include reference to what arrangements you already have in place with the employee e.g. working from home, adjustments to working hours, referrals to occupational health with advice provided etc	In this section make reference to the measures and controls already in place for each hazard as identified in the Corporate Risk Assessment  Also include reference to other arrangements or measures you already have in place with the staff member							

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<p>2. Is the employee at an increased risk of severe illness/complications in relation to Covid-19 due to BAME background?</p>									
<p>3. Are there any religious events that the employee may wish to attend in the near future that might impact on their vulnerability?</p>									
<p>4. Is there an increased risk of severe illness/complications in relation to Covid-19 due to age in relation to the employee?</p>									
<p>5. Is there an increased risk of severe illness/complications in relation to Covid-19 due to gender in relation to the employee?</p>									

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<p>6. Is there an increased risk of severe illness/complications in relation to Covid-19 due to underlying medical conditions?</p>									
<p>7. Is the employee working in a high risk work environment where role prevents social distancing?</p>									
<p>8. Is the employee suffering from any stress/anxiety? If so, is this work related or Covid-19/health related?</p>									
<p>9. Is there insufficient management oversight when the employee is carrying out their role?</p>									

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<p>10. Is the member of staff required to travel as part of their role and do they use public transport?</p>									
<p>11. Are any other risk assessments required to be carried out on this staff member (i.e. pregnancy risk assessment or risk assessment to conduct home visits for example)?</p>									
<p>12. Is the staff member required to visit other sites that could be associated with increased risks related to Covid-19?</p>									

<p>Sign &amp; Print Name:</p>	<p>Date:</p>	<p>Date for Review:</p>
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**MEDWAY COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT – PART 3**

ACTION SHEET

Appendix 3

MODERATE AND HIGH RISK HAZARDS IDENTIFIED AND NOTES	FURTHER COMMENTS / ACTION REQUIRED TO REDUCE RISK LEVEL FURTHER	TIMESCALE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

SIGNED:	DATE:
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