

MEARS

COVID-19 (Getting Back to Work)

Maintenance Activities
Site Operating Procedures

As at 05/01/2021

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Introduction

These are exceptional circumstances and Mears must comply with the latest Government advice on Coronavirus (Covid-19) at all times.

These Site Operating Procedures (SOP's) are based on Public Health (PH) Guidance and Construction Sector Site Operating Procedures. Other restrictions and advice may also apply.

The HSE is the relevant enforcing authority for PH guidelines. If a site is not consistently implementing the measures set out by PH, it may be subject to enforcement action.

Sites operating during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection. This includes considering how personnel travel to and from site.

This guidance is intended to introduce consistent measures on Mears sites of all types and sizes in line with the Government's recommendations on social distancing and ensure Mears and its staff make every effort to comply.

Mears must have in place effective arrangements for monitoring and reviewing their compliance with Government and industry guidance. Site Management should also remind their staff at every opportunity of the Site Operating Procedures which are aimed at protecting them, their colleagues, families and the UK population.

Travel

Anyone who either has a high temperature, a new persistent cough, a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste, is within 10 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19), or has been contacted by the NHS Test & Trace Service, should not come to site, but must follow the guidance on self-isolation.

Wherever possible staff should travel to site alone using their own transport. If staff have no option but to share transport, they must seek approval first from their line manager:

- Journeys should be shared with the same individuals and with the minimum number of people at any one time.
- Surgical type IIR masks are to be worn.
- Maintain good ventilation (i.e. keep windows open) and face away from each other.
- The vehicle should be cleaned regularly using gloves and standard cleaning products, particularly handles and other areas where passengers may touch surfaces.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds using soap and water if available, or hand sanitiser, before entering and after getting out of the vehicle.

Where public transport is the only option for staff, management should consider:

- Changing and staggering working hours to reduce congestion on public transport.
- Inform staff to avoid using public transport at peak times.
- Inform staff to maintain social distancing where possible and wear a face covering at all times.

NOTE: It is mandatory to wear a face covering on all public transport and when visiting retail outlets, including suppliers.

If a member of staff falls ill on site, they should:

- Return home immediately.
- Notify their Line Manager.
- Don't touch anything.
- Ensure that they sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the crook of their elbow.

Welfare

Staff numbers on site should be kept to a minimum to allow social distancing to be maintained.

Hand Cleaning:

- On entry to the property staff should wash their hands using soap and water for 20 seconds. They should wash their hands regularly, particularly after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, before and after breaks, before and after using the toilet and when leaving the property. Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser should be used, and staff should carry this with them at all times.

Breaks:

- Staff should bring pre-prepared meals and refillable bottles to work with them.
- Staff should utilise the facilities available to them, or their own vehicle when taking breaks.
- Staff should avoid contact with others.
- Staff should clear their own waste away and dispose of this correctly.

Toilet Facilities:

- Wash or sanitise hands before and after using the facilities.

Site Working Procedures

Mears has produced a suite of COVID-19 Risk Assessments which are designed to supplement the current Significant and Trade Specific Risk Assessments.

These detail the risks associated with each different work environment and list the control measures required in order to address these risks.

These Risk Assessments are to be read by Mears staff before works commence, and they should confirm in writing to their line manager that they have read and understood the content of these documents. Any issues should be raised immediately with their line managers.

Mears works are risk assessed using a hierarchy of controls and also against any sector-specific guidance. These are broken down into clearly defined areas as follows:

Eliminate:

- Staff are to maintain at least a 2m distance while working.
- Management teams are to plan works to minimise contact between staff and to avoid skin to skin or face to face contact.
- Alternative or additional mechanical aids are to be used where required to reduce worker interface.

Reduce:

- Work should be planned to minimise the frequency, time and number of people involved in the task.
- Staff are to work side by side, or facing away from each other, rather than face to face.
- Ventilation should be increased in enclosed spaces by opening windows etc.
- Staff are to wash their hands before and after using equipment.
- Regular touchpoints (doors, handles, vehicle cabs, tools, equipment etc.) are to be regularly cleaned using gloves and standard cleaning products.

Isolate:

- If staff have to operate within 2m of each other i.e. during manual handling tasks for heavy items etc. they are to:
 - a) Work together in teams and do not change workers within teams where possible.
 - b) Wear a Surgical type IIR mask.
 - c) Keep teams to as small a number as possible to complete the task.

d) Keep away from other workers where possible.

Control:

Where face to face working within 2m is essential to carry out the task:

- a) Authorisation is to be provided by your line manager before these tasks commence.
- b) Compliance with control measures is to be monitored and managed.

PPE:

- PPE will be used as a final means of protection and should be used in accordance with the relevant Risk Assessments. Face fit testing should be conducted where necessary.
- Sites should not use RPE for Coronavirus (Covid-19) where the two metre social distancing guidelines are met unless the tenant(s) are confirmed as having COVID-19, have the symptoms or are self-isolating.
- If work within 2m has to be undertaken a surgical type IIR mask should be worn. If the task in hand will produce a significant amount of dust or there is a likelihood of accidentally disturbing asbestos an FFP3 type respirator should be worn.
- Reusable PPE should be cleaned between uses and not shared between staff.
- Single use PPE should be disposed of correctly so it can't be reused.

Undertaking Maintenance Activities:

It is the responsibility of the property owner / tenant to declare if they are under self-isolation or have been diagnosed with the virus. The client / Landlord is to inform Mears of this at the time the repair is raised.

If this has not been confirmed, staff should attempt to call ahead prior to the visit to obtain this information, discuss the works in question and the safety arrangements. However, for all routine repairs where this has NOT been confirmed, on arrival and before entering the property the operative is to ask:

“Is there is anyone in the property who is either diagnosed with COVID-19 OR self-isolating due to potentially having been exposed, OR does anyone have any of the symptoms or any other flu like symptoms”

Access / Egress to Properties:

On arrival at the property:

- Knock at the door and stand back 2m.
- Explain what you are there to do.
- Ask if there is anyone in the property who is either diagnosed with COVID-19 OR self-isolating due to potentially having been exposed OR does anyone have any of the symptoms or any other flu like symptoms.
- Ask if as a precaution, the occupants can move to another room / area while the work is being completed. As a minimum a distance of 2m must be maintained. Persons deemed vulnerable must move to another room.

If it is confirmed that the tenant(s) is either diagnosed, has the symptoms or is self-isolating staff should immediately don the following PPE and the relevant COVID-19 Emergency Repairs Risk Assessment must be adhered to:

- Disposable nitrile gloves
- Disposable overshoes
- Disposable apron
- Fluid Repellent type IIR Surgical Mask
- Eye protection (goggles or visor)

If the tenant(s) are not confirmed as having COVID-19 or self-isolating, then no additional PPE to standard requirements is needed.

Undertaking Work:

- Carry out work in accordance with relevant Sig / Trade or specific RA requirements and training.
- If work within 2m has to be undertaken a surgical type IIR mask should be worn. If the task in hand will produce a significant amount of dust or there is a likelihood of accidentally disturbing asbestos, an FFP3 type respirator should be worn.
- Operatives are to strictly follow good hygiene controls:
 - Do not eat or drink while carrying out work.
 - Avoid touching nose, mouth and eyes.
 - Wash or sanitise hands routinely during the day and always before and after eating and at the end of the working day.

Behaviours:

These measures are necessary to minimise the risk of spread of infection and rely on everyone taking responsibility for their actions and behaviours.

Mears encourage an open and collaborative approach between staff and site management, where any issues can be openly discussed and addressed. Staff should therefore highlight any issues they have and bring these to the attention of their line manager immediately.

First Aid:

The primary responsibility is to preserve life and first aid should be administered if required and until the emergency services attend. Emergency procedures will be reviewed regularly by site management and kept up to date as required.

Conclusion

Mears Group places the utmost importance on ensuring the highest levels of health and safety for our employees, contractors and the public.

It is vitally important therefore that these Site Operating Procedures are adhered to along with all other associated COVID-19 documentation including existing Mears Policies and Procedures.

Remember if in doubt do not take risks, stop work and inform your line manager and/or regional SHE manager immediately.

If you have COVID-19 Symptoms do not attempt to come into work and inform your line manager.

Remember Safety is everyone's responsibility.

STAY SAFE