

# **A Manual for the Not-for-Profit sector**

## **Returning to Operations Covid-19**

**Second Edition 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

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Available to previous participants in the Carmichael Ready and Able Sessions

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# Introduction and updates

The decision to return and re-open operations continues to pose a particular challenge for the not-for-profit sector. This manual provides a generic template by which not-for-profit organisations can structure their return to operations and assemble the documentation required by Covid-19 official guidance. It enables users to work through step by step from beginning to end by completing the questions and tables provided.

This updated version is based not just on the official guidance from Government but on feedback which the author has received from 800 voluntary bodies around the country which he has worked with during June/July/August 2020. However, it is not meant as a substitute for Government guidance and users are strongly advised to keep up to date with the websites suggested in the manual and any special guidance from their own sector.

In this second edition there are some helpful updates. For those of you already familiar with the earlier versions be assured that it is essentially the same approach and there is no need to redo your work. Here are the key changes and additions. All links are refreshed and updated with some new ones added. As official guidelines are necessarily changing it can be more challenging for people to determine whether or not to run specific events. So the author has added a section 3.3.6 called “Risk Decisions” designed to make it easier for organisations to decide to do the right thing. Under prevention and control measures he has added additional material in section 3.5.4 dealing with shared facilities, an issue raised often in relation to community centres and other shared buildings. In the same section additional material on data protection legislation is added and which relates to keeping logs. In a new Section 5 he has added some suggestions as to how voluntary organisations can behave with the necessary sense of duty and care to avoid legal claims for damages due to Covid-19.

## 1 How to use this manual

### 1.1 A work-book format

The manual is laid out like a workbook drawing together the key steps to re-open, re-operate and document as required. It contains blank tables for you to complete. If there are not sufficient tables then add as many as you need.

Key aspects of Government guidance are summarised in easy-to-use steps. However, references are also provided throughout the manual so that you can refer to more detailed guidelines.

## 1.2 Layout

Chapter 3 “Carrying out Risk Analysis and Making Decisions” suggests a decision-making sequence which voluntary bodies can follow and it also contains pro-formas, which enable managers to clearly document each step, in the way required by official Covid-19 guidance.

It contains a step by step approach by which not-for-profit bodies can return safely to operations

- Making the decision on whether to re-open
- How to carry out a risk analysis and how to make decisions even if not all the facts are clear
- Sharing responsibilities
- Preventative actions including physical measures and human resources measures
- Planning controls measures in the event of a suspected case and
- Communications and training

Chapter 4 assists voluntary bodies in compiling the Response Plan required and the additional documentation which will need to be on file. It does this by providing additional templates for completion as well as incorporating some of the information compiled in Chapter 3.

This section helps you assemble the information provided in the above steps to create the documentation and Response Plan required by Covid-19 guidance.

- Policy Statement
- Responsible Persons Task Register
- Employer Information
- Prevention and control measures
- Return to work forms
- Contact Logs

Chapter 5 Checklist for mitigating against Covid-19 related claims

In response to concerns raised by many organisations I have included in this second edition a checklist of actions to help mitigate against the risk of covid-19 related compensation claims.

Chapter 6 Official References

The post Covid-19 world is an ever evolving one and official guidance evolves with it. It is strongly advised to keep up to date with the main sources of Government advice and with the references which are provided in this section.

**Disclaimer**

*The information contained in this manual is for educational purposes only and is non-exhaustive. It is not intended to provide legal advice to you, and you should not rely upon the information to provide any such advice. We do not provide any warranty, express or implied, of its accuracy or completeness. Liam Scollan shall not be liable in any manner or to any extent for any direct, indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages, losses or expenses arising out of the use of this manual.*

*Users are advised to consult with and keep up to date with official government advice available on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) as guidance may change after the date of this manual's publication.*

*Date 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020*

## 2 Pathway to returning to operations

### 2.1 Introduction

This section contains a step by step approach by which not-for-profit bodies can return safely to operations.

Making the decision on whether to re-open

Carrying out a risk analysis

Key responsibilities

Preventative actions including physical measures and human resources measures and

Planning control measures in the event of a suspected case

### 2.2 Before you decide to re-open

Returning to operations after Covid-19 is firstly a matter of ensuring that ourselves and our organisations are mentally ready for the new challenges.

#### 2.2.1 Sample checks for committees, volunteers and staff

Look in/look around	Ask questions	Be honest with each other
Mental health	Are we ok?	
Vision	Why does our organisation exist?	
Capacity	Can we still serve?	
Change	Are we prepared to do this differently?	
Additional effort	Who will step up for extra work?	
Resources	Have we the resources to re-open?	

Are we ready to begin our pre-planning for Covid-19 re-opening?

Yes

No

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.3 Carrying out a risk analysis and making decisions

### 2.3.1 Risk and how to measure it

Risk is a situation involving exposure to danger, or a threat requiring something to be protected.

The basic approach to measuring risk is to ask two questions:

- What is the likelihood that a specific dangerous situation will happen?
- How severe will the impact of that happening be?

### 2.3.2 Relevance to legal claims

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires an employer to take reasonable measures, perform risk assessments and put in place appropriate measures to remove or mitigate these risks. Therefore, risk assessment and the safety measures that flow from it will constitute the grounds for defence for an employer/volunteer manager/building owner in the event of possible claims for damages as a result of Covid-19 in the workplace. See also Chapter 5 Checklist for mitigating against Covid-19 related claims

### 2.3.3 Further reference

Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide; Annex A page 34; NSAI or click below:

<https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/>

### 2.3.4 Analyse your risks and what you will do to mitigate them.

Potential risk	Potential impact	Reduction/mitigation measure

Add more rows

### 2.3.5 Measure your risks

On a score of 1 to 5 establish how likely and how impactful various situations might be with 1 being lowest and 5 being highest.

Impact	Likelihood	1	2	3	4	5
1		Lowest risk				
2						
3				Medium risk		
4						
5						Highest risk

Add more rows

All situations in the table require attention. Those situations to the bottom and right of the table will require the most immediate attention as they indicate the “highest risk”.

### 2.3.6 Risk based decision making

Even, when you have undertaken risk analysis you may still be left with a difficult decision. Here below is a tool to help.

There can appear to be some conflicting guidelines and safety messages emerging officially or informally. This is especially the case for the voluntary sector which does not enjoy the same level of guideline clarity which commercial business enjoys. This is not the place to debate the merits of various guidelines or lack of them. Instead the objective with the tool below is to simply give not-for-profit leaders a tool to help with common sense risk decisions to go ahead or not go ahead with an event or operation.

The exercise below assumes that you or the organisation hosting your event already has a Response Plan in place and that, to the best of your knowledge, the event is not breaking any known /current safety guidelines. The exercise is suggested if, however, there is either an absence of formal positive confirmation that you can legitimately or safely run your event or that there are fears/concerns in your organisation or stakeholders despite what the guidelines and more general risk analysis defines as safe.

No.	Theme	Less risk	Tick	More risk	Tick
-----	-------	-----------	------	-----------	------



1	Venue	Outdoor		Indoor	
2	Venue	Indoor with ample ventilation/fresh air openings		Indoor but with more limited ventilation options	
3	Venue	The venue is quiet and with minimum ambient noise.		The venue is noisy, with likelihood that people may have to shout to be heard.	
4	People	Participants do not belong to high or very high risk groupings (See link at 2.5.4, Row n in this manual)		Participants belong to high or very high risk groupings (See link at 2.5.4, Row n in this manual)	
5	People	Participants likely to understand/adhere to your Covid-19 Response Plan		Participants less likely to understand/adhere to your Covid-19 Response Plan	
6	Activity	Participants generally stationary/seated		Participants mostly moving about	
7	Locality	Participants mostly live locally		Participants will be travelling from over 20kms to the event	
8	Surfaces	The event does not involve the shared handling of objects/surfaces		The event involves the shared handling of objects/objects	
9	Other priorities	The event is vital to people's health and mental wellbeing		The event is not vital to people's health and mental wellbeing	
10	A spirit of Common sense and sensitivity	The guidelines say yes. Your risk analysis and 1 to 9 above says yes. Everyone involved feels comfortable.		The guidelines say yes. Your risk analysis and 1 to 9 above says yes. Some of those involved still feel uncomfortable.	
<b>Decision</b>		<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
Signed 1			Signed 2		
Type name 1			Type name 2		
Position			Position		
Date			Date		

## 2.4 Key responsibilities



<b>Deputies</b>	People prepared to deputise for others if they are absent due to Covid-19
Responsibilities suggested	Be prepared to deputise for key officers/volunteers who have become absent due to Covid-19 factors
Responsibilities determined by you	Add more space

<b>Compliance officer</b>	Key person responsible for designing/ implementing covid-19 response measures
Responsibilities in Covid-19 guidelines	<p>Managing the compiling of the Covid-19 Response Plan and subsequent adherence to it including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness/training</li> <li>Communication of measures</li> <li>Acquiring the resources/materials/installations to enable protection</li> <li>Ensuring compliance across the organisation</li> <li>External liaison with HSE/Gardaí</li> <li>Monitoring and review of measures</li> </ul> <p>Refer to Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide Section 3.4.1, <a href="http://www.nsai.ie">www.nsai.ie</a> or click on <a href="https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/">https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/</a></p>
Responsibilities added by you	Add more space

Employee /volunteer Lead officer	Ensuring that measures are being understood and implemented on the ground
<p>Responsibilities in Covid-19 guide-lines</p> <p><a href="http://www.hsa.ie">www.hsa.ie</a> Return to Work Templates and Checklists</p> <p>Checklists 6, 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their place of work.</li> <li>• Highlight concerns, report defects, submit ideas and identify improvements in the workplace.</li> <li>• Have received the necessary information and training in relation to the role of Worker Representative</li> <li>• Keeping up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government</li> <li>• Being aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19</li> <li>• Know how the virus is spread</li> <li>• Know how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19</li> <li>• Helping in keeping your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government</li> </ul> <p>Refer to COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol Checklist No.6 - Workers  <a href="https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/">https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/</a></p> <p>And COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol Checklist No. 7 - Worker Representative or click on  <a href="https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/">https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/</a></p>
Responsibilities added by you	Add more space

## 2.5 Prevention and Control

### 2.5.1 Introduction

This workbook divides the Government guidelines for prevention and control into 3 main types of measures: physical, human and dealing with a suspected case.

### 2.5.2 Further reference

Access Government guidance on prevention and control on [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) in particular “COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol; Employer Checklist No.2 - Control Measures” or click [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return\\_to\\_work\\_safely\\_templates\\_checklists\\_and\\_posters/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/)

For dealing with a suspected case refer to the HSA’s COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol Employer Checklist No.4 - Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 or click link: [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return\\_to\\_work\\_safely\\_templates\\_checklists\\_and\\_posters/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/)

For an overall checklist and explanation of measures see Covid-19 Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide [www.nsai.ie](http://www.nsai.ie) or click on <https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/>

*See template below*

### 2.5.3 Preventative actions - Physical measures

	Heading	Action plan	Who responsible
a	Hand hygiene		
b	PPE (personal protective equipment)	For face masks see <a href="http://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a> or click <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/facecoverings/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/facecoverings/</a>	
c	Physical distancing and room capacities		
d	Movement of staff, visitors and deliveries		
e	Respiratory hygiene		
f	Cleaning actions	Refer to COVID-19 Return to Work Safely Protocol Employer Checklist No.5 - Cleaning and Disinfection or click below <a href="https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/">https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/</a>  WHO Cleaning in non-health surroundings in the context of Covid	

		<a href="https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-considerations-for-the-cleaning-and-disinfection-of-environmental-surfaces-in-the-context-of-covid-19-in-non-health-care-settings">https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-considerations-for-the-cleaning-and-disinfection-of-environmental-surfaces-in-the-context-of-covid-19-in-non-health-care-settings</a>	
g	Update Legionella and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)		
h	Heating ventilation /Air conditioning (AC)		

## 2.5.4 Preventative Measures: Human Resources

	Action plan	Who responsible
H	Return to Work Form (At least three days before returning to work) See 4.6 for template and suggestions for use by informal group activity attendees.	
I	Re-arranging shift patterns/rosters/zones in order to improve social distances for workers	
j	Working from home policy	
k	Travel for work duties policy	
l	Temperature testing (Optional)	
m	Training	
n	Protecting vulnerable people  See Return to Work Safely Protocol, page 14 See <a href="https://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a> People at higher Risk from Coronavirus click on <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html">https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html</a>	
o	Customer facing roles	

p	Contractors/ Visitors and keeping logs Data protection link: <a href="http://www.dataprotection.ie">www.dataprotection.ie</a> or click <a href="https://dataprotection.ie/en/dpc-update-covid-19-0">https://dataprotection.ie/en/dpc-update-covid-19-0</a>	
q	Users of shared facilities: checklist for interface between building managers and external building users Lead people, shared understandings around covid-19, sharing response plans and including but not limited to: method of registering to use space, logging names, cleaning, toilet use, food protocols, division of responsibilities, adherence, review.	
q	Mental health wellbeing See <a href="http://www.hse.ie">www.hse.ie</a> Minding Your Mental Health during Covid-19 or click on <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html">https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html</a>	
r	Sick leave policy	

## 2.5.5 Control measure: Dealing with a suspected case

### 2.5.5.1 FURTHER REFERENCE

Return to Work Safely Protocol, pages 9,10 or click on <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/>

[www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) ; Templates Checklists and Posters; Checklist No. 4; Dealing with a Suspected Case of Covid-19 or click on [https://hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return to work safely templates checklists and posters/return to work safely templates checklists and posters.html](https://hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return%20to%20work%20safely%20templates%20checklists%20and%20posters/return%20to%20work%20safely%20templates%20checklists%20and%20posters.html)

	Action Plan: How we will undertake the following actions	Who responsible
Q	Incident response personnel: stabilisation, recovery, continuity of operations	



r	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolation area</li> <li>• Ventilation, i.e. via a window,</li> <li>• Hygiene practice by providing: tissues, hand sanitiser, disinfectant, PPE, gloves, masks</li> <li>• Clinical waste bags.</li> </ul>	
s	Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call doctor or</li> <li>• Go home and continue isolation</li> </ul>	
t	Advice: To unwell person concerning prevention of spread	

## 2.6 Communications and Training

### 2.6.1 Further reference

Visit

[www.gov.ie](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/) Return to Work Safely Protocol; Section C and E.3 or click link  
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/>

Visit [www.hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/) Coronavirus (COVID-19) posters and resources or click link <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

Visit <https://www.pobal.ie/covid-19-updates-from-government-departments/download-print-the-most-recent-public-information-posters/>

	Actions	Who
a	<p>Consult and communicate internally and externally</p> <p>We will:</p>	
b	<p>Management and lead worker representative(s) and lead users communicate at all stages</p> <p>We will:</p>	
c	<p>Provide induction training for all staff/volunteers with emphasis on sharing the Response Plan and ensuring that everyone is familiar with Covid-19 signs and symptoms, personal behavior advice and revisions to any of the policies above especially changes in 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.5.5</p> <p>See Return to work Safely Protocol; Section E4, pages 7,8 or click <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/</a></p> <p>See <a href="http://www.hsa.ie">www.hsa.ie</a> Covid-19 Return to work Safely Protocol, Employer Checklist No. 3; Induction and Familiarization.</p> <p>See <a href="http://www.pobal.ie">www.pobal.ie</a> Step 4 Write Location Inductions or click <a href="https://www.pobal.ie/reopeningyourservice/">https://www.pobal.ie/reopeningyourservice/</a></p> <p>We will:</p>	
d	<p>Provide specific training to your designated Compliance Officer</p> <p>We will:</p>	
e	<p>Alert as many people as possible before they visit your site e.g. notices on website or social media</p>	

	We will:	
f	Clearly display all signs and advices concerning your Covid-19 prevention and control measures We will:	
g	Keep up to date with all official advice and communicate these updates within your organisation  We will:	

## 3 Preparing documentation including Response Plan

### 3.1 Introduction

If you have followed the steps outlined in this manual so far you can more easily create the documentation and response plan that you require as follows:

The following previous sections, already completed, can now be included as Part 1 of your Response Plan

- Risk analysis (Sections 3.3.4, 3.3.5)
- Preventative measures (physical and human resource measures) (Sections 3.5.4, 3.5.5)
- Control measures in the event of a suspected case of Covid-19. (Section 3.5.6)
- Communications and training measures (Section 3.6)

The remainder of this Chapter 4 below completes the Response Plan and will provide the main documentation you will need on file. The pro-formas are included below.

- Policy Statement
- Responsible persons task register (you can lift most of this from the chapter above on Key Responsibilities in section 3.4.3)
- Employer information
- Return to Work Forms
- Contact logs (Only share data when required by HSE for contact tracing purposes or for other statutory purposes.)

### 3.2 Further Reference

For further reference see [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) COVID-19 Templates, Checklists and Posters -

Covid-19 Response Plan and Checklist No. 1 Planning and Preparing

Or click [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return\\_to\\_work\\_safely\\_templates\\_checklists\\_and\\_posters/return\\_to\\_work\\_safely\\_templates\\_checklists\\_and\\_posters.html](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters.html)

### 3.3 Policy Statement

.....is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and customers. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. All managers, supervisors and workers are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our workers
- provide up to date information to our workers on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- provide an adequate number of trained Worker Representative(s) who are easily identifiable and put in place a reporting system
- inform all workers of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the workplace to facilitate physical distancing
- keep a contact log to help with contact tracing
- have all workers undergo an induction / familiarisation briefing
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the workplace
- provide instructions for workers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
- intensify cleaning in line with government advice

All committee members, volunteers, managers, supervisors and workers will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.4 Responsible Persons Task Register

This is based on our decisions in the earlier sections

1	Decision to re-open	Name(s)	Signature(s)
2	Response Team		
3	Deputies		
4	Compliance Officer		
5	Worker or volunteer representative		
6	Person responsible for training		
7	Person responsible for preventative measures (physical)		
8	Person responsible for preventative measures (human resources actions)		
9	Response to suspected case of Covid-19		
10	Covid-19 Response Plan and documentation		
11	Communications		
12			
13			
14			

### 3.5 Employer Information

Information summary	
Organisation name	
Organisation address	
Chairperson	
Manager	
Worker /volunteer representative (s)	
Number of workers and/or volunteers	
Number of workers and/or volunteers who deal directly with the public	
Phone	
Email	

### 3.6 Return to Work Form

Adapt first two rows below for optional use by individuals attending non-work events such as club/leisure/informal activities by inserting some or all of: Name: Contact number/email: Activity group

Employee name		Manager name	
Workplace address			
Please tick yes or no to the following 7 questions			
1	Do you have symptoms of cough, fever, high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness or flu like symptoms now or in the past 14 days?	Yes	No
2	Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days?		
3	Are you a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days (i.e. less than 2 metres for more than 15 minutes altogether in 1 day)?		
4	Have you been advised by a doctor to self-isolate at this time?		
5	Have you been advised by a doctor to cocoon at this time?		
6	Have you returned from a non-green list country to Ireland in the last 14 days.  Click <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/travel.html">https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/travel.html</a>		
7	Please provide details below of any other circumstances relating to COVID-19, not included in the above, which may need to be considered to allow your safe return to work. <a href="https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html">https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html</a>		
Additional information			

If you are unsure whether or not you are in an at-risk category, please check the information at the link in Question 6. If your situation changes after you complete and submit this form, please tell management.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ -



## 3.7 Contact Logs

### 3.7.1 Staff log

Who		Where		When	
Name	Allocated section (For completion by staff)	Area visited	Date	Time in	Time out

### 3.7.2 Visitor log

Who		Where	When		
Name	Contact number	Area visited	Date	Time in	Time out

## 4 Checklist for mitigating against Covid-19 related claims

### 4.1 Introduction

One issue that has been raised by many organisations is the fear of having a claim made against them by someone who feels they contracted the virus in their place of work or building. A Response Team will need be also mindful this possibility. Two steps are suggested here.

Contact your solicitor if you have concerns in this regard. Also, for information refer to a useful article in [www.lawyer.ie](http://www.lawyer.ie) or click on <https://www.lawyer.ie/covid-19-claims-law/>

Secondly, check your Response Plan with your insurer to satisfy yourself that your organisation's prevention and control measures meet the requirements of your insurance policies.

See chapter below for a checklist for mitigating against Covid-19 related claims

### 4.2 Checklist to mitigate risk of compensation

Actions by employers to mitigate risk of covid-19 related compensation claims
Comply with the government's Return to Work Safely Protocol <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/22829a-return-to-work-safely-protocol/</a>
Assess the risks in your workplace(s) using your own individual risk assessment as in Section 3 above and plan and implement prevention and control measures and strategies for dealing with a suspected case as in section 3.5.5 above.
Embrace any concerns brought to you by volunteers/employees in relation to covid-19 compliance. Establish and communicate clear procedures for doing so. Avail of the "Employee/Volunteer Lead Officer" to help achieve this as a positive measure.
Implement your Communication Plan as in 3.6 above.
Implement training for employees in Covid-19 protection measures both for themselves and others in danger e.g. by removing themselves from danger e.g. colleagues not observing face mask Rules or social distancing.
If a paid employee has legitimate safety issues and leaves the workplace early because of them, continue to pay (if possible) for that working day/shift. Keep doing so until you are sure that that the issue has been resolved.

Take quick action to resolve legitimate safety concerns reported and let all effected people know.

If an employee breaches the rules then irrespective of their seniority suspend and discipline them.

Train managers/committee/board members on being able to facilitate people inside or outside the organisation who come forward to report alleged safety breaches in your organisation.

In responding to any concerns about health and safety, consider each volunteers'/employee's circumstances individually

Where risk assessment recommends Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/face coverings provide it in all cases and (potentially) in other cases where requested.

Do not ask vulnerable employees to return and ensure this is decided voluntarily by the person.

Consider employees who live with vulnerable people as if they were vulnerable themselves and do not ask them to return. As above this should be a voluntary decision.

If an employee/volunteer uses public transport to travel to their workplace, do not ask them to return in periods when public transport use is an option. In so far as possible enable this to be a voluntary decision.

You may also consider not allowing public transport users to return at all depending on the level of risk you associate with that option.

Amend hours to allow public transport users to avoid peak times. (i.e. in periods when public transport use is an option)

Support alternative methods of getting to work other than by public transport

Think about whether disciplinary action might be necessary for out-of-work irresponsible conduct (e.g. employees who ignore government guidance)

Ask volunteers/employees to use the contact tracing apps. <https://covidtracker.gov.ie>

Ask volunteers/employees to follow instructions from contact tracers to self-isolate

Supply full company sick pay to employees who are asked by contact tracers to self-isolate



## 5 Official references and other resources

It is of the utmost importance that users of this manual keep up to date with official sources of information. Official guidance is constantly evolving. Also, every organization will have different needs and is advised to interpret official guidance in ways that make sense for their organisation and situation.

[www.Gov.ie](http://www.Gov.ie)

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

[www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie)

[www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

[www.nsai.ie](http://www.nsai.ie)

[www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)

[www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

[www.artscouncil.ie](http://www.artscouncil.ie)

Education Sector

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/PR20-08-07.html>

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/fc7a0-guidance-for-further-and-higher-education-for-returning-to-on-site-activity-in-2020-roadmap-and-covid-19-adaptation-framework/>

Tourism activities sector

Visit [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie) or click on its dedicated website below:

<https://covid19.failteireland.ie>

Volunteering

[www.volunteerireland.ie](http://www.volunteerireland.ie)

or click on covid-19 Resources page: <https://www.volunteer.ie/about-us/covid-19/covid-19-resources/>

Youth Sector Guidance for Youth Organisations on Resuming Full Services after COVID-19 (10 June 2020)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/58393-guidance-for-youth-organisations-on-resuming-full-services-after-covid-19/>  
<https://menssheds.ie/covid-guidelines/>

**Disclaimer**

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*Users are advised to consult with and keep up to date with official government advice available on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) as guidance may change after the date of this manual's publication.*

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