

# Exhibitions & Trade Fairs

## Living with Covid-19 - Protocols for Re-opening



### Version History

Version	Date changes	Changes from previous version
1.1	09/06/2020	National Return to Work Safely Protocols incorporated
2.1	14/07/2020	HSE consultation amendments
3.1	30/09/2020	Resilience & Recovery Plan revision
3.2	15/10/2020	Feedback from Dept. Business, Enterprise & Innovation
3.3	15/06/2021	Aligning IEOA guidelines with Failte Ireland operating guidelines for events and venues and work safety protocol

# TRADE FAIR & EXHIBITION FACTS



NOT LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

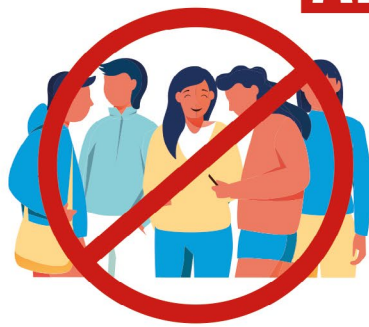


NOT HIGH DENSITY



NOT A MASS GATHERING

## EXHIBITIONS ARE NOT



NOT CLOSE PROXIMITY



NOT A SOCIAL OCCASION

## EXHIBITIONS ARE:

- Professionally managed and controlled environments
- People Density controlled & monitored (4 SqM per person in line with HSE guidelines)
- Low risk
- Low people density like shopping centres where attendance is spread throughout the day
- Total visitor numbers inside at one time is low
- Large, open plan and well ventilated spaces
- Preregistered visitors provide control over attendance numbers and enabling contact tracing



## **Acknowledgements**

This document describes the steps that Irish Exhibition Organisers Association (IEOA) members (Organisers of trade fairs and exhibitions) in conjunction with recognised Venue Operators shall take to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in an exhibition setting.

Because many of the COVID-19 challenges faced by Conferences and Events are the same as exhibitions, the IEOA has used the Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for Re-Opening Business Conference and Business Event Venues and adapted them where necessary. In addition, the IEOA are associate members of UFI - the global association for the exhibition industry. We have accessed and incorporated the best practices and recommendations that have been developed for both the European and Global exhibition industry.

Exhibition Organisers and Venue Operators are committed to providing a safe place to facilitate business between attendees and exhibitors. Both Exhibition Organisers and Venue Operators take responsibility for managing events in a way that minimises the risk of spreading COVID-19 by employing a robust framework to manage all aspects of the event. The key to a safe return of exhibitions and trade fairs is strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between Venue Operators, Exhibition Organisers and exhibitors.

The IEOA is a member of UFI - the global association of the world's leading tradeshow organisers and fairground owners, as well as the major national and international exhibition associations, and selected partners of the exhibition industry.

THE IEOA guidelines and protocols align with UFI's Global Framework for the reopening of trade fair and exhibitions

[https://www.ufi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Framework\\_for\\_reopening\\_the\\_exhibition\\_industry\\_Post\\_COVID-19.pdf](https://www.ufi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Framework_for_reopening_the_exhibition_industry_Post_COVID-19.pdf)

### **Definitions**

"An exhibition is an organised event that takes place in a recognised purpose-built venue - hired by the Organiser for a defined period. Floor space within the venue is sub-let or leased by the Organiser to individual businesses and SME's who reserve a specific stand space to show their products or services. Visitors to the exhibition or trade fair must register with the Organiser in advance to attend.



[Fáilte Ireland Guideline for Re-Opening Business Conference and Business Events Venues](#)

## **Re-Opening Date**

Exhibition and Trade Fairs fall within Level 1 & Level 2 of the Framework for re-opening. We currently await confirmation from Government of a re-opening date.

# Brief overview

## What is an Exhibition?

### Professional Organiser



#### Hires venue

- Controlled environment
- Large purpose built space
- Well ventilated
- Multiple exits/entrances
- Professional venue management team



#### Contract stand to exhibitors

- Predominantly indigenous SME's
- Prepare and operate stand in line with exhibition Covid protocols
- Organiser works with companies to ensure Covid protocol compliance



#### Contractors build the show

- Professional event contractors
- Operating under exhibition protocols
- Wide aisles
- People flow management
- Covid compliance officer inspections



#### Show opens

- Numbers inside controlled and limited to ensure social distancing
- Covid Compliance officer will carry out monitoring of compliance with protocols
- Face coverings mandatory

## The Visitor Journey

### Professional Organiser



#### Selects visitors to invite to event



#### Online ticket booking

- Details recorded for contact tracing
- Time slot booked



#### Travel to event individually or with household

- Venue car parking facilities info communicated upon booking and visitors discouraged from using public transport
- Visitors do not meet up with others prior to the event



#### Enters event at pre-booked time - spends 2-3 hours there

- Visitors do not meet up with other people or households at the event
- Visitors do not mix with others socially at the event



#### Visitors go directly home or back to the office

- Visitors do not congregate or mix together afterwards socially

# Brief overview

## Design & Layout



## Hygiene



Plan a sanitisation procedure for any touch points e.g. fixtures or samples that may be handled



Use a see-through conversation pod to facilitate close interaction with attendees



Remove giveaways/promotional gifts



Use digital brochures where possible or provide single use datasheets



All staff to wear face coverings at all times



Exhibitors will be encouraged not to take cash on stands & use contactless/online payments where possible

## The Venue



# Table of Contents

Irish Exhibition  
Organisers Association  
COVID-19 Roadmap to  
Safe Exhibitions

<b>1. Introduction: Covid - 19 plan for re-opening exhibitions and trade fairs</b>	06	<b>7. Locations for Distribution of PPE</b>	19
		Front of Office	19
		Back of Office	19
<b>2. Exhibition Response/Action Plan</b>	08	<b>8. The Visitor Journey</b>	20
Monitoring & Supporting	08	Pre-Registration	20
Policies & Processes	09	Arrival by Taxi, Drop Off or Parking at the Venue	20
Communication	09	Registration	21
Training	09	Exhibition Area	21
Cleaning & Frequency	10	Refreshment Breaks	21
Ventilation /Air Conditioning	10	Exhibition Area	22
Staffing Resources	10	Car Park & Outdoor Areas	22
		Payment	22
<b>3. Employee &amp; Visitor Health</b>	11	Visitor Sanitation Amenities	22
Face Coverings/ Masks	11	Additional Information	22
Physical Distancing	11	<b>9. Arrival Area &amp; General Offices</b>	22
Employee Physical Distancing	12	Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol	22
Measures to Control Noise Levels	12	Visitor Considerations / Payment	22
Providing Hand Sanitisers	12	<b>10. Public Areas</b>	23
Information Signage	13	Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol	23
Employee & Visitor Health Concerns	13	Physical Distancing Protocol	23
Isolation Area	13	Toilet Facilities	23
COVID-19 Contact Tracing	13	<b>11. Refreshments Area</b>	24
		Refreshments Area	24
<b>4. Employee Responsibilities</b>	14	<b>12. The Exhibition Organiser</b>	24
Hand Hygiene	14	Third Party Exhibitor Suppliers	24
COVID-19 Training	14		
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	14		
Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping	14		
First Aid Kit	14		
<b>5. Physical Distancing</b>	15		
Large purpose-built Event Facilities	15		
Venue Capacity Calculation	15		
Visitor Management	15		
Arrival / Registration Area	16		
Exhibition Layout	16		
Seminar Areas	16		
Refreshment Areas	17		
<b>6. Cleaning Products &amp; Protocols</b>	18		
Public Spaces & Communal Areas	18		
Exhibition Area	18		
Equipment Shared by Employees	18		

# 1. Introduction: Covid - 19 plan for re-opening exhibitions and trade fairs

The last exhibition and trade fair took place in February/ March 2020. Exhibition Organisers will need to review every aspect of their event to ensure everyone stays safe. Through the Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for Re-opening Business Conference and Business Event Venues, this protocol incorporates the guidelines published by Health Service Executive (HSE), Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) where relevant for the exhibition industry.

Businesses must follow the [Work Safely Protocol](#) which has been developed under the aegis of the Safety Health and Welfare Act 2005. Businesses are now required to review their existing advice and guidance to ensure it is in line with the protocol. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the compliance body and has full powers as set out in this legislation designated in relation to the implementation of the Work Safely Protocol. Non-compliance can result in the closure of a business.

Businesses must keep a record of the time and date of arrival at the premises of a visitors to the event along with their telephone number for COVID-19 contact tracing for COVID-19 contact tracing.

The guidelines were developed based on the following considerations:

## • Restructuring operations

Exhibition organisers and exhibition venues need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to provide a safe environment for visitors and employees and ensure physical distancing\* and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Further information on reviewing employee practices can be found in the [Work Safely Protocol](#) e.g. consider any new additional measures for employees who are deemed high risk.

## • Putting dedicated resources in place

Exhibition Organisers and venues must ensure that they have dedicated personnel to implement and operate a robust system that prevents the spread of COVID-19. Equally importantly, businesses need to put processes in place that can deal with individual and multiple cases of the disease that may occur.

## • Adapting and enhancing hygiene practices

Exhibitions must adapt and implement enhanced, general cleaning, storage and cleaning of equipment. In particular, they must introduce and implement touchless solutions where possible.

## • Ventilation

The proven importance of ensuring adequate air circulation should be part of the close collaboration between the exhibition organiser and the venue. The venue is responsible for providing a ventilation assessment of the space and provision of CO2 monitors as per the Work Safely Protocol.

Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.d of the Work Safely Protocol as well as the Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for Re-Opening - Business Conference and Business Event Venues. A copy of this advice is provided in the Appendices of this document.

The spread of the virus is most likely when infected people are in close contact so the risk of getting COVID19 is higher in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where infected people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. It is important to maximise ventilation in areas where people are in close contact. While large droplets containing the virus will settle onto the surrounding surfaces within seconds, smaller particles containing the virus can stay suspended for longer periods of time. Dilution of indoor air by opening windows and doors or using mechanical ventilation (HVAC) systems can lower the airborne concentration and remove these smaller particles from the air.

## • Exhibitions as controlled environments

A "controlled environment" is an environment in which compliance with public health measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, such as physical distancing and hand hygiene, can be reliably monitored and enforced, thereby reducing the risk of transmission of the disease.

Exhibitions adhere to the following controls:

- Pre-booking - visitors pre register with the event organiser
- Scheduled arrival times
- Control/cap on numbers based on venue capacity
- Control on how visitors circulate
- Separate entry and egress
- Face coverings mandatory for admission

\* this will be reviewed in line with current Government Guidelines at the time of the event.

- **Food Safety and COVID-19 Safety**

Venues have sole responsibility for the provision of any food and refreshments at exhibitions. This must be done in compliance with the published food safety guidance available from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI). Buffet-style service should be avoided and, where possible, pre-packed food should be offered. If compliance is not possible catering should not be provided at the event.

For advice and information on food safety during COVID-19 and for food businesses re-opening, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) website is a useful resource which is regularly updated. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

- **Venue and Organiser Collaboration**

The management and Health and Safety of an exhibition and its visitors has always been a joint endeavour between the exhibition organiser and the venue. This document clearly sets out who has responsibility for each aspect. There is however, a requirement for close collaboration on a number of areas and good communication is critical to ensuring that these protocols operate efficiently.

- **Guidance on International Travel**

A range of new measures and requirements, including mandatory quarantine for travel from certain countries, for those travelling to Ireland is available [HERE](#). It is important for employers to keep up to-date on travel restrictions and requirements into the country as these may be subject to change on a regular basis.

Current Government advice is available [HERE](#).

## 2. Exhibition Response/Action Plan

**Creating an Action Plan will help to clarify what is required to overcome the threat of COVID-19 and give employees, visitors and all third party personnel on-site at an exhibition confidence that they are safe.**

Both the venue and the organiser should familiarise themselves with the latest guidelines from the following sources:

- Health Services Executive (HSE)
- Health and Safety Authority (HSA)
- Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC)
- Irish Government Departments
- Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI)
- World Health Organisation (WHO).

Information from these sources will help to shape your plan of action. You must also:

- **Complete a risk assessment** to identify what operational changes you need to make for your event to make it Covid Safe. The venue are responsible for providing an assessment on ventilation to the organiser. Further information can be found [HERE](#) for risk assessments and the appendices for Ventilation.
- **Review of all standard operating procedures** (SOPs) to define and note what you are changing.
- **Create a communication plan** to inform employees and visitors of what you are changing, what you need them to do and how you expect everyone to act and behave.
- The HSA provides templates, checklists and advice on returning to work safely protocols. Please see [HERE](#) for more information.
- **A number of activities will require review** e.g. workflows, operations, etc.
- **Co-operate and communicate** with the venue on your Action Plan.

The plan must reassure employees and visitors that safeguarding their health and safety is of the utmost importance. It must also ensure that your operations continue to run in an efficient and safe manner.

You must review the plan regularly and amend it as new regulations, guidelines and procedures come into force. Experience and feedback will inform how appropriate and effective the plan is.

For further information on the development of your Action Plan, visit the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Business Supports Hub [HERE](#).

### Monitoring & Supporting

A COVID-19 Compliance Officer (CO) and Lead Worker Representative (LWR) must be appointed to ensure new procedures are adhered to. Adherence to this protocol will only be achieved if employers and workers have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol in their place of work. A collaborative approach to the implementation of the protocol is essential to achieve success and maximum buy in.

The person(s) undertaking the role must receive the necessary training and have a structured framework to follow within the organisation to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus. Further information and a short online course on the role of [Lead Worker Representative](#) can be found on the HSA website.

Employers should have regular and meaningful engagement with their worker representative, workers and/or their recognised Trade Union or other representative (including health and safety committee where it exists) about the measures being put in place to address the occupational exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace. Employers should provide a COVID-19 induction training for all workers on their return.

**Section 3** of the [Work Safely Protocol](#) sets out the steps for employers and workers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

These provisions include:

- Consulting with the workplace representatives in the development of a COVID-19 response plan.
- Developing/amending policies and procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.

- Developing, consulting, communicating, and implementing workplace changes or policies. Specific reference is made to agreeing with workers any temporary restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the COVID-19 prevention measures in the workplace. There is also provision for the lead worker representative to be involved in communicating the health advice around COVID-19 in the workplace.

- The HSA has introduced interim guidance to assist employers and workers to manage a return to work following COVID-19 testing or infection. The Fitness for Work interim guidance and related checklists are available [here](#).

Exhibition venues should only use suppliers / agents who are compliant with the Work Safely Protocol and that have a COVID-19 Response Team / Lead Worker Representative appointed to ensure all COVID-19 safety procedures are adhered to.

### **Policies & Processes**

Exhibition organisers and venues need to review all business policies and standard operating procedures across each department to reflect operational changes. In particular, this means:

- Defining and documenting a clear plan of action in the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 among visitors and/or employees.
- Develop a policy and process in line with the Work safely Protocol to prepare your business for management of a case or cases (outbreak) of COVID-19 in the workplace. [Ref. section 9 of the Work Safely Protocol.](#)

An outbreak of COVID-19 is when two or more cases of the disease are linked by time, place or person. The management of an outbreak is managed by the local Departments of Public Health to enable the outbreak to be brought under control as quickly as possible. It also requires close engagement and cooperation between the employer, the LWR, the staff, representatives and in particular with the worker(s) affected. Outbreaks in a single workplace, which are not managed and brought under control quickly, can rapidly spread to other workplaces and/or the wider community. Continuous and effective communication between all parties is essential. Refer to HPSC guidance on management of outbreaks [HERE](#).

- Defining and documenting the correct and appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required. This must be in line with the Government's Public Health advice.

Review and updating cancellation and refund policies in line with business requirements.

- Developing and updating policy relating to the standards of behaviour expected from employees, visitors and all third party personnel on-site to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Strict management controls must be in place to ensure compliance with Public Health advice at all times.

- If adopting the use of Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Tests (RADT) in the workplace, amend the COVID-19 Business Response / Action plan to take account of the agreed testing policy and approach taken and communicate to all employees. For more information see [section D13 of the Work Safely Protocol](#)

### **Communication**

You must share the plan with all employees, as well as changes to other policies, e.g. sick leave policies, prior to them returning to work. If it is updated at any time, you must make sure everyone knows what has changed

Providing guidelines to employees on how they communicate the Action Plan to visitors will ensure everyone gives the same message and there is no inconsistency.

Make sure an up-to-date list of the contact information of all employees, including emergency telephone numbers, is always readily available.

Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest HSE and Government Public Health advice recommendations. Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and, where appropriate, be offered in [multiple languages](#).

Downloading and using the [HSE COVID-19 tracker app](#) is also an important measure that can be adopted. Employers should provide advice on the tracker and encourage workers to download it. Workers should download the app as it can be used for contact tracing purposes in and out of the workplace.

### **Training**

Exhibition organisers and venues must inform all employees of the measures being adopted to manage the threat of COVID-19. Use the most appropriate training channels to do this and ensure that employees stay at home and seek medical attention if they have key symptoms such as a high temperature or shortness of breath.

There is an obligation on employers to ensure that employees are aware that they must not attend work if they have symptoms. This is essential to ensure that the virus does not spread.

You must organise information briefings that cover all the basic protective measures against COVID-19 and the signs and symptoms of the disease. In particular, make sure you cover:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures
- Correct use of PPE
- Cleaning / disinfection regimes
- Employee health and what to do if feeling unwell
- Unwell guest / dealing with suspected cases/ liaising with authorities.

If training is needed for specific procedures or if the venue has specific requirements, it must be included in the training programme. Carry out regular briefings where required with new or updated information.

First Aid Responders may require further training in light of COVID-19.

For a more comprehensive list of symptoms of COVID-19, please click [HERE](#). If you do not have symptoms, you can get a free COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a [COVID-19 walk-in test centre](#).

## **Cleaning & Frequency**

### **Exhibition Stands:**

Cleaning of exhibition stands must be carried out at least twice a day with contact / touch surfaces such as tabletops, counters, displays etc cleaned more regularly.

Communal Areas: e.g. entrance, toilets

The venue should implement modified cleaning intervals for communal areas. This applies especially for toilet facilities and communal spaces such as entrance lobbies. Cleaning must be performed at least twice per day and all areas must be visibly clean at all times.

Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC [HERE](#) or from the Government [HERE](#).

### **Ventilation / Air Conditioning**

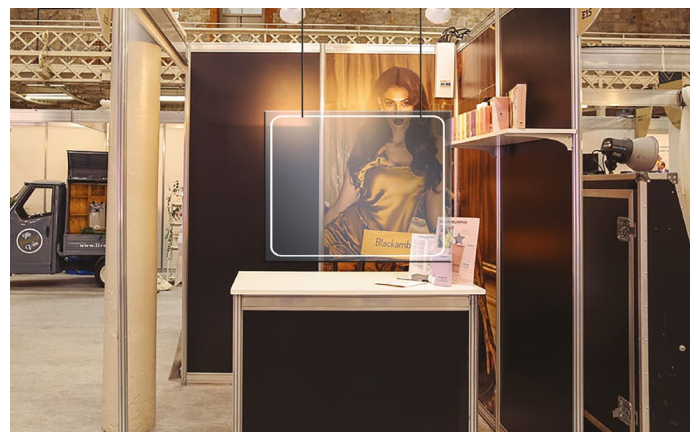
Where possible, windows and doors should be opened to allow for a flow of air throughout the venue.

The spread of the virus is most likely when infected people are in close contact so the risk of getting COVID-19 is higher in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where infected people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. It is important to maximise ventilation in areas where people are in close contact. While large droplets containing the virus will settle onto the surrounding surfaces within seconds, smaller particles containing the virus can stay suspended for longer periods of time. Dilution of indoor air by opening windows and doors or using mechanical ventilation (HVAC) systems can lower the airborne concentration and remove these smaller particles from the air.

Further information regarding air conditioning and ventilation can be found in Section 5.d of the [Work Safely Protocol](#) as well as [Appendix 2 of the Fáilte Ireland Guidelines](#).

### **Staffing Resources**

Exhibition venue management should review rotas in line with Work Safely Protocol, subsection 3 which provides that full consultation on these matters is required to ensure sufficient employees are available to maintain physical distancing while completing the tasks to the required standards. Further details can be found [HERE](#).



# 3. Employee & Visitor Health

**The health and safety of employees, visitors and all third party personnel on-site at a conference or event is the number one priority for the owners and management of the conference and event venue. The following steps will help ensure everyone remains fit and well:**

## Face Coverings/Masks

Following the HPSC Evidence Summary on the “Efficacy of visors compared with masks in the prevention of transmission of COVID-19 in non-healthcare settings”, Exhibition Organisers should consider the following recommendations:

- In public settings, expert opinion and international guidance generally favours cloth face coverings over visors or shields.
- Visors reduce exposure to a certain extent when compared to no face covering and may be considered an alternative in certain circumstances where an individual is unable to wear a face mask. Click [HERE](#) for more information.
- If visors are used, they should cover the entire face (above the eyes to below the chin and wrap around from ear to ear) and be correctly applied.
- Further information on the handling and care of visors can be found [HERE](#).

Wearing a face covering / mask helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is strongly recommended to wear a face covering / mask in situations where physical distancing is difficult. Face coverings / masks are always in addition to, and never a substitute for, other Public Health measures including physical distancing, [hand hygiene](#) and practising appropriate respiratory etiquette.

Under [current legislation](#), management and employees in customer facing roles, who engage in or carry out work relating to the preparation of, or service of, food or beverages for consumption on the premises must wear a face covering / mask. Management must ensure that employees comply with this regulation.

Government Public Health advice states that face coverings /masks must be worn by staff in customer facing roles where no other protective measures are in place e.g. protective screens and where physical distancing of 2 metres\* is not possible. Face coverings / masks must also be worn by visitors inside the exhibition venue at all times. The only exception is when seated within a food and beverage area.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

There are cases where people may be unable to wear a face coverings / masks . For details on what constitutes a reasonable excuse see [HERE](#). Businesses must ensure that they are familiar with the various reasons why an

individual may not be required to wear a face coverings / masks, further details can be found [HERE](#).

The [Work Safely Protocol](#) states that face coverings / masks are recommended in public areas in buildings, including receptions/foyers and also when moving throughout buildings.

Ensure that visitors are clearly informed of your own business policy and government regulations regarding face coverings / masks in advance of arrival. Employers and employees must keep up to date with the latest Public Health advice issued regarding face coverings / masks.

For more information on the safe use, storage and disposal of face coverings / masks, please click [HERE](#). A face covering should cover your nose and mouth, go under your chin, fit snugly against the side of the face with no visible gaps and be secured with ties or ear loops. For more information on the safe use, storage and disposal of face coverings/masks, please click [HERE](#).

## Physical Distancing

Physical distancing guidelines (in line with the Government’s Public Health advice) must be incorporated into the Action Plan for the exhibition venue. All areas of the exhibition space must comply with the mandatory capacity limits.

Visitors must be advised to stand at least 2 metres\* away from other groups of people.

Careful consideration needs to be given when using communal areas, while queuing, using elevators, escalators, stairs or moving around the venue. Ensure there are systems in place to prevent intermingling in communal areas (e.g. entrances, exits and toilet facilities). See Appendix 1.

The exhibition stand layout, seminar areas, coffee and refreshment zones must be planned to ensure appropriate distancing.

### **Employee Physical Distancing**

Where possible, on arrival and departure from work, employees should be able to enter and exit through separate doors.

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres\* and a minimum of 1 metre\* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres\* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. Where the food services environment makes it difficult to physically distance, employers need to consider what measures to put in place to protect employees.

Minimise any direct employee contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids such as hand sanitisers, wipes, etc. Ensure these are readily accessible so employees can perform [hand hygiene](#) as soon as a task is complete.

Make face coverings / masks available to employees in line with Public Health advice. You should note that wearing masks is not a substitute for the other measures outlined above.

### **Measures to Control Noise Levels**

According to the WHO, transmission of COVID-19 can occur through direct, indirect, or close contact with infected people through infected secretions such as saliva and respiratory secretions or droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, etc. In adherence with WHO evidence, recent Public Health advice states that there must be a restriction on noise levels within the premises to prevent transmission of COVID-19.

High noise levels within a premises can impact conversation negatively and encourage individuals to raise their voice to communicate thus encouraging possible transmission of the virus.

### **Symptoms of COVID-19**

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take anything from 2 days up to 14 days for symptoms of coronavirus to appear. They can be similar to the symptoms of cold and flu.

### **Common symptoms of coronavirus include:**

- A fever (high temperature)
- A cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Loss or change of taste and smell
- Some people infected with the virus, so called asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all.

Straining to hear others due to high volumes can cause people to move closer to each other and not adhere to social distancing. To avoid this, businesses must put in place a plan and take appropriate measures to control noise levels, to ensure volumes do not rise to a level where people are required to take such measures to hear others.

Signage relating to these COVID-19 preventative measures must be displayed in visible locations to inform visitors.

Intervention will be required by management in a situation where individuals do not follow this advice. Exhibition venue owners/management should be aware that permitting increased noise levels within their premises is an unnecessary risk as it forces visitors and staff into close proximity and encourages raised voices. Exhibition venue owners/management are responsible for keeping noise at an appropriate level to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **Providing Hand Sanitisers**

Hand sanitisers (including touchless dispensers where possible) must be readily available and accessible to all at each access point. Hand sanitisers for use against COVID-19 may be alcohol or non-alcohol based.

When choosing a hand sanitiser, it is important to ensure that it is effective against COVID-19. Further information on hand sanitisers is available in the Work Safely Protocol, found [HERE](#).

**Coronavirus  
COVID-19**

Coronavirus  
COVID-19  
Public Health  
Advice

### Know the signs

- High Temperature
- Shortness of Breath
- Breathing Difficulties
- Cough

- Wash
- Cover
- Avoid
- Clean
- Stop
- Distance

For 8 out of 10 people, rest and over the counter medication can help you feel better.

If you have symptoms, self-isolate to protect others and phone your GP. Visit [hse.ie](https://www.hse.ie) for updated factual information and advice or call 1850 24 1850.

Protection from coronavirus.  
It's in our hands.

### Information Signage

You must display appropriate COVID-19 signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing measures throughout your venue. Where feasible, television screens and monitors can communicate these messages effectively in arrival and common areas.

### Employee & Visitor Health Concerns

When they return to work, employees must be trained on what to do if they or a visitor becomes unwell. Many large events will have trained medical personnel on site for the event. All employers and employees must follow the Work Safely Protocol. All employers and employees must follow the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

When dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 among employees, following the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

If management is alerted to a suspected case of COVID-19 at the Exhibition venue, a clinician from a local medical centre should be contacted. The clinician will advise on the next steps. Further information is available on the HSE website and also on page 5 of the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Please see [HERE](#) for more information.

Note: Exhibition organisers and venue management need to have the telephone numbers of the health authorities, medical centres plus public and private hospitals readily available in case a visitor or employee falls ill. For a full list of Department of Public Health contact details, please see [HERE](#).

Employers must ensure all employees submit their pre-return to work form before they return to work. For further details relating to what information should be obtained, please refer to Section 3.D4 of the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Advice is available to business owners and employees on how to support your wellbeing during the COVID-19 crisis. Wellbeing supports can be viewed on the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Support Hub [HERE](#).



### Isolation Area

Identify an area/room on the premises where any visitor or employee showing possible COVID-19 symptoms can be isolated from other people. From there, the individual can travel home to seek medical attention elsewhere. It is essential to clean and disinfect this isolation area thoroughly after it has been used.

Further information is available in the Overall Guidelines for Reopening of All Sectors, found [HERE](#).

### COVID-19 Contact Tracing

The exhibition organiser will be required to retain the names and contact details of their visitors for 28 days to facilitate contact tracing, if required, and must be compliant with GDPR.

The exhibition venue does not have to keep records of every person attending the event but instead they need to retain the name and contact details of the exhibition organiser.

The visitors should be advised by the exhibition organiser that the details are to be retained by the business to facilitate contact tracing.

## 4. Employee Responsibilities

**For the purpose of this document, the term ‘employees’ refers to direct employees of the venue, the organiser and all third party personnel on-site at an exhibition.**

**The effective delivery of the Action Plan depends on how employees and management act. Paying attention to the following issues is especially important:**

### Hand Hygiene

Correct hygiene and frequent handwashing with soap is vital to help combat the spread of COVID-19. Conference and event venue management need to ensure that adequate sanitary facilities are provided and that employees thoroughly and frequently clean their hands.

All employees must wash their hands frequently and as required, for a minimum of 20 seconds or use sanitiser regularly if hands are visibly clean.

Hands must be washed as often as necessary, but always in the following circumstances:

- After coughing and sneezing or blowing nose,
- Before and after preparing food,
- Before and after eating,
- Before and after handling their face covering,
- If in contact with someone who is displaying COVID-19 symptoms,
- Before and after being on public transport,
- Before and after being in a crowd,
- When arriving and leaving the workplace/other sites,
- After drinking or smoking
- After handling waste,
- After cleaning duties including sweeping/mopping etc.
- After using the toilet,
- After handling money and
- When hands are dirty. If visibly dirty, wash hands with soap and water.

This list is not exhaustive where a more comprehensive list is available from the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the FSAI. For additional COVID-19 hand hygiene measures, hands must be washed before putting on or after removing PPE.

Please see [HERE](#) for more information from the HSE.

### COVID-19 Training

All employees must attend training on COVID-19 Infection Prevention Control. More comprehensive training must be given to teams in frequent visitor contact.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If required by their roles, appropriate PPE must be worn by employees. Each section of the conference and event venue must be assessed to decide what is needed. Training on how to properly use, apply and dispose of all PPE is also essential.

Further information on PPE is available [HERE](#).

### Employee Welfare Facilities & Timekeeping

On their return to work, employers and employees must follow the Work Safely Protocol. Employers must ensure all employees submit their pre-return to work form before they return for work. Further details relating to what information should be obtained is available [HERE](#) for more information.

It is also essential to display prominent signage relating to hand and respiratory hygiene as well as physical distancing prominently at Back of House.

Employee welfare facilities (such as employee areas and locker rooms) need to be re-organised to suit physical distancing measures and be frequently cleaned and disinfected. Staggered start times and break times can also be very helpful, also a review the use of clocking-in machines.

### First Aid Kit

A medical kit must always be available at reception or in the arrival area in smaller premises. Multiple kits must be located at various locations around larger premises e.g. in breakout rooms.

Kits must include:

- Germicidal disinfectant / wipes for surface cleaning tissues.
- Face / eye masks. Note that disposable face coverings / masks can only be used once.
- Gloves (disposable).
- Protective apron (disposable).
- Biohazard disposable waste bags.

## 5. Physical Distancing

**Physical distancing is very important to help slow the spread of COVID-19. This is achieved by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals. In a controlled environment, such as exhibition facilities, physical distancing of at least 2 metres\* is required, but in refreshment areas, if this is not possible, it may be reduced to 1m if all other risk mitigation requirements have been met.**

**The exhibition organiser and venue management needs to meet Public Health advice on maintaining current physical distancing guidance between people at all times.**

### Large purpose-built Event Facilities

Under the Framework within the Resilience and Recovery 2021 - The Path Ahead (<https://www.gov.ie/pdf/124440/>), very large capacity, purpose-built event centres are to operate under specific guidelines that shall be developed with each sector. The protocols in this document will apply to exhibitions and trade fairs which take place in recognised large purpose built event facilities. E.g. RDS, Citywest, Punchestown, National Show Centre, Millstreet. All IEOA members and major venues have agreed to jointly implement these protocols

### Venue Capacity Calculation

The total number of attendees present in the venue for each event shall be restricted to one person for every 4 sq. metres of space (2m X 2m) in use in the hall. This means that a 1,000 sq. metre hall will not have more than 250 people present at any one time. A 3,500 sq. metre hall (Hall 1 - The Main Hall in the RDS) will be restricted to 875 people at any one time.

Worked Example - Main Hall RDS (3,500 sqM)

1. Max number of exhibitor staff

Exhibition stand space takes up an average of 1/3 of total space.

$1,155 \text{ sqM} / 4 = 288 \text{ Exhibitors}$

In addition the number of staff permitted on each stand will be calculated based on stand size. E.g. a 8 sqM stand (4m x 2m) will have a maximum of 2 staff.

2. Visitor Numbers

Remaining space (two thirds):  $2,345 \text{ sqM} / 4 = 586 \text{ visitors}$

\*NB. Any unused exhibitor capacity may be transferred to visitor capacity. Total number of persons in hall will not exceed 4 sqM per person.

### Visitor Management

The exhibition organiser and venue management must ensure there is a Compliance Officer responsible at the venue for enforcing physical distancing. Any area where visitors or employees queue must be clearly marked for the recommended physical distancing. To facilitate compliance with the physical distancing requirement of 2 metres\*, particularly in high traffic areas, it is vital to control people flows in the following areas: parking areas, pick-up and drop-off areas, queues, entrance halls, entryways, restaurants, catering areas, toilets facilities, coat rooms, exits and within the main exhibition space itself. Key to ensuring attendees and exhibitors can maintain adequate physical distancing is ensuring that the calculated venue density is not breached. Numbers will be monitored by providing a separate entrance and exit door where visitor and exhibitor numbers are counted as they enter and exit so that a count of the numbers present in the hall can be calculated. Once the safe number is reached visitors will be given access on a 'one out - one in' basis.



Use vertical signage or floor markings to direct visitors and facilitate movement within the premises while maintaining 2 metre\* distance.

Both indoor and outdoor areas should be marked with a one-way route to facilitate movement and physical distancing among visitors. Use extensive signage to reinforce the one-way routes within the venue. Reinforcing this with signage, maps or instructions on digital screens will ensure visitor movement and flow is controlled. All arrangements must be agreed in advance with the conference / event organiser and communicated by them to all participants.

### **Arrival / Registration Area**

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres\* and a minimum of 1 metre\* should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres\* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. This is vital in busy employee-visitor contact points, such as registration desks and information points.

Physical barriers such as sneeze guards/plexiglass and partitions can be useful, particularly in areas where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected. These screens do not need to be floor to ceiling but should be of an adequate height (e.g. cover a person in a standing position) and width to block the pathway from the nose and mouth to the face and workspace of the other persons. Screens may be fixed or mobile depending on requirements including emergency access. Ref: Section D3 of [Work Safely Protocol](#).

Employees or registration personnel should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible with individual equipment where appropriate. This will ensure physical distancing is maintained among employees during the registration process.

Exhibition organisers should allocate staggered arrival times to visitors and all participants, while ensuring that calculated capacity limits are not exceeded within the venue at all times.

### **Exhibition Layout**

Exhibition layout details must be agreed in advance with the venue and communicated to all visitors and employees.

Floorplans will be designed to remove bottlenecks and will work with oneway systems. All aisles to be a minimum of 2.5m with stands to be designed to be open on either 2 or 3 sides where possible. All stands to have walls separating from adjoining stands. Multiple entrances and exits to be used and features that

might encourage visitors to congregate will be avoided.



### **Seminar Areas**

The seating within seminar areas should be designed to enable physical distancing of 2 metres\* and a minimum of 1 metre\*. Where fixed seating is in place, visitors must be seated 2 metres\* apart unless physical barriers are in place between seating. Seating capacities and floor plans should be reviewed on an event-by-event basis to ensure recommended physical distancing requirements are adhered to. Develop examples of physically distanced floor plans for Event Management use. Block off rows or sections of seating in order to maintain physical distancing of 2 metres\* and a minimum of 1 metre\*. Where fixed seating is in place, visitors must be seated 2 metres\* apart unless physical barriers are in place between seating.

Install signage to remind visitors to follow the recommended physical distancing.

Designated employees, where possible, should be stationed within the room to control physical distancing measures among visitors. Dedicated stewards should be circulating within the exhibition area to control physical distancing measures.

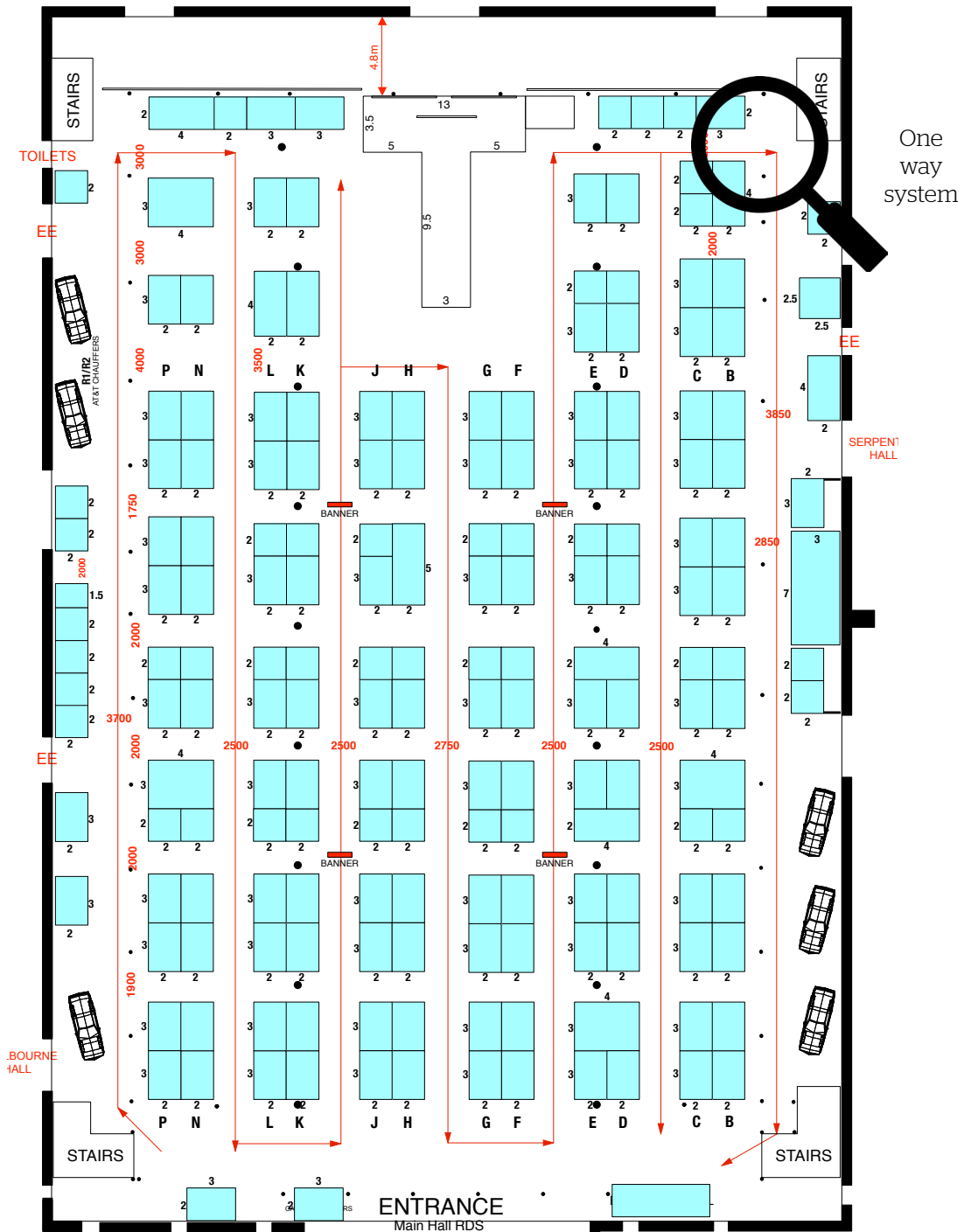


**Refreshment Areas**

Physical distancing of 2 metres\* should be maintained between tables. However, if this is not possible, this can be reduced to 1 metre\* in controlled environments if the other risk mitigation requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met.

Businesses must ensure that they implement the required measures subject to the current Public Health advice, in relation to formal or informal events within their premises.

Seating capacities should be reduced to meet the current physical distancing guidance outlined by HPSC between each seated group of visitors.



# 6. Cleaning Products & Protocols

**Cleaning products and protocols need to be suitable and manufacturer approved for use against viruses, bacteria and similar risks.**

It is important to follow manufacturer instructions with regard to dilution, application and duration of use. Management must review cleaning procedures within all departments and update these if any cleaning and disinfection procedures are changed.

It is also important to work with suppliers, vendors and distribution partners to ensure an uninterrupted supply of cleaning supplies.

Further information is available in the Overall Guidelines for Re-opening of All Sectors, found [HERE](#).

### Public Spaces and Communal Areas

It is important to focus cleaning efforts on 'high touchpoint' areas and areas where visitors or employees are likely to come into close proximity to one another, including toilets, narrow corridors, and lifts / elevators.

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in all public spaces, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of visitors at a given time, and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched surfaces, which must be visibly clean at all times. These includes door handles, ATMs, handrails, elevator buttons, seating, counters and tables.

### Exhibition Area

Cleaning and disinfection protocols must be followed at all times. Particular attention must be paid to frequently touched items and surfaces on exhibitor stands in the exhibition area including tables, chairs, display materials and any other equipment on show.

Exhibitors are responsible for the cleaning and hygiene of surfaces and materials on their own stand and must stock on-site suitable cleaning products to carry out this responsibility.

Demonstration products should be cleaned after every use.

### Equipment Shared by Employees

Appropriately clean and disinfect shared equipment and tools after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.

## 7. Locations for Distribution of PPE

**If required, PPE (gloves, plastic aprons, etc.) must be distributed at the following locations:**

### **Front of House**

All of the venue's entry and exit points, including entrances to meeting and breakout rooms.

### **Back of House**

- Employee entrances
- Specific department offices
- Cleaning and maintenance supply stations
- Storerooms and cellars
- Food preparation areas
- Location in proximity to the Isolation Room.

Note: Hand sanitiser must be provided in each venue and at all entry and exit points of the public areas including arrival areas, dining areas, bars and at entrances to toilet facilities, etc.

Following updated Government advice for businesses serving food, consider providing hand sanitiser on each table for customer use.

Hand sanitiser must only be used on visibly clean hands. If hands are visibly dirty/contaminated they must be washed.

## 8. The Visitor Journey

Irish Exhibition  
Organisers Association  
COVID-19 Roadmap to  
Safe Exhibitions

**As the central link with all visitors, the conference / event organiser should co-ordinate with the venue and suppliers to ensure all Health and Safety procedures are in place and that the arrival schedule plus the programme timings will be agreed to facilitate compliance and adherence to Government Public Health advice.**

**Guidance will regularly evolve and change in line with the Government's updated [COVID-19 Resilience & Recovery 2021: The Path Ahead](#).**

### Pre-Registration

Attendees will be required to pre-register to gain access to the event. In this way the number of people who may register to attend at any one time will be controlled. Visitors must select their time of arrival so that peak times can be restricted to avoid exceeding the hall capacity limits. All persons must have left the venue by 11.30pm in line with current Public Health requirements. Visitors must be informed of the guidelines that apply. Details of the COVID-19 preventative policies and protocols that you have in place should be outlined in detail on registration, as well as on online platforms, marketing or via email. This information should include:

- Physical distancing measures,
- Hand and respiratory hygiene,
- Requirement for face covering/mask,
- Stay at home policy for any visitors with symptoms,
- Cancellation or refund policy,
- Specific government measures in place.

Visitors should confirm at pre-registration that they are familiar with the symptoms of COVID-19 and will not attend if they have symptoms or are close contacts of people with COVID19.

People who are particularly vulnerable to severe disease should generally avoid attending large gatherings and if attendance is necessary, they should adhere to all protocols and precautions in place.

Instructions and guidance on what to expect, where to go and the protocols in place should be provided to visitors, if possible, at pre-registration via email or video (for instance posting short films on the event website).

### Arrival by Taxi, Drop Off or Parking at the Venue

Visitors should be screened for COVID-19 symptoms and risk factors before they enter the venue. They should declare if they have had any symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

In line with Government Public Health advice, venues should minimise the number of access points for arriving and departing visitors. Where possible, visitors should be directed to enter and exit through separate doors that are automated or manually operated by an employee. Doors may be propped open if fire regulations allow.

Hand sanitisers (including touchless dispensers where possible) must be readily available and accessible to all at each access point. Hand sanitisers for use against COVID-19 may be alcohol or non-alcohol based. Signage must encourage all visitors to use this when they enter and leave.

Prominent signage must explain current physical distancing and hygiene protocols. This should be accompanied by clear and visible markings that illustrate the safe distancing protocol.

Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and, where appropriate, be offered in [multiple languages](#).

Install clear markings to minimise contact between employees and visitors. Queues in arrival areas, venue dining areas and bars and entrances to toilets must all adhere to physical distancing requirements. See Visitors Management section.

The exhibition organiser should allocate staggered arrival times to visitors and all participants, while ensuring that mandatory capacity limits are not exceeded within the venue at all times.



## **Registration**

On registration, visitors must be informed of the guidelines that apply throughout the venue. Consider adding confirmation of compliance to your registration process. At this stage, visitors should declare that they have not had symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Adapt the registration process and manage set-up to reduce contact onsite. Encourage online registration wherever possible and consider using technological solutions to collect information rather than hard copy. This will limit shared usage of pens, etc.

Consider inviting visitors to print badges at home prior to the event or bring an existing name tag. Consider making the agenda or event schedule available for visitors to view on-line.

Physical barriers or partitions can be useful, particularly at the registration area where it is difficult for individuals to remain apart. These physical barriers need to be regularly cleaned and disinfected. These screens do not need to be floor to ceiling but should be of an adequate height (e.g. cover a person in a standing position) and width to block the pathway from the nose and mouth to the face and workspace of the other persons. Screens may be fixed or mobile depending on requirements including emergency access. Ref: Section D3 of [Work Safely Protocol](#).

As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres\* and a minimum of 1 metre\* should be maintained at all times. Where 2 metres\* is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place. This is vital in busy employee-visitors contact points.

Employees or registration personnel should have a self-sufficient workstation where possible with individual equipment where appropriate. This will ensure physical distancing is maintained among employees during the registration process.



Designated employees, where possible, should be stationed at the registration area to control physical distancing measures among visitors. They should act as a key point of contact while visitors are on site, be available to answer questions and to disseminate up-to-date information. These employees should be fully trained in all Health & Safety and COVID-19 Safety protocols.

Where registration is required for workshops, breakout sessions, etc. ensure that capacity limits are adhered to and the correct number of people are pre-booked into each session.

## **Exhibition Area**

Careful consideration must be given to the layout to ensure Government Public Health advice on physical distancing are met both between stands and between visitors and exhibitors at stands.

Use vertical signage or floor markings to direct visitors and facilitate movement within the exhibition area while maintaining 2 metre\* distance.

Both indoor and outdoor areas should be marked with a one-way route to facilitate visitor management and physical distancing among visitors. Use signage to reinforce the one-way routes within the exhibition area. Reinforcing this with signage, maps or instructions on digital screens will ensure visitor movement and flow is controlled.

Designated employees, where possible, should be stationed within the exhibition area to control physical distancing measures among visitors.

Exhibitors must ensure that hand sanitiser is available on their stand both for their own and for visitor use. Each stand must contain a sealable waste disposal bag.

Exhibitors should be discouraged from having food, sweets or edible product samples for visitors. Where handouts and giveaways are provided, they must be individually packaged.

### **Car Park & Outdoor Areas**

All outdoor areas, grounds, gardens, greens, verges, roads and car parking areas within the exhibition venue must be kept clean and well maintained.

This means ensuring that lidded bins are available for the disposal of gloves, masks, tissues, etc. that may be contaminated. You must ensure all rubbish bags are disposed of in an appropriate external facility such as a waste removal skip.

### **Payment**

Visitors should be encouraged to use card / contactless payment and pay in advance where possible. If handling cash, employees should observe the Government's Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures. Exhibitors should be encouraged to have literature available to download through the use of QR Codes to reduce the amount of handling of brochures.

### **Visitor Sanitation Amenities**

Hand sanitiser must be provided at public entrance and exits and at key locations throughout the conference and event venue.

### **Additional Information**

All third party suppliers for the conference and event venue must ensure they adhere to the Government's Public Health advice. Please refer to Suppliers of Goods & Services for further details on supplier management.

## **9. Arrival Area & General Offices**

**Appropriate COVID-19 signage must be prominently displayed that explains the physical distancing and hygiene practices currently in use throughout the venue.**

### **Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol**

In the arrival area, cleaning and disinfecting must take place regularly during the day and more frequently during busy periods. This must focus on frequently touched surfaces especially counters, desks, equipment, communication devices, door release buttons, etc.

If they are provided on the premises, clean and disinfect internet stations, ATM machines and cigarette machines.

The sharing of office equipment should be avoided. Where shared equipment is necessary, it must be cleaned and disinfected after each shift or any time the equipment is transferred to another employee.

### **Visitor Considerations / Payment**

Visitors should be encouraged to use card / contactless payment and pay in advance where possible.

Debit / credit card machines should be moved to the front of the counter and cleaned and disinfected after each use.

The use of cashless / contactless payment systems is recommended where possible. Online payment should also be considered.

If handling cash, employees should observe the Government's Public Health advice on hand hygiene measures.

## 10. Public Areas

### Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

Cleaning and disinfection should be carried out with increased frequency in all public spaces, at least twice a day, but more frequently depending on the through-put of visitors at a given time and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.

Particular emphasis must be placed on the following items and areas, and scheduled more frequently during busy periods:

- Internal and external doors (e.g. door plates, handles, releases)
- Hard surfaces (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches)
- Stair handrails
- Interior seating (e.g. arms of chairs)
- Exterior seating / benches
- Toilet facilities
- Smoking areas
- Public amenities (e.g. internet station, ATM machine, cigarette machine, vending machine).
- Interior and exterior refuse bins must be emptied, cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals.

### Physical Distancing Protocol

Clear markings must be put in place to ensure that contact between visitors and employees is minimised and visitors adhere to physical distancing in all public areas.

Signage referring to COVID-19 physical distancing measures must be installed in visible locations (e.g. notice boards).

Within public toilet facilities, a queuing system and limitations on the number of users should be in place to

ensure physical distancing.

Visitors must wear face coverings/masks when moving around public areas. Face covering/mask wearing must be enforced.

### Toilet Facilities

Clear signage should indicate the location of and route to the facilities.

A strict queuing system and limitations on number of users must be enforced to ensure physical distancing.

Install clear markings to minimise contact between visitors and to ensure that queues follow physical distancing requirements. Encourage the use of alternate sinks.

The frequency of cleaning and disinfection must be increased in toilet facilities.

Ensure splashes are avoided while cleaning these facilities. Ensure soap and hand sanitiser dispensers, disposable tissue dispensers and other similar devices are regularly checked, cleaned and maintained. Repair or replace defective soap units.

Where possible, facilities such as toilets or smoking areas should not be used simultaneously by multiple gatherings. However if they are cleaned in between usage, they may be used separately by different gatherings, within the same time period.

# 11. Refreshment areas

**The venue management must aim to follow the Government's Public Health advice throughout all food and beverage areas including refreshment and break areas, dining rooms, bars, etc.**

**Further information on sector specific Guidelines for Food & Beverage areas are available [HERE](#)**

## Refreshment Areas

It is important to maintain good hygiene practices at refreshments areas. Both visitors and employees should strictly observe good personal hygiene practices at all times around these areas. Attention must be paid to hand and respiratory hygiene.

If these areas are managed by employees, they should take orders in a time efficient manner and at a suitable distance to minimise time spent in close contact with visitors. Close contact can mean spending more than 15 minutes in face-to-face contact within 2 metres\* of an infected person. For more information see [HERE](#).

Remove as much loose furniture (e.g. sofas, etc.) where possible from the room to ensure maximum space for physical distancing.

Buffet-style service should be avoided and, where possible, pre-packed food should be offered. If compliance with the guidelines for Food & Beverage areas is not possible then catering should not be provided at the event.

Payment should be contactless only.

# 12. Exhibition Contractors

**The exhibition organiser and venue management team must contact all suppliers to ensure that they have put all necessary protocols in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.**

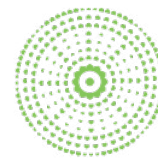
**Note: Fresh food deliveries must be treated separately to other deliveries. HACCP only refers to food deliveries**

## Third Party Exhibition Suppliers

All third-party suppliers for a exhibition and event venue, such as stand contractors, set builders, sound or lighting engineers, photographers, videographers, etc must adhere to the Government's Public Health advice including physical distancing and hand hygiene measures. The venue must monitor and manage physical distancing at all times.

The suppliers must also adhere to the [Work Safely Protocol](#).

# Recognised Exhibition Venues in Ireland



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