

 **Cork Centre for Independent Living Limited**
Company Limited by Guarantee

Covid-19 Service Planning

Easing Restrictions and Re-establishing Services Phase 2

This is to be read in conjunction with the Covid-19 Practice Guidelines and Cork CIL Policies & Procedures

Context

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on all of us at home and in the workplace. The way we work has changed. Some services temporarily suspended; other services have been offered using different platforms including remote working.

As a result of the gains made by the period of strict lockdown the country is beginning to move to the next phase in reducing the spread of the virus, while starting to gradually re-open our economy and our society. As we move to Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4 it is essential that we adhere to the rules of the new way of living and working, so that we maintain the gains we have made, and continue to suppress the spread of the virus.

Cork CIL Policy

In response to the overall easing of restrictions Cork CIL is continually assessing how we can continue to work safely, respond to Services Users requests and work toward more face to face services safely.

Cork CIL published the Covid-19 Practice Guidelines which provide information and clear instruction for all staff. **These guidelines remain in place and the practice instructions issued must be followed until such time as it is safe for alternative services to recommence.**

Recommencing services will take time. It may well be different for each Service User and each employee. We are encouraging all staff to talk with the Service Users they work with, find out what they would like as the lockdown restriction ease and bring these requests and ideas, to make them work safely, to your Co-ordinators. This will inform our decision making. However, to reiterate the guidelines apply to us all and Staff must not change a pattern of working without discussion with Cork CIL and without formal instruction.

Getting Back to Work

The COVID-19 pandemic has implications for all workplaces as it can present a health risk to workers and other persons at a place of work. Managing the risk of spread in the workplace is especially important in relation to the health of workers but is also important as part of general efforts to control the spread and protect the most vulnerable.

Changes in the way we work will be agreed by Cork CIL after discussion with staff and Service Users and following individual risk assessments. Any decisions to re-commence a suspended face to face service shall be done in compliance with the Government and Public Health advice. We will consider the level(s) of risk associated with various venues and work activities. This assessment will:

- Consider the risk of exposure of staff, Services Users and co-workers and their families
- Consider employees individual risk factors (e.g. older workers, presence of underlying medical conditions, etc.)
- Ability to conduct individualised service assessment if and as required
- Ability to supervise staff appropriately
- Staff skills and up to date staff training
- Agreement of Service Users

Communication & Training

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Communicate with Service Co-ordinators, colleagues, and service users as appropriate and clearly
- Any issues that arise in the workplace need to be alerted to us in timely way so we can respond appropriately. Cork CIL has a clear Communication Policy and all staff should review this
- Read and understand all communication sent to them by Cork CIL. If you cannot access information you must contact 021 432 2651 or email admin@corkcil.ie as we will help
- Complete all Mandatory Training as instructed and required. - Training resources are online and in house
- Staff who have been temporarily laid off or have been working remotely must complete re-induction training prior to recommencing face to face work with service
- All new employees will have Covid-19 Awareness Training as part of the standard Induction Training
- If any employee has any difficulties in completing training, you must 021 432 2651 or email admin@corkcil.ie as we will help

Covid-19 Is Still Here!!

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. Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- Some people infected with the virus, so called asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all

[For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE Website www.hse.ie]

How COVID-19 Spreads

The coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 that causes COVID-19 disease is spread from people in fluid and in droplets scattered from the nose or mouth of an infected person when the person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or speaks. The fluid or droplets land on objects and surfaces around the infected person. Other people contaminate their hands by touching these objects or surfaces and then bring the virus into contact with their eyes, nose, or mouth by touching them with their contaminated hands. COVID-19 can also spread if droplets from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eye, nose or mouth of a person standing close to them.

While people are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms, current information suggests that some infected people spread the virus to others prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves.

It is not known how long the virus survives on surfaces in different conditions. The period of survival may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature, or humidity of the

environment). Studies indicate that it can persist on surfaces for hours and up to several days in the absence of effective cleaning.

Thorough and regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is essential. If disinfection is required it must be performed in addition to cleaning, never as a substitute for cleaning.

Reducing Risk

Early Identification

Prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in protecting staff, their colleagues, Service Users or others at the workplace.

Self - Monitoring

It is our individual responsibility to make ourselves aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and monitor our own wellbeing. All Cork CIL staff are required to self-monitor and if at all unwell or have a temperature of 37.5° self-isolate at home and contact the GP promptly for further advice. Please review the Covid 19 Practice Guidelines.

Service User - Self Care and Self- Monitoring

All Services Users are required to inform us if they or anyone in their household is unwell. All PA's must formally ask the Service Users they work with if they and everyone in their household is well before they start their session with them. If anyone in the household is unwell the service must not go ahead. Please review the Covid 19 Practice Guidelines.

Service Users will be required to observe the government guidelines when working with a Cork CIL PA including frequent hand hygiene, cough etiquette and the wearing of face coverings in public places where social distancing cannot be maintained

Cough & Sneeze Etiquette

This has not changed. This must always be observed. PA must encourage Service Users to practice good cough and sneeze etiquette. If this is difficult for a Service User, you must advise the Co-ordinator.

Hand Hygiene

Frequently properly performed hand washing and appropriate use of hand sanitiser must be practiced at all time. Service Users are encouraged to follow the published guidelines but will be required to practice hand when working with a PA

Social Distancing

The advice for 2-meter social distancing remains the same. This is not possible when delivering personal care so sessions must be planned to keep close contact to a minimum and PPE will be worn as required.

Personal Protective Equipment - PPE

Prior to any service each employee must ensure that they have an adequate supply of Personal protective equipment PPE and know how and when to use this appropriately. In addition, every employee has been issued with an emergency PPE kit you must have this available to you and if you use this you must request a replacement.

Gloves – personal care only and now when visiting cocooners in their own home. Disposable surgical gloves are not issued for shopping trips nor for domestic cleaning. These activities require planning, hand washing and use of hand sanitiser. Gloves are not used for transfers or for pushing a wheelchair. Please read Covid -10 Practice Guidelines.

Aprons – personal care or cleaning as required to protect clothes.

Masks - All staff working with Service Users in whatever context if 2 metres cannot be maintained. And for staff working with a co-worker for more than 15 minutes and where 2 metre social distancing cannot be maintained.

Face Covering - are recommended for use in busier places shops, public transport etc. Some shops and services will not allow you into the premises unless you have suitable face coverings. Service users will be required to follow this guideline when with a PA. Cork CIL requires the face covering for staff to be surgical masks when working.

All PPE must be donned and doffed properly, worn properly, and disposed of safely.

Please see Covid 19 Practice Guidelines and ensure you have completed the PPE training online at www.HSELand.ie and inhouse. If you are at all unsure please repeat the training to refresh your understanding and call us 021 432 2651 e-mail admin@corkcil.ie

Social Inclusion

For Social Inclusion Supports social distancing should be maintained. If a PA has to reduce the social distance between themselves and a Service User e.g. to assist in transfer or to assist a Service User to put on face covering the PA will ensure best practice of hand hygiene, use of PPE and reducing close contact time to a minimum.

Session Venue

If the session is in a Service Users home each PA will be asked to clean the area they will be working in with the Service User, wear a surgical mask if 2 metres cannot or may not be maintained during the whole session.

An outside venue that is quiet and where social distancing can be maintained is the ideal venue. This may not be possible and if an outside venue is likely to be crowded or there are likely to be pinch points such as entrances and exits to parks, etc. face covering/face masks for Service User is recommended and for staff is required. Cork CIL requires the face covering for staff to be surgical masks when working.

Social Shopping

Shops are reopening but are limiting the numbers allowed in. If a Service User wishes to social shop for fun, they must be prepared to socially distance and queue. They should consider if this is how they want to use a time limited PA supported session.

Essential Shopping and Shopping

Many PA's have been shopping for Service Users and as restrictions lift may wish to assume this role again but need support. This will be assessed on an individual basis to ensure that it is safe for both the Service User and the PA.

As shops open and are busier, risk in some settings may be increased. A Service User's desire to do their own shopping when they need a PA to support this must be assessed considering risk to Service User, understanding of Service User of the 'new normal', risk to PA, venue and travel, etc. Staff must discuss and get agreement from the Co-ordinator for any changes.

Risk can be reduced by planning the shopping trip, not using busy stores. Following the safer shopping guidelines. Remember now shopping takes longer and this needs to be considered before setting off. Service User will be required to wear face covering when with a PA.

Public Transport

Risk can be reduced by planning the trip and not using public transport at busy times. It is also recommended to sit socially distancing on the vehicle where possible. PA's must decline to travel if the transport is crowded and Service Users asked to respect this decision should it be made. Service Users and staff will be required to wear face coverings/masks when travelling on public transport.

Driving with Service User

Social distancing cannot be maintained in a car. This activity remains excluded currently.

Travel Club

Not currently operating

Covid -19 is still with us. These measures are required to be adhered to by all staff to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. As information about the virus is evolving, public health advice is being updated and flexibility will be required. Keep informed!