

# Risk assessment - Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## SOCIAL WORK EMERGENCY SERVICE EMPLOYEES

<b>Author</b>	<i>Sharon Coats</i>	<b>Contact</b>	<i>SOCIAL WORK EMERGENCY SERVICE</i>
<b>Owner</b>		<b>details</b>	<i>0800 121 4114</i>

<b>Date</b>	<i>12 Jan 2021</i>	<b>Version number</b>	<i>1</i>	<b>Document status</b>	<i>Complete</i>
-------------	--------------------	-----------------------	----------	------------------------	-----------------

<b>Governance Committee</b>		<b>Date approved</b>	
<b>Review date</b>	<i>As required</i>		

<b>Strategic Alignment:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Families (Social Work)</b>
-----------------------------	---

<b>Consultation process</b>	<i>Previous risk assessments: 21 April 2020, 1 June 2020, 6 October 2020, 12 November 2020, 24 December 2020 &amp; ongoing discussions in team and in management of OOH services.</i>	
<b>Stakeholders</b>	NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL / SOCIAL WORK EMERGENCY SERVICE	

### Change record

<b>Date</b>	<i>21 April 2020</i>	<b>Author</b>	<i>Claire Murray</i>
<b>Change made</b>	<i>6 October 2020: Claire Murray &amp; Sharon Coats  12 November 2020: Sharon Coats  24 December 2020: Sharon Coats  12 January 2021: Sharon Coats</i>		

## Risk Assessment

Assessors Name <b>Sharon Coats</b>	Date/Time of Assessment <b>12 January 2021</b>
Review Date: 12 January 2021	
RA Reference:	
Location of activity <b>SOCIAL WORK EMERGENCY SERVICE</b>	

**Evaluating risk**

		Likelihood				
		1 Remote	2 Unlikely	3 Possible	4 Likely	5 Certain
Severity	1 Trivial	1	2	3	4	5
	2 Minor	2	4	6	8	10
	3 Lost time	3	6	9	12	15
	4 Major	4	8	12	16	20
	5 Fatal	5	10	15	20	25

Activity Details <b>Social work emergency service risk assessment: COVID-19 pandemic</b>
---

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
<b>Exposure to COVID-19 and variant in the workplace.</b>	Any employee.	<p><b>Reduced office footfall:</b></p> <p>Building is closed to the public.</p> <p>Single building access and egress point.</p> <p>Signage directing one-way system for people traffic, physical distancing and requirement to use hand sanitiser throughout building.</p> <p>Sign in sheets to be completed by all visitors on arrival at the building, and</p>	4	Ongoing review required by line managers and through Building Management.	Low

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		<p>upon entry of fourth floor, which includes logging relevant contact details in accordance with Test and Protect procedures.</p> <p>Staff to complete sign in sheet on arrival at fourth floor, logging relevant contact details in accordance with Test and Protect procedures.</p> <p>To avoid SWES staff member being on the fourth floor office at times on their own during partial / full shifts, an office / work station has been set up next door to the Community Alarms Team on the second floor.</p> <p>When staff are based on the second floor, the above sign in / out procedures should be followed, using the sign in / out sheet provided.</p> <p>Clear escalation and risk management processes in the event of virus outbreak in the workplace. Operations Manager Home Support, Donna Bridges and Building Manager, Cathy Paterson, to be notified to trigger this process.</p> <p>All shift teams to be updated timeously in relation to any developing concerns.</p> <p>SWES operates with one-person office based each shift, others home based.</p>		<p>Should any systems outages occur which impact upon operations for SWES, Duty Seniors will consider the requirement for shift teams to</p>	<p>Low</p>

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		<p>Home Support Services and Community Alarms will operate a blended approach with minimal essential staff working in office space. Communications should be maintained between the three OOH teams (SWES, HSS &amp; CAS) by phone / virtual means as far as possible.</p> <p>Staff should not move about floors / offices and where required to do so as essential to the task, this should be done with strict adherence to social distancing; use of face masks and sanitising products to hands before and after any movement about the building.</p> <p><b>Eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination:</b> Immediate access to the vaccine has been extended to front line employees in social care.</p> <p>Full details of the ongoing vaccine delivery programme have been made available to all SWES personnel and individuals are encouraged to make direct application for an initial appointment with follow up appointment timed for 12 weeks thereafter.</p>		<p>return to the office with consideration being given to the necessary physical distancing measures.</p> <p>Full adherence with regard to infection control measures - wearing of masks and, where appropriate, full PPE, hand and surface hygiene and physical distancing to be maintained in accord with current guidelines.</p>	

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
Office working	All employees	<p><b>Hygiene:</b></p> <p>Office cleaning rota - Morning and early evening Monday - Friday and daily at weekends by cleaning staff.</p> <p>Fogger system used weekly in office and Toucan spray used daily to work surfaces.</p> <p>Hand sanitising stations positioned at entrances / exits to all offices and main touchpoints, such as doors, photocopiers and kitchens.</p> <p>Sanitising and anti-bacterial cleaning products in ready supply in the office to maintain hygiene and clean workstations.</p> <p>Agreement that workers clean their workstation and chair at the start and end of each shift as a minimum. Any equipment at workstations with touchpoints to be cleaned in this process, i.e. computer screen and phone.</p> <p>Hand washing is encouraged throughout shift.</p> <p>Hand wash and dryer facilities in toilet areas.</p>	4	Ongoing review required by line managers	Low
		<p><b>Communal areas:</b></p> <p>Physical distancing to be strictly maintained by staff passing desk</p>	5		Low

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		<p>spaces and entering / leaving the office. A one-way flow system is in place on second and fourth floor, with signage.</p> <p>Face coverings to be worn when accessing, egressing the building, walking to and from desks, in toilets, kitchen, break out area, corridors and in face to face meetings.</p> <p>Occupancy of lifts, kitchen and toilets to be restricted to one person at a time.</p> <p>There should be no shared use of cups, plates and cutlery etc. with staff advised to bring in and use own.</p> <p>Staff should not share food products, such as tea, coffee, milk and bring in own for personal use.</p> <p>Physical distancing to be maintained when using stairs.</p> <p>Meetings to be held in Meeting Room to be limited to no more than four attendees.</p> <p>All meetings for more than this number to be held online or by a blended meeting.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded to maintain social distancing during breaks etc.</p>			

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		<p><b>Shift cover:</b></p> <p>SWES personnel are designated key workers for the Council's out of office hours social work service with responsibility for public protection.</p> <p>Staff should travel alone by car to and from workplace, avoiding public transport where possible. If travelling in car with another person, the Council's car sharing advice to be followed regarding the use of PPE and hygiene.</p> <p>Cover to be maintained at three members of staff per shift.</p> <p>For each shift, at least one member of staff requires to be office based.</p> <p>This should be from a combination of senior social worker, senior practitioner or social workers with relevant experience given the public protection focus of work and the interface which requires to be maintained with other co-located out of hours services.</p> <p>Desk spaces to be occupied with strict adherence to physical distancing guidelines and hygiene measures detailed for the office.</p> <p>When undertaking visits external to the office, noting this may often require a response by two workers, these duties are closely coordinated with Senior Social Worker on shift.</p>	4		Low



Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
Staff working at home.	All staff	<p>Relevant risk assessment to be conducted prior to all proposed visits - person to be visited, or another competent individual (e.g. next of kin), to be asked to confirm any pre-existing or developing symptoms of COVID-19 by household member, or if any household member is self-isolating as an identified close contact to a person who has tested positive.</p> <p>Where competent information is available, this should be used to inform protective measures required when undertaking visits - hand hygiene, PPE and social distancing.</p> <p>Provision of Council approved PPE and sanitising substances are available.</p> <p>The requirement to use masks / full PPE to be discussed with Senior Social Worker and be recorded.</p> <p>When workers are undertaking duties in other offices/ buildings, i.e. Police Station, Hospitals they should adhere to guidance in relation to social distancing, use of face masks and hand sanitising.</p> <p>Two-way communications channels to be maintained in line with internal practice guidance for home working.</p>	4		Low

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		All external visits to be approved by duty senior social worker, noting mySWIS details and venue.			
<b>Being tasked to visit an environment with possible exposure to coronavirus may give rise to anxiety.</b>	All employees	<p>Line managers will maintain good communications links with their teams throughout the period when measures are in place for COVID-19.</p> <p>Updates to council information will be passed on timeously.</p> <p>All workers are referred to My NL for updated guidance.</p> <p>All workers are to be reminded when undertaking home visits or undertaking duties in other premises, such as Police Stations, Hospitals that they should adhere to guidance in relation to social distancing, use of face masks and hand sanitising. Where appropriate the use of masks and full PPE to be worn.</p>	9	Ongoing review required by line managers to consider necessity of face to face contact on any occasion and consider the risk assessment around contact and use of PPE.	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Further Control should reduce to 4 - Low</p> <p>Low</p>
<b>Changes to work experience and remote working</b>	All employees	<p>Work / life activity and demands may give rise to stress.</p> <p>Employees will be encouraged to raise concerns with their line manager.</p> <p>Stress management arrangements can be deployed including employee counselling service.</p> <p>Virtual platforms to be used to promote team communications and routine supervision and support to staff.</p>	9	Ongoing review required by line managers. The increased communication via phone and virtual means during shifts, including supervision and team meetings should reduce risks.	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>Further Control should reduce to 4 - Low</p> <p>Low</p>

Hazard	Who could be harmed	Current Controls	Risk Rating LxS=R	Further Controls Required	Residual Risk
		<p>Staff supervision and Team Meeting will be conducted through the use of virtual platforms and will only be conducted face to face where a specific need arises. In such circumstances, social distancing and hygiene guidance will be observed.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded and referred to the NL Life and work well NL coronavirus web page accessible from the Connect homepage.</p>			


### Summary of Action Required

Action Required	Responsible Person	Timescale for Completion	Date Completed
<p>Agree at what point buildings will be closed to some, or all building users depending on suspected or confirmed coronavirus cases.</p> <p>Review this in line with current guidance.</p>	NLC Command Group	Ongoing	
SWES personnel are qualified social workers and are designated key workers - status confirmed by head of services' correspondence.	Senior management	-	
<p>To safely manage service demands, public protection and operational activity, qualified professional social work staff require to be office based.</p> <p>This includes professional oversight, advice and guidance to all other co-located staff working out of hours, (in accord with practice since establishment of the service in 2009).</p>	SWES personnel	-	

Social distancing measures to be adhered to; current office space and IT facilities provide sufficient placement options to meet safe distancing requirements, during weekday and weekend periods.	SWES management	Each shift	
Staff reminded of NLC guidance in relation to social distancing, hand sanitising, workstation hygiene, and use of face masks in accordance with updates.  Such communications will be sent to staff and staff reminded of relevant documentation on My NL Portal.	SWES management & Corporate Communications	Ongoing reference to the My NL webpage and communication as updated	
Staff to be asked to bring in own cups, plates and cutlery and food products, such as tea, coffee and milk etc to remove communal use of such items and associated potential risks.	SWES management	Communication with SWES and OOH staff	
Review of this home working arrangement to be undertaken at intervals as recovery plan progresses and to meet the service requirements.	SWES management	Ongoing and updated	
Home working operational guidance to be followed when staff are working from home.	All staff	-	
Council equipment to be safeguarded, maintenance of records and destruction of written notes to be prioritised.	All staff	-	
Communication via shift manager and Handover process to be maintained.	All staff	Each shift	-
Service continuity - systems access to be checked pre shift and any issues escalated urgently to IT Helpdesk and notified to Senior Social Worker.	All staff	Prior to and at start of each shift	-
Public protection visits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preparedness - key worker status letter, employee ID, driving licence / insurance documentation.</li> <li>• ascertain third parties' risk management measures - health settings and Police stations.</li> <li>• question service users as to any pre-existing viral symptoms, positive Coronavirus cases or persons self-isolating in</li> </ul>	SWES seniors & all staff	As arise	-

<p>household.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual risk assessment for home visits or visits to other buildings, such as Police Stations, health settings regarding Coronavirus and requirement of use of masks / full PPE.</li> <li>• briefing / debriefing by Senior Social Worker.</li> <li>• shift breaks, maintaining social distancing.</li> <li>• prioritisation and allocation of work.</li> </ul>			
---	--	--	--

The contents of this risk assessment are an accurate reflection of the activities being undertaken and appropriate control measures to be implemented or maintained to ensure the activity can be undertaken whilst protecting the health safety and welfare of employees and anyone else who could be affected. The content of the risk assessment will be made known to employees, controls implemented and monitored and a review carried out either annually or when a change to circumstances dictates.

<p>Signed:</p>  <p>Date: 12 January 2021</p>
---

## Further information

Health Protection Scotland:

<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/>

Health and Safety Executive:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Health and Safety Executive, Managing risks and risk assessment at work:

[https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm?utm\\_source=hse.gov.uk&utm\\_medium=refferal&utm\\_campaign=risk&utm\\_content=home-page-info](https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm?utm_source=hse.gov.uk&utm_medium=refferal&utm_campaign=risk&utm_content=home-page-info)

Health and Safety Executive, Dermatitis:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/food/dermatitis.htm>

Health and Safety Executive, Skin checks for dermatitis (free poster):

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/posters/skindermatitis.pdf>

Time for talking

<http://connect/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36324&p=0>

Telephone 0800 970 3980