

Covid 19 pandemic: Workplace practical hints and tips

Reviewed 21 July 2021

2 VENTILATION

As Covid-19 restrictions are being lifted from 19th July 2021 and more staff return to the workplace, it is important to consider ventilation of the space you are working in when sharing with others.

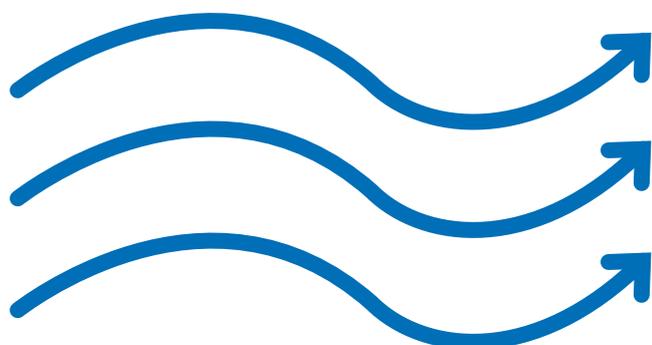
The chances of becoming infected with Covid 19 are significantly lower outside than inside. This has a lot to do with the greater air circulation, which helps disperse the viral particles more quickly so reducing their concentration. Using mechanical ventilation in the workplace helps offset the absence of natural airflow outside and can reduce the airborne concentration, which may help to reduce the overall viral dose to the workforce.

In order to reduce the risk we therefore recommend that employers:

- Identify and deal with areas that are not well ventilated
- Ensure mechanical ventilation systems operate properly in line with manufacturer's instructions and provide acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space
- Use high efficiency air filters compatible with your specific system and switch from 'auto' to 'on'
- Set systems to 'fresh air' not 'recirculating'
- In the absence of the above, provide fans to increase the effectiveness of opening windows
- Provide ventilation breaks during or between room usage
- Communicate safer ventilation practice on a regular basis

Key hints and tips to reduce the risks of Covid 19 to share with your employees:

- Keep area near to air vents clear
- Open windows and doors to increase air circulation (where it is safe to do so and does not pose a health & safety risk e.g. a risk of falling or spread of fire)
- Open windows and doors at opposite sides of the room to increase flow
- Use fans (place carefully so that potentially contaminated air is not be not blown directly from one person over another)
- Make sure trickle vents (small vents usually on the top of a window) or grilles are open and not blocked
- Speak Up to colleagues and supervisors about any issues



As with other risk reducing measures ventilation is not a solution on its own. It should be used alongside other measures including washing hands frequently, keeping the workplace clean, avoiding gathering and restricting and reducing the duration of activities.