**COVID Secure**

**Risk Assessment and Operating Plan**

**For**

**B Simmons**

**Date of issue – 7th January 2022**

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**Covid Statement 7th January 2022**

**This statement sets out how we will operate to ensure the safety of our staff and our customers and to help reduce the spread of Coronavirus.**

**In General terms**

1: We will operate in accordance with Government guidance at all times and take all reasonable steps to protect our team and our customers and we will have in place measures to help prevent the spreading of the Covid 19 virus. This includes maintaining a covid risk assessment.

2: Our office will be open, but we will operate under a locked door policy to restrict the numbers of people in at any one time.

3: It is a requirement that face coverings should be worn when visiting our offices. Our staff will wear face coverings. Our office will have a sign clearly advising any visitor that it is a requirement to wear a face covering before entering (unless exempt)

4: We will have supply of hand sanitizer at appropriate points in offices for use by staff and visitors

5: We will take all reasonable steps to ensure social distancing is maintained

6: We will not permit any face-to-face meeting to take place in any case where any party has been advised to self-isolate or is awaiting Covid 19 test results.

7: We will ensure our offices are well ventilated at all times and that our team has access to regular hand washing facilities.

8: We will recommend virtual appointments as a first option to reduce the level of face-to-face contact

9: We will issue digital information and communication where possible.

10: We will retain your information should this be needed for any NHS test and trace purposes.

11: In light of the ‘Plan B’ announcement in England, from 13th December we will be allowing our teams to work from home where they can and where they are able to do so. This may be on a fixed basis or as and when required, so whilst you may not ‘see’ us all the time in the office, we want to re-assure you we are still here, still offering all of our services but from the safety of our homes.

12: If our own teams are working in the office then they will take a covid lateral test to identify any early signs of a potential issue, even if they are not showing any symptoms.

13: We will continue to monitor the risk of the people who work for us and identify any person who is classed as ‘High Risk’ to ensure that we are able to put in place extra precautions (see later for High-Risk definitions)

14: We have a dedicated Covid 19 responsible person who is Matt Byrne, who should be the first point of contact for any Covid related queries.

15: We reserve the right to amend these procedures at short notice depending on Government advice at the time.

**Property transactions**

16: When on any appointment we will recommend face coverings are worn when coming into face-to-face contact with anyone who people do not normally meet. We will set out this recommendation at the point of making any appointment.

17: For viewings we will recommend that properties cleaned by wiping any touched surfaces including door handles before further viewings or ‘move in’s take place.

**Self-Isolation**

18: Given the increase in testing it is inevitable that that the numbers of people testing positive may increase, even where symptoms are not shown. We will adopt Government guidance which states the following.

**Self-isolating and quarantine**

19: If you have COVID-19 symptoms you should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. You should arrange to have a PCR test as soon as possible. If this PCR test result is positive, you must continue too self-isolate.

20: If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, but you have a positive PCR test result, you must stay at home and self-isolate.

21: If you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 you are at significantly higher risk of becoming infected yourself.

22: If you have been vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine, you are less likely to become severely ill if you catch COVID-19. You are also less likely to spread COVID-19 to other people, but it is still possible for this to happen.

23: Therefore:

* if you are aged 18 years 6 months or over and you are not fully vaccinated, and you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are legally required to stay at home and self-isolate
* if you are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months, and you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are not legally required too self-isolate. However, you are strongly advised to take a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test every day for 7 days, and to self-isolate if any of these test results is positive

24: It is now possible to end self-isolation after 7 days, following two negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart. The first LFD test should not be taken before the sixth day.

25: You should not expect to immediately be able to move into any home where people have COVID-19 or are self-isolating. There is a greater risk that home moves may need to be delayed if someone in the transaction shows symptoms of COVID-19 or is self-isolating.

26: The following key general protections continue to apply both to those moving home and those working in the industry:

* If you get any COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and [get a PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). Find out more about [what to do if you have COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection).
* You must still self-isolate if you are told to do so by NHS Test and Trace.
* If you are self-isolating, you should not view or work in other people’s homes for the duration of your isolation. Home viewings can continue to take place virtually, if possible.

**High Risk individuals**

27: The advice from Government is very clear that providing someone is fully vaccinated then there is no mandatory requirement for them to self-isolate if someone else in the same household, or someone they have come into contact with, tests positive for Covid. s.

The other important advice is that they should consider limiting contact with people who are classed as high risk which includes those with:

* Long term lung conditions
* Long term conditions affecting the heart or blood
* Long term kidney disease
* Long term liver conditions
* Conditions affecting the brain or nerves
* Severe or multiple learning difficulties
* Downs syndrome
* Diabetes
* Problems with the Spleen
* Severe obesity
* Severe mental conditions

**28: Between exchange of contracts and completion or before a tenancy move in.**

The Government make the following advice:

29: All parties involved in home buying and selling should prioritise agreeing amicable arrangements to change completion dates where someone in a chain or their family member is self-isolating or has tested positive for coronavirus.

30: Once you have exchanged contracts or signed a tenancy agreement, you have entered into a legal agreement to purchase or rent the property. We encourage all parties to be as flexible as possible and be prepared to delay moves if necessary; for example, if someone involved in the transaction becomes ill with COVID-19 during the moving process or has too self-isolate.

31: All parties are advised to discuss this with their solicitor

**This statement is prepared based on Government guidance (England) updated on 6th January 2022 and may be subject to review and amendment at short notice.**