



Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction Measures During the Coronavirus Pandemic

On Monday 23 March 2020 evening the Prime Minister made an announcement that has no comparison in our recent history, instructing everyone in the country (other than previously listed 'key workers') to stay home to save lives, contain the accelerating spread of the COVID-19 outbreak, and to enable the NHS to cope with the pandemic. These wider shutdown measures meant that people should only leave their homes for very limited purposes, including (say the Government) only travelling to work if absolutely necessary ("essential") and only if your work cannot be done at home. However, the announcement has sparked confusion for the construction industry.

On Sunday 10th May 2020, the Prime Minister set out an initial 'road map for reopening society', which was followed up by HM Government's document 'Our Plan to Rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 Recovery Strategy'. Both set out a phased step-by-step recovery plan to lift restrictions, with step 1 including instruction that 'Sectors of the economy that are allowed to be open should be open'.

We have reviewed the Government's guidance document 'Working safely during COVID-19 in shops and branches, along with HSE's guidance available on both COVID-19 risk and general risk management principles to produce this risk assessment. All guidance will continuously be reviewed, and this risk assessment will be updated with any changes or additions that are recommended.

The following risk assessment and risk reduction measures have been completed by the Safety Adviser, Dawn Simmons in consultation with Company Director, Guy Barker and the Ladieswear Manager, Jane Hunter. A walk-through of the store and back of house areas was conducted, and the latest available advice from the Government, HSE, and a variety of agencies including Associated Independent Stores (AIS) and our concession partners, was reviewed and all parties agreed the necessary new measures to comply with both the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulation 2020 and the basic Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 duty to do everything that is "reasonably practicable" to safeguard our employees and those affected by our operations.

Risk Assessment

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the Coronavirus and who develop COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Those over 70 as well as those with underlying medical problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer, are more likely to develop serious illness.

The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is for all individuals to be well-informed about the Coronavirus, how it spreads, and the symptoms associated with COVID-19. Those working for Barkers need to protect themselves and others from infection by washing their hands regularly (or using an alcohol-based rub frequently), not touching their face and keeping 2-metres away from others whenever they can.

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it is crucial that everyone also practices respiratory etiquette for example, by coughing or sneezing into a flexed elbow or tissue and disposing of it immediately.

General Precautions

These general precautions will support the risk reduction measures which follow:

- 1) Homeworking will be enforced for all work that can be carried out remotely.
- 2) 2-metre distancing will be adhered to wherever possible, with staff reminding customers at the entrances of this requirement. Where this is not possible for staff, side-by-side working practices will be used.
- 3) Staff will be reminded and encouraged to increase frequency of hand washing.
- 4) Hand sanitiser will be available on every department for both customer and staff use.
- 5) A one-way system will be introduced in the staff areas to reduce the frequency of contact between staff members.
- 6) There may be times where close working is required, this will be avoided whenever possible, however where it cannot be avoided, activities will be kept to 15 minutes or less wherever possible, with back-to-back or side-by-side practices adopted wherever possible. Such jobs will be assessed as to how essential they are and will not be carried out if not completely necessary.
- 7) Skin-to-skin contact will be avoided by the correct use of clothing and PPE (face masks and gloves) if necessary.
- 8) All PPE will be personal and not shared, in line with current risk assessments. Single-use PPE will be disposed of, so it cannot be reused, and re-usable PPE will be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared.
- 9) Face coverings will not be enforced but will however, be available for staff if they prefer or if customers request it.
- 10) Shifts will be arranged to keep the same teams of workers together wherever possible.
- 11) First aid provision will be considered when organising shifts.
- 12) Existing risk assessments and safe systems of work will continue to be followed; if they cannot be followed, the activity will not be carried out.
- 13) Self-isolation guidance will be given to staff, who will be supported and encouraged by the business.
- 14) Any staff members with a high temperature, new or continuous cough will be instructed to self-isolate at home for at least 7 days. Any staff members with family members with the symptoms or who have come into close contact with someone with symptoms are to self-isolate for at least 14 days.

- 15) Support for staff who are contacted by the government's test and trace service and are advised to self-isolate. Guidance can be found [here](#).
- 16) Employees who are within the clinically vulnerable category will not be customer-facing and will be tasked with activities that enable them to stay at 2-metre distance from others.
- 17) Guidance will be provided to staff on hand washing and social distancing, with regular reminders given and notices displayed.
- 18) A cleaning team will be present to continually clean and disinfect, particularly those high-use points such as handrails, controls and handles.
- 19) Non-fire doors will be kept open, to reduce the need to use handles.
- 20) Phones, stationery, PPE and personal equipment, will not be shared.
- 21) Shared tools, equipment and machinery will be disinfected before and after each use.
- 22) Regular briefings will be given on the importance of hygiene for on-site and remote workers.
- 23) Staff will be given a briefing when returning to work to introduce new protocols with updated Government and Public Health England and HSE guidance distributed to staff when issued.

Activity	Who Might be Harmed	How Might they be Harmed?	Risk Control Measures	By Whom	By When
Customers browsing and shopping	Employees and other customers	Exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus. Unable to meet the 2-metre distancing guidelines.	Limiting numbers of customers in the store by keeping just one entrance open, which will be monitored by a member of staff, who will count customers in and out.	Company Director	Prior to opening
			Ongoing liaison with neighbouring retailers to ensure queuing customers do not impinge on others' activities or present an additional risk to the High Street thoroughfare.		
			Fire exits will remain open, with signage informing customers to use the designated entrances. Hand baskets will be removed. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrances and customers encouraged to make use of them. Signage will be displayed throughout the store, informing customers of our COVID-19 Secure measures.	Cleaning team	Ongoing
			Customer restaurant and toilets to remain closed to avoid large amounts of people in one area and pinch points as much as possible.	Employees at entrances	Ongoing
			Stairways to be designated either 'up' or 'down' to reduce the potential for close contact between customers.		

Activity	Who Might be Harmed	How Might they be Harmed?	Risk Control Measures	By Whom	By When
			Cleaning team regularly disinfecting around the store during the day, particularly high-touch points and the lift, to control the spread of virus. Staff members staffing the entrances to remind customers of the 2-metre social distancing protocols.		
Beauty concessions	Employees and other customers	Coronavirus could be easily spread by customers when using product testers.	Makeup tutorials will be suspended. Product testers will be made unavailable to customers to prevent the spread of virus. Fragrance blotters will be used by staff only, by spraying fragrance blotter and placing it on the counter for the customer.	Company Director Beauty concessions teams	Prior to opening Ongoing
<u>Changing Fitting rooms</u>	Employees and other customers	Frequently used areas could lead to increased chance of exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.	Changing rooms will be closed to customers to reduce the numbers of high touch points throughout the store. A limited number of fitting rooms will be made available to customers, and will be opened over staggered hours. <u>Fitting rooms will be monitored by a dedicated member of staff, who will ensure sanitisation of rooms when they are open.</u> <u>Clothes that have been tried on and deemed unsuitable will be placed on a portable hanging frame, covered over and placed into storage for</u> Changing rooms will be utilised to store returned items for 48 hours, prior to them being returned to the sales areas. <u>Those fitting Changing rooms that are not used for fittings will be used for storage of unsuitable and returned merchandise, and will remain locked during trading hours, to prevent any accidental use or contact with returned merchandise.</u>	Company Director	Prior to Opening
<u>Lingerie fittings</u>	<u>Employees and customers</u>	<u>Close contact between customers and fitters could lead to increased chance of exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.</u>	<u>Lingerie fittings will be by appointment only. Customers will be required to confirm they do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and have not been required to shield or self-isolate.</u> <u>Customers and staff to wash hands with soap and water, prior to the fitting starting.</u>	<u>Lingerie Fitters</u>	<u>Ongoing</u>

Activity	Who Might be Harmed	How Might they be Harmed?	Risk Control Measures	By Whom	By When
			<p><u>Face coverings will be worn by both staff and customers during the fitting process, gloves will also be used by the fitter whenever appropriate.</u></p> <p><u>Fitter works from behind the customer, to avoid face-to-face contact.</u></p> <p><u>Close working will be kept to a minimum and 2-metre distancing adhered to at all other times. It is highly unlikely that close working will exceed 10 minutes.</u></p> <p><u>On completion, the fitter will disinfect fitting room, paying particular attention to high-touch points, eg, door, handles, buzzer etc.</u></p> <p><u>Gloves and mask will be disposed of at the end of the fitting, and fitter will wash hands with soap and water.</u></p>		
Paying for purchases at till areas	Employees and other customers	<p>Frequently used areas could lead to increased chance of exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.</p> <p>Unable to meet the 2-metre distancing guidelines.</p>	<p>We will place 2-metre distancing markers on the floor, to assist customers when queuing.</p> <p>Fewer pay-stations to be made available in enable easier management of social distancing.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser will be available for staff at every till point.</p> <p>Perspex shields will be installed at the front of the till desk to prevent spread of droplets between staff and customers.</p> <p>Contactless payments will be encouraged.</p> <p>Customers will be requested to place required items onto the desk for staff to scan to avoid skin-to-skin contact.</p> <p>This will be reversed once the purchase has been processed and bagged, the bag will be placed on the counter, for the customer to pick up.</p>	<p>Company Director</p> <p>Employees</p>	<p>Prior to Opening</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Customers returning unwanted items	Employees and other customers	Items from customer homes may have Coronavirus on the surfaces, brought in from outside of the store.	<p>Returned items will be stored for 48 hours in the unused changing rooms, before replaced on the sales racks.</p> <p>Counter tops will be cleaned after returned items have been processed.</p>	Company Director	Prior to opening

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Activity	Who Might be Harmed	How Might they be Harmed?	Risk Control Measures	By Whom	By When
			Customers will be requested to place items being returned onto the desk for staff to pick up and process, to avoid skin-to-skin contact.	Employees	Ongoing
Collections and Deliveries	Employees	Exposure to the Coronavirus from drivers who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.	<p>Delivery drivers to remain in their cabs while staff load or unload delivery items.</p> <p>Alternatively, delivery drivers to leave deliveries outside for staff members to bring indoors.</p> <p>Delivery drivers are permitted to use washing facilities if they request it.</p> <p>Re-useable delivery boxes will be regularly disinfected.</p>	Warehousing team	Ongoing
Staff only areas	Employees	<p>Exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.</p> <p>Unable to meet the 2-metre distancing guidelines.</p>	<p>One-way system around the 'back-of-house' areas implemented to reduce the potential for close contact between staff.</p> <p>Departments to be allocated specific toilets to reduce the aid social distancing.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser available in staff areas and staff encouraged to use them.</p> <p>Open fridge made available for staff to store their own lunch and minimal touching of surface required.</p> <p>Restaurant coffee machine offered to staff to reduce the surface contact with kettles and utensils.</p> <p>Increased handwashing encouraged, with posters of hand handwashing techniques displayed.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser to be placed at the hand scan points for staff to use after signing in, with the cleaning team disinfecting the scanners at the beginning and end of the day, once all staff have arrived and left the premises.</p> <p>Staff to use the store's restaurant area to aid social distancing, with tables appropriately distanced.</p> <p>Locker rooms to be limited to one or two people at a time, with start and finish times staggered to aid social distancing.</p>	<p>Company Director</p> <p>Cleaning team</p> <p>Employees</p>	<p>Prior to opening</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Activity	Who Might be Harmed	How Might they be Harmed?	Risk Control Measures	By Whom	By When
			Lunch breaks to be staggered to prevent large numbers.	Department Heads	Ongoing
Office areas	Employees	Exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.	<p>Staff who can work from home will be required to do so.</p> <p>Offices will be re-configured to ensure desks are 2-metres apart.</p> <p>No hot-desking will be permitted.</p> <p>Shared equipment such as photocopiers will be disinfected before and after use.</p> <p>No sharing of telephones or computer equipment.</p> <p>Face-to-face meetings will be kept to a minimum and held via telephone or video conferencing whenever possible. Where this is not possible, the number of attendees will be kept to a minimum the largest space available will be used (outdoors if possible) to facilitate 2-metre distancing.</p>	<p>Company Director</p> <p>Employees</p>	<p>Prior to opening</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Risk of spread of infection during travel	Employees and others during commute	Exposure to the Coronavirus from those who may unknowingly be infected and spreading the virus.	<p>All travel should be avoided unless critical.</p> <p>Public transport avoided where possible, with alternative means, such as walking, cycling or driving, adopted as much as possible.</p> <p>If public transport must be used, consideration to starting times to be made, to avoid busiest times and routes.</p> <p>Face coverings to be worn when travelling on public transport.</p> <p>Daily checks on government guidance and travel restrictions, and prepared that these could change at any time.</p> <p>Single-person business journeys wherever possible. Where single-person journeys are not possible, fixed pairing will be applied. Side-by-side seating only in vehicles.</p> <p>Increased air flow whilst the vehicle is moving.</p> <p>Vehicle interiors to be cleaned before and after each use.</p>	Department Heads and Employees	Ongoing

Date of Assessment:	May 2020	Name of Assessor:	Dawn Simmons	Signature:		Position:	Health and Safety Adviser
Authorised Date:	May 2020	Authorised By:	Guy Barker	Signature:	G. BARKER	Position:	Company Director
Authorised Date:	May 2020	Authorised By:	JANE HUNTER	Signature:	J. HUNTER		Head of Womenswear

Revision Date	Reason	Authorised by
4 th June 2020	Changes made to reflect Government's updated 'Working safely during COVID-19 in shops and branches' guidance.	
15 th June 2020	Changes made to reflect Government's updated 'Working safely during COVID-19 in shops and branches' guidance.	
22nd June 2020	Updates in the use of fitting rooms. Control measures for the fitting of lingerie	

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