

Covid-19 Additional Actions – In Home Workers and working in non-domestic property.

Distribution
All Domestic and I&C Engineers

Office staff

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1 References

HSE	Website and guidance documents
NCHA	National Clinical Healthcare Association (Doorstep Procedures)
NHS	Removal of PPE, Symptoms update
Public Health England	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19
BEIS	Working safely during COVID-19 in other people’s homes 13 th Dec 2020. http://www.gov.uk/workingsafely
GOV.UK	Test and Trace. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works.27/05/20
GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection
GOV.UK	PM Briefing 04/01/21, https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

2 Introduction and Scope

This document is written specifically for Smarter Metering Services Ltd in the context of our normal working procedures, as such, to simplify this guidance, advice that is already part of our working practice, is not included.

One-person work in non-domestic settings can be completed using the precautions and processes set out below. However, there are likely to be additional, site specific, instructions provided by the consumer, these must also be followed.

There are additional precautions for team working in section 6.

3 Risk

The primary additional risk is the transmission and/or contraction of COVID-19, in three stages, don't take it into a house, don't pick it up at the house, don't bring it out of a house.

There are secondary risks due to raised stress levels and protective behaviours that could spill over into aggression or unreasonable behaviour. Anyone in any work setting must avoid any confrontation, if work still needs to be done to make a job safe seek assistance.

4 Purpose - Everyone

Working within Government guidelines and with our clients, SMSL are completing meter work with priority on, repairs and exchanges for faults, exchanges to remove old style PPM and install either credit meters or PPM that can be topped up from home (SMETS1 or SMETS2).

The official description of the type of work we will be doing is "In home worker", as advice for this group changes, this procedure will be updated. If you have any suggestions to improve this guidance let someone from the management team know straight away.

4.1 Symptoms of COVID 19

According to NHS.uk, 20/05/2020, as used in this document "symptoms"

- **high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms. If you have any of the symptoms, [get a test](#) as soon as possible and stay at home, if you are positive for Covid-19 the isolation period for you and your family (home) unit is 10 days.

5 Safe System of Work

5.1 Pre-visit Requirements - Everyone

No-one that is unwell or has symptoms, no matter how mild, should be scheduled to work, it is understood that this situation can change over-night or during the working day, be conscientious and do not work if you are unwell with any symptoms. In addition, if someone in your household has symptoms or a confirmed case of Covid-19, you must not come to work. You may also be asked to self-isolate through the contact tracing system, Test and Trace, if asked to do so you must not come to work, sick pay is payable for the time you are off work. Your work can be re-allocated or re-scheduled.

If you have any other reason to stay at home, if you are considered at higher risk of severe illness, such as pre-existing conditions including pregnancy, see Section 6. Let a member of the management team know.

Without special permission and additional precautions, visits shall not be made to homes where any resident is Isolating (see below). Any such circumstances shall be referred to a member of the management team.

5.2 Making Appointments - Office.

Make appointments in the normal way, but in addition the consumer shall be asked about their particular circumstances. Take note of Tier and National restrictions, some businesses may be closed, this may be a hinderance or an opportunity depending on the circumstances.

Note for Tier 5 “Stay at Home” (04/01/21) People can leave home for work, including work in other people’s homes. To minimise travelling, wherever practical, engineers will work locally to home or within as small an area as practical.

- 5.2.1 Does anyone at the address have symptoms of or been confirmed to have COVID-19? That is, **Isolating**.
- 5.2.2 Is anyone at the address self-isolating after being told to do so by the **Test and Trace** service?
- 5.2.3 Is anyone at the property not going out at all to protect themselves from COVID-19? That is, **Shielding**.
- 5.2.4 Everyone else is expected to be **Social Distancing**, staying in as much as possible, only going out for exercise, essential shopping, work and a few other special circumstances.
 - Social Distancing, staying at home as much as possible, only going out for exercise, essential shopping and work.
 - Shielding, staying at home at all times, usually people vulnerable to COVID-19.
 - Isolating, where someone in the household has symptoms of or has been confirmed to have COVID-19, no-one from the house should go out at all.
- 5.2.5 No work should be planned for a household that are Isolating without special permission and additional precautions from the senior team.
- 5.2.6 We will be requested to work in homes where the occupier is Shielding, this is only allowed to remedy a direct risk to the household, such as, going out to top up pre-payment cards or to maintain or restore the energy supply.
- 5.2.7 In all cases, make sure the consumer gives their permission for the engineer to attend the property.
- 5.2.8 As usual, work shall be planned to minimise traveling distances.
- 5.2.9 If a second visit is required and it’s possible to do so, the original engineer shall be sent again.
- 5.2.10 Information for the consumer.

Inform the consumer, that we are working to protect people in the household and ourselves and that the engineer will:

- call or text before arriving
- knock or ring the bell, then stand back from the door
- ask again if anyone in the property has COVID symptoms

- have an ID card, will be wearing branded work clothes and will put on a face mask before entering,
- have just washed their hands or be wearing fresh gloves.
- need access to the meter(s) and for gas work, need access to any room with a gas appliance.
- ask that internal doors are kept open to minimise contact
- expect to keep at least 2 m away from residents and ideally be in different rooms

5.3 Additional Precautions - Engineers

In addition to the usual risk assessments and the use of safe systems of work the following precautions shall be taken.

The additional risk is the transmission of COVID-19 in three stages, don't take it into a house, don't pick it up at the house, don't bring it out of a house.

Remember, face to face contact has the highest risk, side-by-side or back-to-back is better, and for as short a period as possible.

Do not enter any office or manned stores unless asked to do so, when you do follow the guidance as explained to you at the time, a face covering must be worn

Use your own judgement, if someone is clearly unwell with symptoms of COVID do not enter the property and if you have already started work, leave as soon as possible when the job is safe.

- Travel alone and in your own van, take food and drinks with you to avoid unnecessary contact, consider the best place to use a toilet while you are out, take a good opportunity when there is one.
- Use clean workwear each day, including your face covering (mask).
- Take any good opportunities to use toilet facilities when you can
- Wash your hands before and after each job, the government say you can do this at the customer's house, if you want, or at the van. Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using the best method available.
- Call the address before arrival and ask again if there any confirmed cases or symptoms at the property.
- Carefully knock the door or ring the bell.
- Move back away from the door, 2 m if practical.
- Request permission to enter the property
- Asking that households leave all internal doors open to minimise contact with door handles.
- Ask the consumer again, if anyone in the house has COVID or symptoms of COVID, abort the job if they have. Explain that the job will be rescheduled for 21 days later.
- Explain that you will keep 2 m from them whenever that's practical and about any access to appliances you need. Ideally residents should be in another room to you.
- Don't accept a drink or anything else from the occupier, don't take your own drink or food into the property.
- If there is an accident and the property needs to be evacuated, the 2 m social distance is less important than the exit from the building, if anyone needs help to evacuate and you are able help, then do so.
- Wipe down the metering equipment and HDU before you leave.
- Don't hand paperwork customers, just leave anything you need to before you go.
- Don't ask anyone to sign on the handheld.
- Bag all wipes or rags you used, don't re-use any disposable item at the next address.
- Wipe down and carefully store removed meter equipment as usual, wipe any tools that may be contaminated.
- Treat the front of your face mask as contaminated, only handle by the ear loops and wash it every day.
- Wash your hands or remove gloves when you leave.
- Put workwear straight in the wash and have a shower when you get home

5.4 Materials

Materials collection and return may be at unmanned locations, from the store's vehicle or from outside a manned stores under click and collect rules . Where the store's vehicle is involved, always maintain 2 m separation, stores place new stock to one side, engineer place returned stock to the other, load up, then wash your hands or remove your gloves.

6 Team Working

Where work requires more than one engineer on site, in addition to the applicable precautions above the following additional precautions shall be taken.

- Teams should be fixed, working with the same person every day reduces the risk of exposure to Covid-19.
- Where practical, travel to site in your own vehicle, if not sit apart and open the windows.
- Where practical, maintain 2 m social distance, try not to work face to face.
- Wash hands frequently and/or wear gloves and change them regularly
- Don't share tools and equipment, where equipment is shared clean it frequently with standard cleaning materials.

7 Links

Check this video for glove removal: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/mvr/resources/videos/video9.htm>

Those at higher risk: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>

Get a Test - <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

8 Updates

03/06/20 v1.4 Change of work types to more normal operations, added self-isolation for Test and Trace.

21/12/20 v1.5 Update for latest restrictions

05/01/21 v1.6 Update for latest restrictions