

Spot Inspections Target Bolton and Trafford

Bolton and Trafford are the latest areas the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is specifically targeting with spot inspections to ensure workplaces are COVID-secure.

Following a rise of COVID-19 cases in both Bolton and Trafford, they have been put into local lockdown measures. To ensure businesses in these areas are following the COVID-secure guidelines, HSE inspectors are calling and visiting businesses to carry out spot inspections.

During the spot inspections, the HSE provides advice and guidance to manage risk and protect workers and visitors but, where some businesses are not managing this, we will take immediate action. This can range from the provision of specific advice, issuing enforcement notices, stopping certain work practices until they are made safe and, where businesses fail to comply, this could lead to prosecution.

To support the understanding of the rise in coronavirus cases in the area, HSE is working alongside local public health authorities and the local councils.

To be COVID-secure means businesses need to keep up to date with the latest guidance and put measures in place to manage the risk and protect workers and others. There are practical steps that businesses can take:

- Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment
- Develop increased cleaning, hand washing and hygiene procedures
- Maintain 2m social distancing where possible
- Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Sally Nicholson, HSE Head of Operations, North West, said: "Becoming COVID-secure needs to be a priority for all businesses, especially in Bolton and Trafford.

"As we have seen a rise in COVID-19 cases in these areas, it is essential workplaces take reasonable steps to control the risk and protect people from coronavirus. This means making business adjustments to become COVID-secure.

"We advise employers to work with their employees when implementing changes, to help increase confidence with workers, customers and the local community while reducing the risk of transmission. Simple steps can help save lives."

As inspections are ongoing, HSE has been utilising different ways to gather intelligence and reach out to businesses across Bolton and Trafford with a combination of site visits, phone calls and through collection of supporting visual evidence such as photos and video footage.

All businesses are in scope for inspections, that means any size business in

any sector can receive an unannounced inspection.

Some of the common issues HSE inspectors are finding include: failing to provide arrangements for monitoring, supervising and maintaining social distancing, failing to introduce an adequate cleaning regime – particularly at busy times of the day – and providing access to welfare facilities to allow employees to frequently wash their hands with warm water and soap.

Francine Cheney, HSE Head of Operations for Construction, said: “All businesses in Bolton and Trafford are in scope for spot checks which means businesses of any size, in any sector can receive an unannounced visit from us to ensure they are COVID-secure.

“We want all workers to remain safe in the workplace and to continue to follow government guidelines travelling to and from work, back at home and socially as this can make a real impact in halting the spread of coronavirus.

“By making sure that businesses have measures in place to manage the risks, we can benefit the health of the local community as well as support the local and national economy.”

For more information on spot inspections, see <https://www.hse.gov.uk>

Ends

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. <https://www.hse.gov.uk>
2. HSE news releases are available at <https://press.hse.gov.uk>
3. For HSE’s working safely guidance see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

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