



## Our Covid -19 HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY



## INTRODUCTION

Following Government advice on home moving during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak we have re-opened our offices.

The principal objective of this assessment and plan is to take all reasonable steps to prevent the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus to:

- Our employees and their families
- Our customers and their families
- Visitors and contractors who visit our premises or properties we are selling or managing

The senior person(s) responsible for COVID-19 Management is Sarah Hartley

As we return to our workplace, the most important fact is to ensure we continue to safeguard everyone who we work with and everyone we work for.

In order to minimise all possible risk of a second round of the virus and a further lockdown, we have made changes to our processes, our working environment and how our team operates.

The following sections outline how we have achieved this:-

## SECTIONS

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3. Premises
4. Valuations
5. Viewings
6. Compliance (including AML & Right to Rent)
7. Property Management
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## 1 Our Statement

Where possible, we will take all reasonable steps to enable our teams to work from home and only come into the office where there is an essential need to do so.

We will complete a risk assessment and agree an operating plan to manage our risks. This document will be shared with all of our team and reviewed on a regular basis.

Where we operate in the office or where we visit people in their homes, we will maintain two-metre social distancing, where possible.

We will use technology where we can for valuations, viewings and property management responsibilities in order to reduce the need for face-to-face contact.

We will have strict processes for cleaning and hygiene and make PPE available for our teams.

We will not undertake any face-to-face meeting or allow any employee to attend the office where they or a member of their household is self-isolating or showing symptoms of COVID-19.

**STAY ALERT**

**CONTAIN THE VIRUS**

**SAVE LIVES**

## 2 People

We will check on the health of the people working for us. We will ensure that all members of our team are fit and healthy by having regular one to one checks and asking two key questions: are they or any member of their household self-isolating or been advised to self-isolate; are they or any member of their household suffering from any COVID-19 symptoms? Where this is confirmed, then the individual will not be permitted to work in a face-to-face situation.

At our morning meetings, we will establish whether any member of the team is, or has within their household, any person classed as clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable. Where this applies, they will be advised to consult medical advice before undertaking any face-to-face work.

There is a clear understanding that where a COVID-19 health situation changes, the employee must notify us at the earliest opportunity, but in no circumstances should they attend work.

Where possible, we will continue to work from home and only have essential roles operating from our office.

## 3 Our Premises

We will agree on minimum and maximum levels of employees and visitors at any one time in our offices – taking into account two-metre social distancing.

Our minimum number of employees at any one time to enable us to meet our health and safety policy is: 2

Our maximum number of people in our office at any one time is: 2

Our office door will remain locked at all times in order to control numbers.

Where possible, we will promote video calls as the primary source of communication and only agree to office visits where this is not possible or where there is a legal requirement for a face-to-face meeting.

We will request that appointments are made to visit the office, where possible, and we will restrict visitors to one party from the same household at any one time.

We will clearly mark out the office floor to ensure two-metre social distancing can be adhered to.

We will have all occupied workstations at least two metres apart with side-by-side seating rather than 'face-to-face', with an acrylic screen erected in between workstations.

Only one person at a time will be allowed in the kitchen area, and additional eating facilities.

Any point where we are meeting with a member of the public or a contractor will be at a designated desk where a protective screen has been fitted.

We will arrange for our offices to be fully cleaned on a daily basis.

Each member of the team will be responsible for regular cleaning during the day of all surfaces and equipment used.

We will ensure all toilet facilities have hot water, soap, sanitiser and paper towels.

All members of the team will be encouraged to wash their hands more frequently with hot water and soap.

Bottles of hand sanitiser will be available on each workstation, at the entry/exit door, in kitchen and toilet washrooms – every person entering or leaving the building will be required to sanitise their hands.

## 4 Valuations

We will encourage full use of our digital technology such as Zoom, Skype and other means of video communication.

Where a face-to-face meeting is required, then we will establish a health assessment form to assess whether the seller or any member of their household is self-isolating or showing any of the COVID-19 symptoms. Where they are, then no face-to-face appointment will take place. All staff have been advised to never attend a valuation appointment if they are feeling unwell.

We will confirm in writing the requirement for the seller to advise us at any point prior to the appointment if any COVID-19 situation changes.

Where we do conduct a valuation, we will respectfully ask only ONE person to be present on the valuation and to avoid any handshaking or physical contact, keep a two-metre distance, always wear protective gloves, and consider the use of face coverings. We will show all marketing via digital resources rather than leaving any 'paper' documents and follow up with an email. We will ask the seller to open all internal doors, so that we can walk freely around and will not touch any surfaces, where possible. This goes against the 'grain', but we will keep face-to-face contact time to a minimum, decline any coffees/refreshments etc.,

We will explain to the customer the actions we are taking as a company, to reduce the risk of spreading Coronavirus.

When we return to our cars we will: dispose of gloves, use a hand-gel and wipe any equipment we have used during the visit.

When we arrive back at the office, we will be sure to wash our hands with soap and water before we do anything else.

At the end of the day and after our last appointment we will give the steering wheel, gear lever, handbrake, and all controls a wipe down with anti-bacterial wipes.

We will never attend a valuation appointment if we are feeling unwell.

Where we receive an instruction to sell a property, we acknowledge that all other aspects of our legal obligations are still in force.

EPCs can continue to be provided if no COVID-19 issues exist and the assessor operates in accordance with Public Health England guidance.

## 5 Viewings

We will make full use of virtual viewing tools and only arrange a physical viewing where the buyer is interested in the property.

We will always carry out a health-check on all viewers intending to visit the property and to establish whether the viewer or any member of their household is self-isolating or displaying any COVID-19 symptoms.

We will find out who will be attending the viewing and limit the number of people to no more than ONE person from a single household and will do our best to limit the appointment to 15 minutes.

If the property is occupied, we will check on the health of the seller before arranging the appointment and advise the seller to open all internal doors and to wipe down all surfaces and door handles after the viewing.

Where a physical viewing does take place, we will respectfully avoid any handshaking or physical contact, keep a two-metre distance where possible, wear protective gloves and avoid any 'paper' documents. If anyone from our team goes out on a physical viewing, they have the facility to use a supplied face covering. As our agent will be wearing protective gloves, only the agent will be permitted to open doors to show potential buyers and tenants rooms and storage etc.,

When we return to our vehicles after each appointment, we will safely dispose of gloves and use hand gel to give our hands a good wash. We will also wipe down any equipment we have used during the visit.

If the property is vacant and we use a key, we will wipe the key when it is taken from the key cabinet, wipe it after the viewing and again before it is placed back in the key cabinet.

We will never travel in the same car as anyone else and will always meet viewers at the property.

No open house viewings will be arranged.

We will issue clear guidance to viewers so that they understand the processes we are taking to prevent COVID-19 from spreading.

If the property is vacant, we will supply a bottle of hand sanitiser for use at the commencement and end of each viewing. Where the property is occupied, we will suggest that the seller does the same.

We will confirm all arrangements in writing (digitally), including matters relating to COVID-19 and how the viewing will be conducted in order to comply with COVID Secure guidelines.

## **6 AML and Right to Rent**

### **AML**

We are still required to complete legal requirements to confirm the identity of sellers and buyers, and landlords and tenants in some cases. This should be completed before a business relationship commences.

Using our chosen AML platform may make this easier, especially if the individual is a low risk, when a sole electronic search may be the only check required.

If physical documents are required, the requirement is that this is completed where we can see the individual and the document at the same time – where this method is required, we will wear protective gloves when handling paper documents.

As a first step, we will see if the customer has 'certified copies' which they could supply digitally as evidence of identity.

If the customers make an appointment to visit the branch, we will complete the COVID-19 health questionnaire before they are permitted into the office, if they have already done so previously, we will check there has been no change.

Any face-to-face visits in the office will only be undertaken where two-meter social distancing can be adhered to, or behind a desk with a protective screen and strictly by appointment only

### **Right to Rent (England only)**

The Home Office has issued guidance that the right to rent checks should continue as normal prior to any tenancy commencement.

Where we do see tenants on a face-to-face basis, we will ensure the COVID-19 questions are asked prior to them being permitted into the office. An appointment should always be made and confirmed.

Any face-to-face visits into the office should only be undertaken by appointment only and where two-metre social distancing can be adhered to, or behind a desk with a protective screen.

They (the Home Office) have permitted FaceTime inspection of documents with the individual followed by submission by email, providing full inspection with the individual takes place within eight weeks of the restrictions being lifted. We will keep a record of all such cases.

## 7 Property Management

Interim inspections - we will consider achieving these using technology such as FaceTime, Zoom or similar. We will take clear notes on what we have seen, just as we would with a manual recording of an inspection.

It is important to ensure health and safety of tenants; annual gas safety checks will continue (these can be arranged at any time from month 10 of the existing certificate without impacting the expiry date). Gas Safe engineers are permitted to visit.

Contractors may continue to visit properties to undertake maintenance and repair, but we will ask them to complete the COVID-19 health assessment.

End of tenancy check-out. Where possible, we will try completing a virtual check out, with a copy of inventory and check-in report, using this to cross-reference any points. We will obtain landlord and tenants' consent to using this method.

Where any face-to-face visit has to take place in the property, we will ensure a health assessment is completed prior to the visit taking place; wear protective gloves and avoid any physical contact; on returning to our vehicles, we will sanitise our hands with gel and disinfect any equipment used with wipes.

Where a tenant is required to visit our office, we will ensure full two-metre social distancing is observed and, if possible, use a desk behind a protective screen.

Where any keys are issued, we will wash our hands once this has happened and where keys are received back, disinfect the keys and wash our hands.

We will avoid taking any cash payments from tenants and ask preferably for bank transfers, however, where this is not possible, we will ensure protective gloves are always worn.

For new tenancies where possible, we will consider a 'three-day void period' between previous tenants vacating and new tenants taking up residence. This is based on results from research that has found the Coronavirus can still be detectable on surfaces for up to 72 hours.

Where possible, we will try arranging for any works and health and safety checks to be completed in the period between tenancies

## 8 Risk Assessment Summary

It is our sole intention to demonstrate a safe way to return to work, servicing our clients with health and safety as our primary concern.

Based on the content of our COVID Secure operating plan, we believe that we have appropriate measures in place to control any increased risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus to our people, our customers or visitors/contractors.

Any specific concerns or increased risks are documented below – this will be an ongoing working document and available upon request.

Date	Risk Area	Issue	Actions

## 9 Confirmation Statement

Confirmed that on behalf of LEAPFROG LETTINGS AND SALES I have fully reviewed the content of our COVID Secure operating plan and that this represents an accurate position in our aim to prevent COVID-19 being transmitted.

### Appendix 1

Clinically extremely vulnerable: Doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that place someone at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19

This includes the following people: Solid organ transplant recipients; people with cancer undergoing active chemotherapy; people with lung cancer undergoing radical radiotherapy; people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment; people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer; people having targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system; people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last six months; people with severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary; people with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections; people on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection; women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Clinically Vulnerable People are at high higher risk of severe illness from Coronavirus – these include: People aged 70 or older (regardless of medical condition); under 70 with an underlying health condition including; chronic mild to moderate respiratory diseases, chronic heart disease, chronic kidney failure, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological conditions such as Parkinson's, motor neurone, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy, diabetes; a weak immune system resulting from conditions such as HIV or AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tables; being seriously overweight (BMI of 40 or above); pregnant women.

## 10 Links for further information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

