

**DERRYCOURT COVID-19 RESPONSE POLICY STATEMENT**

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**1. Background**

The outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) virus and its impact on the Irish economy, especially in healthcare settings has the potential to reach an unprecedented level. Coupled with the international impact of the COVID-19, this poses both a serious health and economic health risk to Ireland as well as the rest of the world. This policy statement sets out Derrycourt’s response to the current outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) that poses major health risks.

Derrycourt takes its corporate social responsibility to the healthcare industry very seriously and is mindful that during critical times it can’t withdraw its field staff away from their vital roles within healthcare sites and at other businesses providing essential services where their skills and expertise is vital to client site operations, their staff, clients and patients.

Thus, Derrycourt is committed to providing ongoing services both for cleaning and disinfection services across all its healthcare and non-healthcare sites that are operational in Ireland.

We are an essential service provider and due to the ever-changing nature of managing Covid-19 outbreaks, Derrycourt is committed to operate within the safety guidelines prescribed by the following sources (weblinks) for updates and industry best practices:

- Irish Government: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus>
- HSA: [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/covid-19\\_coronavirus.html](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/covid-19_coronavirus.html)
- HSE: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner-www>
- HPSC: <https://www.hpsc.ie>
- IBEC: <https://www.ibec.ie/employer-hub/covid-19>

This document should be considered within the context of resources and operational methods outlined within Derrycourt’s Quality and Environmental Health & Safety Statement Policies, available from our EQHS Department.

**2. Derrycourt Safety Initiatives & Controls**

Due to the nature of our business, Derrycourt has undertaken a range of additional precautions and controls to help ensure the ongoing safety of staff and clients on our sites where we operate, both in healthcare and non-healthcare sectors:

This Policy covers the following areas of interest:

- A. Head Office Management & Support
- B. Covid-19 HSE Core Protocols
- C. Cleaning and Decontamination
- D. Communication, Training and Wellbeing
- E. Continuous Monitoring and Review
- F. Health Screening & Monitoring
- G. Contractors/3rd parties on site
- H. Disposal of contaminated items
- I. Drivers

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## A. Head Office Management & Support

- ✚ **Derrycourt established a Covid19 Task Team from the outset of notification of the virus:** This is made up of senior managers who direct and support business operations and needs of clients to meet the challenges posed by Covid19 in a 'safe as possible' manner.
- ✚ **Head Office:** The team is small and the office space in Dublin is self-contained and not shared with any other organisations. Wider contact with others during working hours is therefore extremely low and only within the context of being an "essential worker" when providing cleaning and disinfection services
- ✚ **Working from home:** All Head Office management and support staff, including Site Area Managers work remotely from home and only attend sites as essential workers where the need is risk assessed and deemed necessary. Our IT functionality allow for secure remote working to support this process.
- ✚ **The Quality Auditing function** is suspended during government "lock-down" periods to provide greater focus on Environmental Health & Safety support and to remove any risk of possible transfer/exposure to Covid19 across client sites due to auditor visits. However, Audit requests from customers will be carried out only where it is safe to do so and with the agreement of the client.
- ✚ **Return To Work:** We conduct RTW Risk Assessments for Head Office to inform and implement operational safety arrangements for staff and clients who may work/visit the site. This includes coordinating pre, during and post lock-down requirements.
- ✚ **We recognise that people need to be comfortable with their own decisions** and at no point will Derrycourt pressure staff to attend meetings or events if they are unwell or have concerns around travel/being in public spaces. However, we urge everyone engaged in Derrycourt's business to take all necessary personal precautions over and above any decisions and advice provided by management or that of the Health Service Executive (HSE).

## B. Covid-19 HSE Core Protocols

- ✚ **Derrycourt drives awareness and adherence** to HSE guidance on Covid-19 best practices, and includes increased focus on Hand-Hygiene, Cough & Sneezing etiquette, Social Distancing protocols and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- ✚ **Hand Washing:** Stringent hand washing is promoted through training, onsite signage and monitoring by management and is done in accordance with hand hygiene guidance from the WHO and HSE. Gel/alcohol sanitisers are provided in high traffic areas and all are advised not to touch their face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands.
- ✚ **Social Distancing Protocols:** Measures are taken to reduce the number of persons in any work areas to comply with the 2-metre (6.5 foot) gap recommended by the HSE. We review work schedules including start & finish times/shift patterns and support working from home (IT) arrangements. Reduced number of workers on site or in a common area at any one time. Making effective use of Calls or Conference calls instead of face to face meetings with clients and/or staff. Social distancing is also promoted at work for informal settings like bus shelters, canteen areas and smoking areas.
- ✚ **Cough/Sneezing etiquette:** Staff are informed and regularly reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues are made available throughout the workplace and encouraged on client work sites.
- ✚ **PPE - Wearing of Personal Protective Equipment:** HSE guidance on the use of PPE to protect against COVID-19 is always followed for both healthcare and non-healthcare settings. This includes a range of equipment like gloves, aprons, gowns, face shields, Tyvek suits and surgical/FFP2 masks. They are used in accordance with Risk Assessments/Method Statements and includes cleaning and decontamination work. An adequate supply of these is provided on client sites. Staff are trained on how to use and wear PPE correctly to reduce contamination and how to dispose of them safely. Hand washing and/or use of alcohol based disinfectant rub before and after use is recommended in addition to normal hand hygiene measures. Staff are advised to always check PPE has no rips/tears and that they are not heavily soiled to remain effective and never to reuse PPE unless trained on proper disinfection techniques.

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**C. Cleaning and Decontamination**

- ✚ **Cleaning:** Frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly particularly in areas of high use such as door/cabinet handles, elevator buttons, handrails, faucets, kitchen appliances, toilets, vending machines, common switches, reception area seating, canteen tables, etc, using appropriate cleaning products and methods (refer to method statements). Regular vacuuming of lobbies and main hallways. Regular cleaning/disinfecting of hard floor surfaces.
- ✚ **Disinfection Protocols:** We comply with our Infection Control Manual and apply HSE Clinical environment infection prevention standards for Covid19 (see [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie)) guidelines; Additionally, we apply 3 levels of disinfection depending on site agreed requirements ; (1) precautionary cleaning and sanitising of high touch-point surfaces ; (2) cleaning and decontamination of droplet contaminated environments/surfaces of suspected or confirmed Covid-19 cases with disinfection sprays/wipes or a chorine based disinfectant solution (3) apply intensive decontamination via H2O2 (Hydrogen peroxide) or Ecostatic disinfectants through 'Fogging' of confirmed cases target areas/pathways.

**D. Communication, Training & Wellbeing**

- ✚ **Proactive communication with clients:** To aid their awareness and deployment of HSE guidelines and for Covid19 cleaning and decontamination solutions and Covid19 Return To Work preparations. Using communications via site noticeboards, staff mailings, posters and signage, website and LinkedIn updates, eBulletin newsletters and client flyers.
- ✚ **Proactive communication with staff:** we issue regular communications with all staff in relation to COVID-19 requirements. This is initiated at the start of the pandemic. Communications vary from reinforcement of HSE guidelines to all staff to guidelines to specific staff working with specialist clients where their requirements may vary.
- ✚ **Increased focus on training interventions:** BICS - Infection Controls, Online Covid19 Awareness, guidelines on Covid19 PPE, Covid19 Risks and Method Statements. Using on-site training or Tool Box Talks (applying social distancing guidelines), but with most done via on-line courses and remote learning initiatives.
- ✚ **Management Training & Updates:** we regularly update our managers in relation to any changes to PPE requirements in specific areas as well as refresher training in relation to the impact of COVID-19 in relation the Safety, Health and Welfare requirements of both staff and management. It is vital for our management to be vigilant during this time.
- ✚ **Mental & Physical Health** - Management will promote mental health & wellbeing awareness to staff during the Coronavirus outbreak and will offer whatever support they can to help. Ensuring staff are engaged through regular contact, doing work from home risk assessments, providing advice on physical and mental wellbeing techniques and provision of Occupational Health Medical support through special Covid19 services provided by MedMark (where escalated).

**E. Continuous Monitoring and Review**

- ✚ **Derrycourt will frequently monitor the situation** as nationally reported by the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Health Protection Surveillance Centre (<https://www.hpsc.ie>) and other reputable information sources internationally and will use this to inform any subsequent reaction to this policy.
- ✚ **Revisions to management tools and controls:** These are reviewed to include pandemic/virus measures within Risk Assessment Controls ; Method Statements ; PPE Guidelines and Training Materials
- ✚ **Prioritising of resources** to Healthcare and essential services by re-assigning staff where available, where skills allow and only if fully supported by staff.
- ✚ **Monitoring site adherence** to HSE and HIQA sanctioned Viral Outbreak Management practices in so far as it affects cleaning and decontamination requirements to keep Operatives safe (e.g. PPE supply)

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## F. Health Screening & Monitoring

- ✚ **Health screening and temperature Checks** - All staff to undergo Health screening (for identifying symptoms and recent traveling) and temperature checks (less than 37.5'C) at entry point including Derrycourt Staff where sites allow for this capability.
- ✚ **C-19 Symptomatic personnel procedure / register:** All employees must inform their line manager if any symptoms are observed (cough, fever, tightness of the chest) prior to entering work for guidance on next steps, to contact their GP/HSE hotline for a Covid19 test and/or to self-isolate for 14 days and advised to follow the stay at home guidance (<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>). Also to be clear of symptoms for 5 days before their Return To Work date and only if approved by HR.
- ✚ **Self-declaration Wellness Questionnaire:** Used at interviews and inductions or when cases are reported to EQHS/HR of unwell/symptomatic staff or of asymptomatic staff with close contacts. Also to establish if anyone has travelled outside Ireland in high risk countries (as per HSE published countries of high risk).
- ✚ **Covid19 Tracker:** Track and trace capability of all suspected/confirmed cases, test results, shared accommodation, or travel arrangements and to manage Return To Work requirements.
- ✚ **Monitoring “vulnerable groups”** within the staff cohort (e.g. over 60's, pregnant employees, declared underlying health conditions, immuno-compromised conditions) and implementing appropriate HSE guidance to remove or reduce Covid19 exposure in the workplace.

G. **Contractors/3rd parties on site:** All contractors acting on our behalf are informed of our Covid19 controls and are required to adhere to these. They in turn also need to furnish their Covid19 policy, method statements, risk assessments and where gaps arise, Derrycourt’s controls will apply by default. We also actively support our clients by sharing their policies with our staff and our sub-contractor’s staff to ensure adherence to client policy requirements.

H. **Disposal of contaminated PPE:** This is to be treated as clinical waste (dedicated waste disposal stream/yellow bins) or if not available on site to use a sealed plastic bag and in a way that prevents it infecting others or to contaminate the environment.

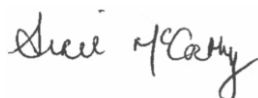
I. **Drivers:** Procedures in place for drivers to ensure adequate welfare facilities available at places of work. Persons should not share vehicles or cabs, where suitable distancing and PPE cannot be achieved. Provision of cleaning/disinfectant wipes/solutions for use by drivers in their vehicles each time they re-enter the vehicle whilst visiting multiple sites and interacting as essential workers with others. Travel is limited to the minimum and only where necessary to perform essential worker duties.

## 3. How to contact us

Should you have any queries or wish to contact us, please email

[customerservice@derrycourt.ie](mailto:customerservice@derrycourt.ie) or [EQHS@derrycourt.ie](mailto:EQHS@derrycourt.ie) or call our Dublin Office – 00353 (01) 864 3000

Managing Director



**Avril McCarthy**

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