Government guidance on returning to work – Key points

Furlough scheme

The Chancellor announced the Government’s plans to extend and eventually wind down the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme:

- The scheme as currently operated is extended until the end of July.
- From August to October the scheme will continue with greater flexibility.
  - Employers will be able to bring furloughed employees back part time
  - Employers will have to start sharing with the government the cost of paying people’s salaries.
- Throughout the duration of the scheme, employees will be paid 80% of their current salary up to £2,500 through the end of the scheme in October.

Full details on the changes to the scheme will be released by the end of May.

Roadmap to easing restrictions

As part of its Covid-19 recovery strategy, the Government has set out the following steps to ease restrictions:

- **Step 1 (from May 13th)**
  - those who cannot work from home are now encouraged to return to work
  - people can spend time outdoors for recreation and exercise as for long and as often as they like,
  - people can meet one person outside of their household at a time outdoors providing they stay 2m apart.

- **Step 2 (from June 1st earliest)**
  - aim for primary schools to reopen for some pupils in smaller class sizes,
  - non-essential retail to start to reopen where it is safe to do so,
  - cultural and sporting events to take place behind closed doors.

- **Step 3 (no later than July 4th)**
  - aim to allow more businesses and premises to open, including potentially those offering personal care, public places, and places of worship.

Returning to work

- The Government’s Covid-19 recovery strategy sets out that:
  - For the foreseeable future, workers should continue to work from home rather than their normal physical workplace, wherever possible.
  - All workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open.

- The government has produced guidance on traveling to work.

Covid-secure offices
As soon as practicable, workplaces should be set up to meet the new Covid-19 secure guidelines for offices. These include detailed practices for:

- Assessing and managing workplace risks
- Assessing who should travel to work
- Maintaining social distancing at work
- Managing customers, visitors, and contractors
- Cleaning the workplace
- Safely using face coverings
- Managing workforce to reduce contact between employees
- Avoid transmission through inbound and outbound goods

BEIS has also produced Covid-19 secure guidelines for construction and outdoor work, factories, plants and warehouses, labs and research facilities, other people’s homes, restaurants offering takeaway or delivery, shops and branches, and vehicles.