

The Representative Church Body COVID-19 Response Plan

Step 1- THE RCB Covid-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as an employer to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the Chief Officer and brought to the attention of all our employees, committee members, clergy and visitors, including suppliers and contractors.



RCB COVID 19 Policy Statement

The Representative Church Body is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our employees, committee members, clergy and visitors. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. All employees, committee members, clergy and visitors are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our workers
- provide up to date information to our workers on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- provide an adequate number of trained Worker Representative(s) who are easily identifiable and put in place a reporting system
- inform all workers of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the workplace to facilitate physical distancing
- keep a log of contact / group work to help with contact tracing
- have all workers attend an induction / familiarisation briefing
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the workplace
- provide instructions for workers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
- intensify cleaning in line with government advice

All employees will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions. This can be done through the Worker Representative(s).

Signed: _____

Date:

David Ritchie - Chief Officer



Step 2 - Responsible Persons for Performing Tasks

We have identified suitably trained person(s) to help with ensuring that the plan is implemented and checklists are completed.

Persons have been identified who have agreed to take responsibility for carrying out tasks such as:

- role of worker representative(s)
- use of checklists to identify any areas for improvement
- regular checks to ensure the plan is being implemented
- review of risk assessments and the safety statement
- renewal of statutory certification where needed
- training
- reviewing emergency procedures and first aid

We have consulted with the persons responsible for these tasks and have:

- briefed them on the tasks and their responsibilities
- entered their name against the relevant task(s) in the Responsible Persons table (see below) and asked each responsible person to sign to indicate their agreement with carrying out the tasks

Responsible Persons Task Register (Non-Exhaustive)

NO.	TASKS (non-exhaustive list)	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	SIGNATURE
1	Person responsible for overall implementation of the plan	David Ritchie	
2	Identification and training of worker representative	Eddie Hallissey Fern Jolley	
3	Planning and Preparing to Return to Work (Checklist No.1)	Catherine Smith Eddie Hallissey Fern Jolley	
4	Control Measures (Checklist No.2)	Catherine Smith Eddie Hallissey Fern Jolley	
5	COVID-19 Induction (Checklist No.3)	Catherine Smith Eddie Hallissey Fern Jolley	
6	Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 (Checklist No.4)	SM/HOD or Duty COVID Manager	
7	Cleaning and Disinfection (Checklist No.5)	Fern Jolley	
8	Employee Information (Checklist No.6)	Eddie Hallissey	
9	Worker Representative(s) (Checklist No.7)	Catherine Smith	
10	Return-to-work forms	SM/HODs	
11	Other:	Catherine Smith Eddie Hallissey Fern Jolley	



Step 3 - Employer Information

Employer Name:	The Representative Church Body	
Workplace Address:	Church of Ireland House Church Avenue Rathmines Dublin 6	Representative Church Body Library Braemor Park Churchtown Dublin 14
Director / Senior Manager in the Workplace:	David Ritchie – Chief Officer	Dr Susan Hood – Librarian & Archivist
Worker Representative:	Dr Catherine Smith – <i>Church House, Dublin</i> Mr Robert Gallagher – <i>RCB Library</i> Mr Peter Cheney – <i>RCB Office, Belfast</i>	
Type of Business:	Non Profit	
Number of Workers:	50	
Number of Workers who Deal Directly with the Public:	5	4
Phone:	01 4978422	01 4923979
Email:	office@rcbdub.org	library@ireland.anglican.org

Step 4 – Checklists



Return to Work – Planning and Preparing

The planning and preparing phase is critical to ensure a safe return to work and covers such items as information and guidance, return-to-work forms, identifying worker representatives, revising our induction briefing, identifying and putting in place control measures and updating our safety statements, risk assessments and emergency plans. Workers have been told to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, which have been explained to them, and the return-to-work form will be used to assess workers' health before they enter the workplace.

The following checklists will be used to audit and monitor Plan, the Return to Work plan.

- Checklist No. 1 - Planning and Preparing
- Return to Work Form

COVID-19 Staying informed

The Representative Church Body will monitor the latest updates and information from the following sources.

- **The Department of Health** <https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-health>

Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) www.hpsc.ie

The HPSC provide advice for the general public and for specific groups and settings including employers, healthcare professionals etc. The HPSC has issued guidance for businesses and retail sectors: <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/employeremployeesguidance/>

Health Service Executive at www.hse.ie .

The HSE have produced public health guidance for employers and employees: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/returning-to-work-safely.html>

- Updating Response Plans as Necessary

The arrangements to control the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, outlined in this plan, may change as Government advice and requirements are updated. Employees will be informed of any changes.

Information and training for employees

The Employees will be trained and instructed through the following Process.

- Online training on Church of Ireland website
- Periodic updates by email as required

Information and Training on the following topics will be provided –

- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- How COVID-19 is spread.

- Cleaning routines and hygiene controls (including respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, hand washing and physical distancing).
- Use of face masks.
- Use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g. thermometers, disposable gloves, masks, and disinfectants) as relevant.
- What to do if an employee or a member of the public becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.
- When individuals in the workplace have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Cleaning offices and public spaces where there are suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Rubbish disposal, including tissues.
- Travel Restrictions.
- Restricted Movement Advice.
- Familiarising key staff with the COVID-19 plan.
- Cross-training workers and establish mask arrangements to minimise disruptions

Consultation with employees

The employees will be formally consulted through the appointment of and subsequent collaboration with a Lead Worker Representative. The Representative Church Body recognise their legal obligation to consult with workers in matters of health and safety. The employees are at all times encouraged to offer their opinions and insights into the preventative and protective arrangements formal or informal means. All suggestions are welcome.

Raising and reporting issues and concerns

The employees may raise any issue either through the **Lead Worker Representative** or report directly to Eddie Hallissey or David Ritchie.

Identifying control measures

Control Measures will be identified through an ongoing risk assessment process. A collaborative approach will be employed using walkthroughs and task analysis to identify possible sources of transmission.

Revising risk assessments and safety statements

All risk assessments will be reviewed and amended as necessary on a risk based, phased basis. All staff will be consulted to identify any opportunities to improve the risk assessments. This COVID-19 response plan will be added to the safety statement and employees informed of the contents and revised risk assessments as required.

Updating emergency plans regarding social distance

There are no major changes to the emergency evacuation procedure. Social distancing will be maintained during the evacuation only where it is reasonable and safe to do so. Social distancing will be maintained at the assembly area.

Health screening employees before return/continuing to work (template form)

All employees will complete and submit the **Return to Work form** before returning to the workplace. Employees who have remained at work during the lockdown must also acknowledge their understanding of how to recognise symptoms and when to remain at home. The **Return to Work** form may also be used for this purpose.

Assessing individual risks/vulnerabilities

All employees will be asked to inform their Senior Manager (SM)/Head of Department (HOD) if they believe themselves to be in an at-risk group. Details of who might be in such a group can be found at

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

This will enable the SM/HOD to discuss with the employee the types of additional supports that can be put in place for their protection.

Staying home with symptoms

Workers will be informed through induction training, emails and safety briefs of the need to stay at home if they are symptomatic. The Return to Work form will be used as part of this process.

Lead Worker Representative

A Lead Worker Representative will be selected through a consultative and voluntary process wherever possible. In the absence of volunteers a worker will be appointed in keeping with the requirements of the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid19/return_to_work_safely_templates_checklists_and_posters/lead_worker_representative_poster_a4.pdf

The role of the Lead Work Representative is to work in collaboration with management, to ensure the COVID-19 response plan is being fully implemented. The lead worker will monitor the protective and preventative measures in place and report any non-conformities.

The **Lead Worker Representatives** are:

Dr Catherine Smith (Church House):

Robert Gallagher (RCB Library):

Peter Cheney (Belfast Office):

Consulting with workers about rosters/teams/breaks etc. (to reduce numbers exposed/contacts made and maintain social distance)

The RCB recognises the advice contained in Government guidelines that anyone who can work from home should continue to do so. Where there is a clear operational necessity for employees to be in the workplace, management will consult with staff to ensure that they can be provided with a safe working environment. This may require a number of changes to established working practices, including:

- The **maximum** number of staff who can be safely accommodated in the workplace has been significantly reduced.
- A weekly schedule, setting out who will be permitted to work from Church House or the Library, may be required.
- Senior Managers/Heads of Department will consult with their teams members to identify who will be required/permitted to work from the office, and when they will be required/permitted to do so.
- Discussions with staff members will consider the staff member's risk status, the operational needs of the RCB and the staff member's personal preferences.
- A restricted canteen service will be available and staggered lunch breaks may have to be introduced.

Induction training provided

The RCB online induction course will be completed by all staff members. This will include information on the following topics:

- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- How COVID-19 is spread.
- Cleaning routines and hygiene controls (including respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, handwashing and physical distancing).
- Use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and medical equipment (e.g. thermometers, disposable gloves, masks, and disinfectants) as relevant.
- What to do if an employee or a member of the public becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.
- When individuals in the workplace have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Cleaning offices and public spaces where there are suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Rubbish disposal, including tissues.
- Travel Restrictions.
- Restricted movement
- The COVID-19 plan.

Meetings/training/info sessions

All meetings, training and briefings will be conducted online or by phone whenever possible. Where in-person meetings are necessary they will be kept as short as possible, face coverings should be worn and social distancing guidelines strictly observed.

Identified activities with possible transmission to/from the public

Pay close attention to callers and practice good hygiene. Exposure to callers is generally short so should be a lower risk.

Prevention of close/physical contact as much as possible

Throughout the offices in Church House and in the Library we must maintain a social distance of 2m at all times. If there are occasions where it is un-avoidable to be closer than this, face coverings should be worn.

Deliveries and Suppliers

When ordering and receiving supplies, or arranging for maintenance to be carried out the following procedure should be followed:

- When ordering supplies or arranging for maintenance to be carried out, please ensure to get a date/time and provide a contact number and name for the supplier/contractor to call and confirm this or if they need to change it for whatever reason.
- If you are person ordering supplies/arranging maintenance you should arrange for the delivery to be made or the maintenance to be carried out at a time that suits you to be available. If you are not going to be available, you should nominate a colleague in your place and inform the supplier/contractor of the person's name and contact details.

- When the delivery is being made or the contractor arrives, the supplier/contractor needs to sign in, the same as a visitor, provide contact information and sign out when leaving. They should wear a face covering and ensure to sanitise their hands.
- Likewise, the staff member receiving the delivery/meeting the contractor should wear a face covering, sanitise their hands before receiving the goods/meeting the contractor and sanitise/wash their hands when finished and returning to their office.
- In Church House, deliveries for the kitchen should be made at the kitchen back door. Office deliveries/contractors should be made to /met at Reception. Office deliveries should be dated and quarantined for 72 hours under the stairs area in Reception. If it is a particularly large delivery that will not fit under the stairs it should be quarantined in one of the boardrooms for 72 hours, but this means the room will not be able to be used until the delivery has been checked and stored in its proper place. Non-perishable kitchen deliveries should be quarantined in the kitchen lobby, safely out the way, until the 72 hours is up and they can be put away.
- In the Library, a member of staff will direct the Visitor to wait in the hallway and sanitise their hands. The member of staff will at a safe distance direct the Visitor to the Reading Room area.
- As the Library building is too small to host meetings, as far as possible meetings will take place outside.

Business/work travel

No business travel outside the island of Ireland should be undertaken unless specifically authorised by the Chief Officer.

Use of Vehicles

When travelling on business within the island of Ireland, staff should not share a car.

Workplace set up, for physical distancing

A number of significant changes have been introduced to the physical layout of the offices in Church House and in the Library, particularly in relation to the erection of screens and the introduction of a one-way system. These changes are covered in detail in the re-induction training programme.

Particular attention is drawn to the new arrangements in the canteen in Church House. Seating capacity has been greatly reduced, and this may necessitate the introduction of staggered lunch breaks. A restricted menu may also be necessary.

Supporting workers with anxiety or stress

Staff are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their Senior Manager/Head of Department or with the HR Manager. Advice on managing mental health can also be found at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html>

Free online and phone counselling support resources are available at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/services/mental-health-supports-and-services-during-coronavirus/mental-health-supports-and-services-during-coronavirus.html>

Face Masks

Employees and visitors are asked to wear face coverings in all public areas of the building (e.g. reception, corridors, meeting rooms and toilets). Advice on the safe use of face coverings is provided in the re-induction training and may also be found at :

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/>

NOTE: This requirement does not apply to anyone who has an illness or impairment that would make wearing or removing a face covering upsetting or uncomfortable.

Further information on who should not wear a face covering can be found on

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/face-masks-disposable-gloves.html>

Gloves

The use of gloves is of little use in preventing infection transmission in the workplace. The virus can be transported from the surface of a glove just as easily as from the skin. Using gloves may give a false sense of security. Correct hand hygiene is essential.

Ventilation

Whenever possible, windows and doors are to be left open to facilitate general ventilation of enclosed places. This prevents a build of stale air and decreases the potential concentration of COVID-19 in any one area.

Workplace Cleaning Arrangements

Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made

- The person assigned to clean the area should avoid touching their face while they are cleaning and should wear household or disposable single use non-sterile nitrile gloves and a disposable plastic apron (if one is available).
- Open the window while you are cleaning.
- Clean the environment and the furniture using disposable cleaning cloths and a household detergent.
- Pay special attention to frequently touched flat surfaces, the backs of chairs, couches, door handles and any surfaces or items that are visibly soiled.
- Place all waste, including used tissues, and masks if used, in a plastic rubbish bag and tie when full. Place the plastic bag into a second bin bag and tie it, then clean your hands.

Toilet or bathroom facilities

These areas should be cleaned with regular bathroom cleaning products. Pay special attention to frequently touched sites including door handles, toilet seats, taps of washbasins, toilet handles, etc. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings.

Routinely clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended at this time.

Waste disposal

All waste, including used tissues and masks if used, should be put in a normal waste bag. Tie the bag when it is almost full. Double bagging should be used. Note the date and time on the bag with a permanent marker when the waste is placed in the bag. The waste bag should be kept for 72 hours, then thrown into the normal waste.



Control Measures

This section deals with the measures we are implementing to prevent or minimise the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and in our communities.

In keeping with Government guidelines and the Hierarchy of Controls, the RCB recognises that remote working is the single most effective method of limiting the spread of COVID-19 available to the RCB. All staff who can work from home are therefore encouraged to continue doing so.

Measures which must be complied with in the office include:

- Hand hygiene/Hand sanitising
- Respiratory hygiene
- Physical distancing
- Minimising contact
- Considering at-risk workers

The following control measures have been implemented:

- Informing and training the employees and managers
- Online Induction training
- COVID-19 Response organizational structure in place
- Homeworking wherever possible
- Hand washing
- Respiratory hygiene
- Cough etiquette
- Physical distancing
- Face masks where 2 m distance cannot be maintained
- Modified seating and working arrangements in shared spaces including the canteen
- Individual use of equipment wherever possible
- Increased cleaning of shared spaces and equipment
- Limiting numbers in the canteen
- Staggered break times
- The use of screens at reception & in open plan offices
- Workplace Signage
- Screening for vulnerable workers
- A stay-at-home policy for people displaying symptoms
- Development of an isolation protocol for employees with symptoms
- Designated isolation room
- Online and phone communications to replace face to face meetings wherever possible
- Visitor restriction
- Visitor control policies
- Contact logging via sign-in sheets

- Avoiding close contact situations
- A no handshaking policy
- The provision of hand sanitiser for all staff
- The use of paper towel to dry hands
- Avoiding interchange of team members
- Avoidance of gathering before and after work
- Controlled deliveries

Monitoring / Audit Process

- Checklist No.2 - Control Measures



COVID-19 Induction / Familiarisation

Employees need to be told about changes in the workplace and updated on new ways of working. Our usual induction, or workplace familiarisation, for new employees has been revised to include measures to help prevent the spread of the virus. The re-induction training will be carried out online with all staff required to self-certify that they have completed the training before being permitted to return to the office.

The following range of items will be discussed and brought to the attention of workers:

- Communication system
- Return-to work form
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (at home and in the workplace)
- Information on how the virus is spread
- Control measures to help prevent infection
- COVID-19 contact log
- Worker Representatives
- Changes to risk assessments and safety statement
- Changes to emergency plans and first aid procedures
- Minimising contact
- Reporting procedures

Monitoring / Audit Process

- Checklist No.3 – COVID-19 Induction



Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

This details our procedure to be followed in the event of someone developing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or while in the workplace.

We have assigned a COVID Duty Manager and put in place a system to manage this situation, and provided them with information on how to do this safely. We have also identified and marked an isolation area to be used to isolate the affected person from the rest of the workforce and procedures to be followed to enable them to safely leave the premises.

COVID Duty Manager

- If your Senior Manager/Head of Department is in the office, s/he will act as your COVID Duty Manager. If your SM/HOD is not in the office on a particular day, your COVID Duty Manager will be Ray Smith.

Isolation Rooms

- In Church House, the primary isolation room is the Meeting Room, situated between Boardrooms 1 and 2 on the first floor. This room will not be available for any other purposes.
- In the Library, the primary isolation room is the small room off the Conference Room. This room will not be available for any other purposes.
- In Church House, in case of the primary isolation room being occupied by someone with suspected COVID symptoms, the HR office will be vacated immediately and made available as a secondary isolation room. In the Library, the Librarian & Archivist's office will be vacated immediately and made available as a secondary isolation room.

Developing COVID symptoms whilst in the office

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties
- 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

If you develop any of the above symptoms whilst in the office you should:

- Phone your HOD or, if they are not in the office, phone reception and ask them to inform the Duty COVID Manager
- If you have not traveled to work by public transport, and you feel it is safe to do so, you should put on a face covering and return home immediately. Once you reach home you should contact your GP for medical advice.
- If you have travelled to work by public transport, or if you do not feel well enough to return home on your own, you should put on a face covering and go immediately to the isolation room. Once there you should contact the COVID Duty Manager to discuss arrangements to get you home or to a hospital, as appropriate. You should contact your GP for medical advice as soon as you get home.

NOTE: Under no circumstances should you use public transport to get home if you suspect you may be displaying COVID symptoms.

- **Monitoring/Audit Process** - Checklist No.4 - Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19



Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace

We have put in place an effective cleaning and disinfection system as regular cleaning and disinfection will help reduce the spread of the virus. We have arranged for frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, kitchen appliances etc. to be cleaned twice daily.

Toilet facilities and communal areas will also be cleaned twice daily.

If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is needed, this will be done in addition to cleaning.

Employees will be provided with cleaning materials to keep their own workstation area hygienically clean and advised to regularly clean any personal items brought in from home.

Cleaning staff will be given information and instruction in relation to the new procedures.

Monitoring/Audit Process

- Checklist No.5 – Cleaning and Disinfecting



Employees' Responsibilities in the Workplace

Aside from the usual day to day responsibilities that employees must comply with, the introduction of COVID-19 into society brings new challenges that employees need to be aware of so that the **Work Safely Protocol** can be implemented effectively.

Employees must keep themselves updated on the latest advice from Government and the HSE. They must also cooperate in maintaining the control measures put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and report any issues or concerns they may have.

Monitoring/Audit Process

- Checklist No.6 – Employees



Workers Representatives

We will appoint a worker representative(s) for each workplace or each work area to ensure that COVID-19 measures are followed. Worker representative(s) will receive training and information on the role and the measures that have been put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus. We will tell workers who their worker representative is.

Good communications channels in the workplace are essential for all stakeholders. Managers, supervisors and workers, should engage with the worker representative(s), to highlight concerns, report defects, submit ideas and identify improvements in the workplace.

The Lead Worker Representative Training will include:

- keeping up-to-date with the latest COVID-19 advice from government
- the signs and symptoms of Covid 19
- how the virus is spread
- how to prevent spread of Covid 19
- The contents and delivery requirements of Induction training
- How to communicate information to fellow employees
- The contents and reason for the Return to work form
- The selection and application of control measures
- Consultation arrangements and requirements
- Communicating with the employer
- The requirements of cooperating with the employer to maintain control measures
- Cleaning requirements for infection prevention
- How to perform a walkaround check of the control measures
- Reporting requirements and arrangements
- Recording of issues and corrective actions
- Response to a suspected case procedure.
- Isolation area requirements and selection
- Response team arrangements

- Follow up actions to a suspected case
- Maintaining the contact log
- Emergency plans and first aid; COVID-19 arrangements
- Representing the workers: listening to and raising issues and concerns
- Reporting concerns and issues
- Mental Health Care and communication.

Monitoring/Audit Process

- Checklist No.7 – Workplace Representatives