



The Manufacturing Technologies Association

Covid-19 advice 5 – 31st March 2020

Continuing to go to work

The Government's advice is that where employees can work from home they should do so; but if it is not possible, as is the case for many manufacturers, then employees should go to work if they can do so safely.

The advice, which is available [here](#), is below:

With the exception of [some non-essential shops and public venues](#), we are not asking any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on.

However, you should encourage your employees to work from home unless it is impossible for them to do so.

Sometimes this will not be possible, as not everyone can work from home. Certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work – for instance if they operate machinery, work in construction or manufacturing, or are delivering front line services.

See the [full guidance on work](#).

The CBI held a webinar yesterday which looked at which businesses should be open and how to operate safely. You can access the webinar and read about some of the topics that were discussed [here](#).

CBIL

The Government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans Scheme was launched to much fanfare two weeks ago, as one of the first business support measures to help the economy to cope with the crisis. The plan was make available up to £330bn of interest free loans to small and medium sized businesses to help tide them over.

However, when it was rolled out by through the Banks last week, initial reactions from businesses who sought to use the scheme indicated that availability would be patchy and conditions more onerous than originally advised. The MTA, along with other Business organisations, fed this back to Government, strongly recommending that what we believed were the intentions of the scheme were failing to be met on the ground.

Happily, the most recent feedback that we have had indicates that terms are changing, with companies that had been told they were not eligible being re-contacted with a revised offer and personal guarantees playing less of a part, or none at all. If these straws in the wind turn out to be an accurate weathervane for the direction of the policy, then it will be a really welcome injection of

flexibility on the part of the both the Government and the Banks. We will continue to monitor the situation, but in the meantime if you had been turned down last week or had been discouraged by what you'd heard it may well be worth revisiting your plans.

Government amends insolvency law to help companies keep trading while they explore options for rescue

Over the weekend, the Government announced plans for the temporary introduction of a new form of insolvency, based loosely on the American Chapter 11 system, to give time to save businesses that are coming under pressure very quickly.

Under the plans, the UK's Insolvency Framework will add new restructuring tools to give companies breathing space and keep trading while they explore options for rescue. The proposals will also include key safeguards for creditors and suppliers to ensure they are paid. The Insolvency Act will be temporarily suspended specifically to give confidence to directors to continue trading without the threat of personal liability, should the company ultimately fall into insolvency. Find out more [here](#).

Supply of PPE

You will be aware the Government made a request to UK Manufacturing to help supply the NHS with ventilators in response to the coronavirus pandemic, to which there has been a fantastic response, with many MTA members giving critical support.

The NHS is also requesting numerous forms of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to help protect their front line staff. A summary of the PPE being sought by the NHS in response to the coronavirus can be found through the following link (Pages 18 and 19):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876577/Infection_prevention_and_control_guidance_for_pandemic_coronavirus.pdf

If you think your company might be able to help with the manufacture, supply or distribution of these critical pieces of PPE then please register yourselves on the NHS supply chain website through the following link: <https://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/covid19/>.

Free webinar invitation: COVID-19 and The Good Work Plan

Members are exclusively invited to a **free webinar** on Wednesday (1st April) about coronavirus and its HR, Employment Law and Health & Safety implications. There will also be an important update about the Good Work Plan, which is still scheduled to be implemented in April this year.

Hosted by our partner, Citation, the webinar is expected to run for about 90 minutes and there will be an opportunity to ask their experts questions about the current situation and future changes.

REGISTER YOUR PLACE

It will begin at 3.30pm on Wednesday and you can register your place via: <http://tiny.cc/jeb0lz>

Places are first-come-first-serve, so please reserve your place today to avoid missing out.