

Capsticks COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Assessment completed by: Neil Middleton, Chief Operating Officer

Reviewed by: Jeanette Lucy, Director of Governance and Risk

Approved by Martin Hamilton, Managing Partner

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Introduction

This Risk Assessment has been completed based on current working arrangements for Capsticks where most members of the firm continue to work from home and will continue to do so until further notice, with a very limited number of staff working at our offices on a periodical basis with effect from 20 July 2020 alongside the Essential Services Team. The Risk Assessment will be reviewed regularly and updated as appropriate in light of any changes in current working arrangements (including any further phased return to working in the office), government advice and/or legal requirements and members of the firm will be consulted on those changes as appropriate.

Risk title	Description & consequence	Mitigation	Action
Spread of COVID-19 in the firm	<p>This will result in multiple individuals becoming infected and possibly seriously or fatally ill</p> <p>Vulnerable workers could be worst affected</p>	<p>Most members of the firm continue to work from home where possible</p> <p>Flexible start and finish times to reduce the number of people on site at any one time</p> <p>The upper occupancy limit in place for our offices at any time is currently 11% London, 8% Winchester, 16% Leeds, 18% Birmingham and 19% Chorley</p>	<p>Most members of the firm except a skeleton Essential Services Team (EST) have been instructed to work from home since 16 March and will continue to do so until further notice. With effect from 20 July a very limited number of staff will be given the option to work in the office on a periodical basis.</p> <p>N/A for members of the firm working from home. Standard hours of service for the EST working on site have been reduced from 7.00am to 8.00pm in London and 9am to 5.30pm elsewhere. Staggered start and finishing times are in place to help reduce any pressure on public transport services during peak hours.</p> <p>N/A for members of the firm working from home. The ratios in place allow for effective social distancing in each office.</p>

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		<p>Desks removed (or desks sealed with tape) to encourage physical distancing</p> <p>Closure of kitchen/canteen/communal areas and/or putting in place social distancing markers and measures in communal areas including kitchens and canteens</p> <p>No one reporting as feeling ill will be allowed to come to work</p> <p>Communication and awareness-raising posters referring to the above measures</p> <p>Enhanced cleaning regime, including for toilets, pantries and frequent touchpoints such as door handles, light switches, reception area using appropriate cleaning products and methods</p> <p>Hand washing awareness: see the NHS guidance</p>	<p>Any member of the firm attending the office will have an allocated desk at least 2 metres apart from any other member of the firm and be provided with their own personal equipment including a wireless mouse and keyboard. Given spacing screens not required.</p> <p>All satellite kitchens closed, main kitchen areas in each office have in place social distancing markers and where possible we have removed some of the furniture to help enforce social distancing.</p> <p>Water and machine produced hot beverages will continue to be provided, via disposable cup if necessary. Provision of any food will be paused and all communal cutlery, glass, tableware and mugs will be removed. Colleagues may bring their own cups, plates and cutlery for personal use.</p> <p>N/A for staff working from home. Any member of the firm attending the office will be briefed that if unwell they should not attend work and self-isolate where appropriate.</p> <p>Any members of the firm attending the office will be provided with a local office guidance booklet which has been put together by the firm to confirm the new measures and procedures in place. This includes details of social distancing measures/markers, hand washing, number of people allowed in lifts/toilets/shower facilities etc – cleaning materials will be provided to ensure cleaning takes place and “Wipe down after use” posters all in place.</p> <p>New enhanced cleaning programme in place with additional cleaning for high use areas including lifts, stairs, toilets, kitchens, showers, changing rooms and first aid room. Cleaners provided with uniform and any relevant PPE equipment deemed appropriate.</p> <p>Hand washing awareness posters in place in lift, entrances and toilet facilities</p>

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		<p>Sanitation products (hand sanitiser, cleaning wipes) widely available. Consider providing a 'cleaning pack' for staff with hand gel, wipes etc</p> <p>Reminding everyone of the public health advice through posters, leaflets and other materials made widely and prominently available: see government guidance</p> <p>Other steps taken</p>	<p>Sanitation products available outside of each lift, on each desk, in meetings rooms with doors and in toilet facilities. Hand gel and wipes for personal use also included in new hotboxes.</p> <p>Public health advice displayed at entrance, lifts, toilets and communal areas</p> <p>A plexiglass screen has been installed on the communal ground floor reception in London. This is not necessary for other offices as onsite reception is closed. A separate desk has been set up for external deliveries in every office which will be stocked with wipes and hand sanitiser.</p> <p>In preparation for a potential return to the office at a future date all desks in the office are to be cleared of all personal effects/non-standard issue items which will be stored safely to aid ease of cleaning.</p>
Spread of COVID-19 to clients or visitors	This will result in multiple individuals (partners, staff, visitors/clients and contractors) becoming infected and possibly seriously or fatally ill	<p>No face-to-face events permitted on site</p> <p>Face-to-face meetings discouraged with conference calls to be used instead</p> <p>Upper limit on meeting numbers determined by available room size</p> <p>Meetings staggered so no congestion possible</p> <p>Seats removed from meeting rooms to ensure physical distancing</p>	<p>All on site events through to (at least) September cancelled. Any contractors visiting site fully briefed on procedures/requirements in advance (non-attendance if unwell, social distancing, hand washing etc.)</p> <p>Both on and off site meetings are strongly discouraged save in exceptional circumstances and where appropriate measures in line with current government guidance are in place. Guidance has been provided to members of the firm and Zoom is available firm wide for video and conference calls.</p> <p>Upper limits on meeting room capacity has been put in place to ensure social distancing.</p> <p>At least 1 hour gap between meetings in place to allow for cleaning.</p> <p>Seats removed from meeting rooms in line with upper limits to ensure social distancing.</p>

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		<p>Enhanced cleaning regime, including before/between/after each individual meeting</p> <p>Sanitation products (hand sanitiser, cleaning wipes) available inside each meeting room</p> <p>No catering/refreshments offered inside meeting rooms</p> <p>Pre-meeting notification (if possible) sent to all attendees asking them to stay away if feeling unwell</p> <p>Temperature checks at building entrance will keep away any external attendee with an elevated temperature</p> <p>Physical distancing in place in reception/waiting area</p> <p>1-hour upper limit on meetings strongly advised and communicated</p> <p>No cloakroom service – visitors should look after their own personal items</p>	<p>Increased hours of day cleaning team to ensure cleaning measures in place.</p> <p>Sanitation products already available in all meeting room.</p> <p>No catering/refreshments being offered.</p> <p>Any visitors fully briefed in advance as part of meeting arrangements</p> <p>Given very low numbers visiting site not an appropriate measure at this time.</p> <p>Social distancing reminders in place.</p> <p>For now most of the meetings on site will be for tribunals, inquests etc so not appropriate.</p> <p>No First Impression Services available on site.</p>
<p>COVID-19 case (suspected) in our offices</p>	<p>This may result in the individual staff member experiencing medical distress on-site and could increase the risk of onward transmission of the virus among other people with whom the individual has been in proximity</p>	<p>If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of sense of smell in the workplace, they will be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance</p> <p>Everyone in the relevant office to be informed</p> <p>Managers to increase the frequency of contact with those they supervise during this time</p> <p>Majority of people instructed to work from home</p>	<p>N/A for staff working from home. All members of the firm attending the office fully briefed not to attend the office in the event of any signs of illness and if displaying potential C-19 symptoms in the office to self-isolate Immediately and call First Aider for assistance. Meeting room in each office set aside for temporary isolation if required and First Aiders provided with PPE equipment. Contacts will be advised to self-isolate.</p> <p>N/A for staff working from home. All members of the firm working on site in the relevant office will be informed in the event another team member on site has displayed symptoms. Contacts will be advised to self-isolate</p> <p>N/A in this context for staff working from home or in the office. Onsite Manager for EST in daily contact with all EST members.</p> <p>Majority of firm already working from home. In the event a member of the EST displayed symptoms we would seek to determine which services can be delivered from home or another office and redeploy team members accordingly.</p>

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		<p>Reemphasise that no-one feeling ill is allowed to come to work</p> <p>OPTIONAL: Temperature checks at building entrance should prevent anyone with an elevated temperature entering the office</p> <p>Maintaining up-to-date contact information (including emergency contacts) for all partners and staff</p> <p>Record keeping on who is in and where in the office on a given day to aid potential contact-tracing efforts and processes</p>	<p>Anyone feeling ill should not attend work, be that on site or off site/working from home.</p> <p>Given very low numbers visiting site not an appropriate measure at this time.</p> <p>Firm already maintains up-to-date information as part of business continuity process. Members of the firm can update via self-service.</p> <p>Head of Division/Director approval is required to attend any office and Business Services Manager is aware of and keeps a record of all team members and contractors who are on site each day. Additional floor walk check undertaken each day across all floors.</p>
COVID-19 transmission via communal resources or areas	This may result in increased risk of transmission, including to/from clients and visitors	<p>Marketing material (brochures and literature), newspapers and magazines removed from client reception area</p> <p>Information Services to develop a special protocol for cleaning all books, journals and other publications held in the open</p> <p>If advised that a member of staff or visitor has developed COVID-19 and was recently on the premises the management team will ask the local public health authority for advice, identify people who have been in contact with them and take on any actions or precautions</p>	<p>All marketing material and other literature removed from client reception and meeting rooms until further notice.</p> <p>N/A as not utilised given all staff working from home and service is now provided remotely. When back in the office books will be cleaned and quarantined for 72 hours.</p> <p>This process and any subsequent advice from the local public health authority will be followed by the firm.</p>
COVID-19 transmission via mail/packages	This may result in increased risk of transmission by handling of objects	<p>Cleaning protocol is in place for all incoming mail and courier packages</p> <p>Staff advised to clean any mail/post items delivered to their desks (wet wipes to be provided)</p>	<p>Separate desk set up as drop off point in each office for external deliveries.</p> <p>All team members involved in opening the post to wash their hands thoroughly after completing the task.</p> <p>N/A as no post physically delivered to desk.</p>
Mental health problems and poor wellbeing	This may result from increased stress caused by home-working and the lockdown, potential bereavements, increased caring responsibilities, elevated incidence of anxiety and depression associated with isolation, concerns about personal and family circumstances and job security	<p>Signpost to LawCare resources and the Law Society's mental health resources</p> <p>Increase volume of guidance materials and resources available</p>	<p>Added to Covid-19 resource page</p> <p>Signposted on Covid-19 resource page.</p>

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	<p>Staff members of BAME background and staff from other vulnerable groups or who live with a vulnerable person may feel more uncomfortable coming back into the office</p>	<p>Raise awareness of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) offering access to additional resources and support</p> <p>HR policies and working practices adjusted for home working and leave-taking to support working parents and carers</p> <p>Regular internal communications from senior leadership emphasising self-care and regular and inclusive communication. The emphasis should also be on honesty and transparency about the difficulties the firm is facing and how to best manage these together</p> <p>Regular communication of mental health information and an open-door policy for those who need additional support</p> <p>Provide assurance over measures taken to protect employees' health and safety</p>	<p>Included in regular all firm communication and signposted on Covid-19 resource page.</p> <p>HR policies reviewed and updated where appropriate, supportive working practices included in regular all firm communication</p> <p>Included in regular all firm communication</p> <p>Monthly reminders of contact details for the Mental Health first aiders</p> <p>Included in regular all firm communication</p>
Ergonomic injuries	<p>Insufficient chairs, screens, footstools, desks etc. may be available in the office</p> <p>It may be difficult to perform workspace risk assessments whilst maintaining physical distancing or if people sit in different locations each time they are in the office</p>	<p>Virtual self-administered workplace risk assessment module to be made available</p> <p>Where possible, people to be asked to bring their more portable ergonomic equipment (such as keyboards, wrist supports or mice) with them when working in the office</p>	<p>Individual workplace risk assessment for all members of the firm undertaken by on-line survey in June. .</p> <p>N/A to members of the firm working from home. All members of the firm working in the office to be provided with their own desk at least 2 meters apart from others along with personal equipment – including a wireless keyboard and mouse - allocated to them for their own individual use.</p>
Public transport virus transmission	<p>Crowded and unsanitary conditions on public transport services</p>	<p>Individuals who feel that they cannot travel safely to/from the office will not be required to do so.</p> <p>An interest-free loan/subsidy scheme that makes buying a bicycle very cost-effective and together with ample space for cycle storage on-site</p> <p>Travel Policy to make it clear that if staff members need to travel (for example to courts or to do site visits) they should not share vehicles or taxis, unless suitable</p>	<p>N/A to members of the firm working from home. Arrangements for members of the EST have already been discussed and agreed with them. Any other members of the firm currently attending the office are doing so on a voluntary basis only and again arrangements have been discussed and agreed with them. Parking at each office is offered where available and where public transport is required working hours will be allowed to be staggered to avoid peak times.</p> <p>Promote the interest free bike to work scheme via internal communication.</p> <p>Updated guidance has been provided to members of the firm and is now included in the Office Manual.</p>

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		distancing can be achieved	
Car/bike park virus transmission	Narrow spaces in the firm's carpark or bicycle storage area may elevate the risk of person-to-person transmission	Social distancing advisory notices displayed in car park	N/A to members of the firm working from home. Sufficient space in existing car park and bike storage arrangements although temporary policy members of the firm are allowed to bring bikes directly into the office and store these within their allocated area.
Safety and security at building entrance	There is a risk that individuals waiting for extended periods of time at building entrances due to physical distancing and temperature checks experience adverse weather-related health impacts or could be subject to opportunistic crime/harassment	Staggered arrival times for those attending the office should limit congestion Staff encouraged to arrive early before temperatures rise Building management to increase staffing at main entrance and increase contact with police	N/A due to size of onsite team and building arrangements. N/A due to size of onsite team and building arrangements. N/A due to size of onsite team and building arrangements.
COVID-19-related stigma and harassment	Risk that there is an increase in targeted harassment or stigma directed at individuals who have been ill or are from a specific ethnic background	Reporting channels to permit investigation and where proven appropriate misconduct procedures followed Partners and managers to offer support to staff who are affected by COVID-19 or have a family member affected Review Capsticks' bullying and harassment policy and remind managers of it Publish or signpost colleagues to facts about COVID-19 to dispel myths Ensure senior figures in the organisation issue and support messages about values and diversity and inclusion Diversity policies	Publicise Raising Concerns Policy – new version to be published shortly Heads of to work with HR BP team to deliver tailored support as appropriate. Review the policy and remind managers of the obligations under the policy Create a Covid-19 resource page on the Intranet Provide suitable messaging and monitor any concerns reported Provide reminder training
Non-compliance with government regulations	Risk that a member of the firm ignores firm's guidance	Communicate the importance of the adherence to the rules Stricter enforcement of rules against people continuing to attend the office while feeling unwell	Regular reminders sent as part of firm's SMT communication plan. N/A to members of the firm working from home. Strict enforcement is already in place underpinned by disciplinary sanctions as appropriate.