

COVID-19: Supporting your blind and partially sighted employees

R N I B

See differently

As lockdown begins to ease, RNIB is sharing top tips on how to support employees with sight loss as they start to return to the office.

Carry out a coronavirus risk assessment

Before restarting work, you should ensure the safety of the workplace and consider employees with sight loss by:

- carrying out a risk assessment (See **RNIB Factsheet** [bit.ly/3kMlcaK] on Risk Assessment for issues relating to sight loss)
- consulting with your blind or partially sighted staff or trade unions
- sharing the results of the risk assessment with your workforce and on your website in an accessible format for all staff.

Communicate changes to the environment

Make sure your employees are aware of any changes to the workplace, such as floor indicators, protective screens and temporary barriers. Ensure any temporary signage is in size 14 font at least – hand-written notes can be difficult for everyone to read. But where you can, explain any changes to your employees.

Make floor markings and protective screens accessible

Using tactile floor markers can help indicate one-way systems or boundaries and adding coloured tape around the edge of protective screens will improve their contrast and visibility.

Highlight hygiene stations

To keep everyone safe, ensure your blind and partially sighted employees

know where they can sanitise their hands and any equipment they are using. Don't assume everyone knows where it is. You may want to consider purchasing sanitiser which comes in coloured or opaque packaging to make it more visible

Be aware of social distancing challenges

Employees with sight loss will find it difficult to maintain social distancing, so try and support them where you can. This could include encouraging the rest of your workforce to be more aware of each other.

Additional support via Access to Work

The government's Access to Work scheme may be able to help advise on additional workplace adjustments, as well as provide financial and practical support for your blind or partially sighted employees. Visit www.gov.uk/access-to-work for more information.

Just ask

Providing up-to-date information about any new measures put in place is key. But above all else, make sure you speak to your staff. Your employees with sight loss are best placed to describe how they see, and what will be best to help them.

To find out more about how you can support your employees, call us on **0303 123 9999** or visit our website rnib.org.uk/professionals.