

THOROUGH EXAMINATIONS AND INSPECTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Allianz engineer surveyors are highly trained professionals at the forefront of safety and never more so than during this COVID-19 pandemic. During challenging times our engineer surveyors are doing what they've always done, keeping you, our customer, your workforce and the general public safe and delivering that service in a consistent, reliable manner.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

At the early stage of the pandemic, both the **Health and Safety Executive** (UK) and The **Health and Safety Authority** (Ireland) recognised the essential role of the engineer surveyor and issued guidance to industry and commerce regarding inspections and examinations. Duty holders were advised to co-operate with their inspection bodies and the engineer surveyors to facilitate the thorough examinations and inspections necessary to support the continued safe use of work equipment, plant and machinery, thereby safeguarding their workforce and the general public.

The HSE Guidance was last reviewed in October 2020 and remains the same as updated in June 2020.

Following the easing of lockdown in August, we re-instated inspections for non-essential service industries alongside those industries previously deemed as 'critical' to the national infrastructure. With the introduction of the Tier 1, 2 and 3 approach for regional Covid-19 controls, our stance has remained relatively unchanged because our risk-based control measures provide the principal means of safeguarding our engineer surveyors and customers. The latest announcement of a second lockdown from November is anticipated to impact non-essential service industries in way of gaining access to customers' premises. In the event that Allianz are unable to complete an inspection due to access then we will issue a PNA notice and seek to re-schedule the inspection with the customer.

HSE GUIDANCE

The HSE guidance on conducting examinations during COVID-19 now includes advice on all classes of plant where examination may be required including

what to do if an examination cannot be completed within the required time frame.

The legal obligation to ensure plant and equipment is maintained and thoroughly examined in accordance with relevant regulations remains in place and there have been no exceptions to workplace safety regulations granted. The HSE recognises that examination by a competent person is essential to the continued safety of persons. The enforcing authority expects duty holders (those who have control of the equipment) to make all reasonable effort to ensure examinations are completed at the correct time. The duty holder is expected to work with and co-operate with their inspection body by providing safe working arrangements which satisfy both parties' needs, for example safe and suitable access and emergency procedures.

Advice on safe systems of working during the COVID-19 pandemic for a number of industries can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

The HSE recognises there may be circumstances where some duty holders will find it difficult or impossible to conduct the required examination due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and has included guidance within their document advising what the duty holders should do in those circumstances.

The primary and overriding statutory obligation is that the equipment must remain safe. The advice is to remove the item from service until the necessary examination can be safely conducted. If removing the equipment from use is not feasible then additional measures should be identified to minimise any potential risk from continued use. This may be achieved by applying a robust risk-based approach to the decision making.

The HSE has clarified that conducting examination prior to re-opening would not

be considered normal business activity in respect of using furloughed staff.

If duty holders conclude that the equipment can be used outside of its testing period, they must document:

- the efforts that have been made to get the plant examined
- their decision making process
- the factors considered to justify their decision.

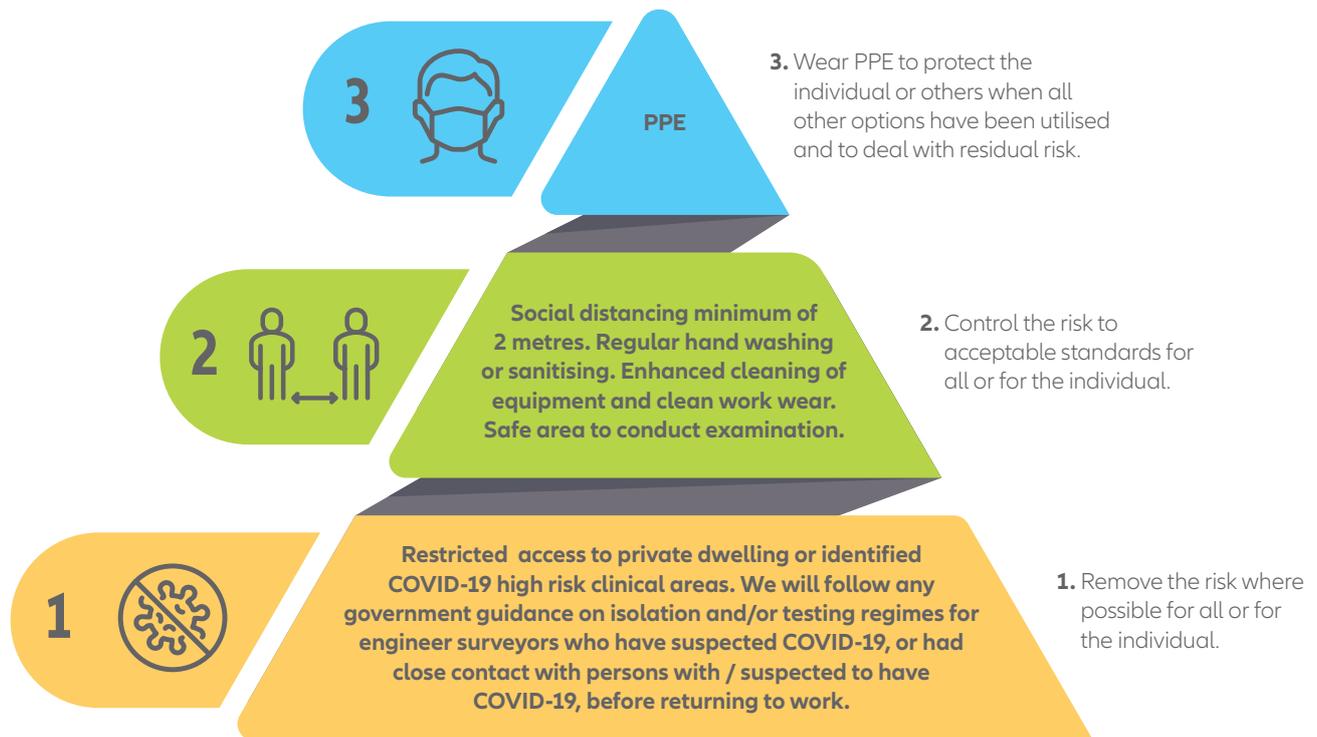
The exact scope of the risk assessment will depend on the circumstances and the HSE has provided guidance on what should be considered within the risk assessment as a minimum.

More information can be found in the latest **[HSE guidance document](#)**.

OUR APPROACH TO PROVIDING EXAMINATION SERVICES

Throughout the pandemic, Allianz has worked tirelessly on behalf of our brokers and clients by continuing to successfully provide a high quality inspection service which is fully accredited to both ISO45001 by Lloyds Register and ISO17020 by UKAS, (for which we have received re-accreditation in 2020). We have an extensive knowledge of health and safety and being presented with new risks is not unusual. We support our engineer surveyors in assessing risk by providing relevant information, guidance, risk assessments and PPE and by planning a structured approach to the inspection process. This enables them to continue to work safely, while carrying out their duties onsite and following Government guidance.

ALLIANZ HIERARCHY OF RISK CONTROL FOR COVID-19 PANDEMIC



SUPPORTING OUR ENGINEERS TO WORK SAFELY

It's most important to keep all equipment and plant examined and within date. We ask brokers and their clients to work with us, co-operate and facilitate the requirements of our engineer surveyors in carrying out essential work at this very difficult time. Our engineer surveyors will do everything reasonably practicable to abide by enhanced safe systems of work whilst on client sites and we request that you respect the guidance which they have been instructed to follow:

- Engineer surveyors have been instructed to contact their client prior to any visit, to ascertain whether the client can provide safe access and maintain a safe working environment.
- We've instructed our engineer surveyors to avoid public transport wherever possible and so we'd appreciate clients facilitating car parking for our visit wherever possible.
- Engineer surveyors require up-to-date information on your current COVID-19 status, regarding any symptomatic or suspected cases.
- Engineer surveyors require the use of wash and toilet facilities which have undergone appropriate sanitisation and cleaning procedures.
- Engineer surveyors have been instructed to avoid all unnecessary contact with paperwork, therefore all emergency

reports will be electronic only. Any signing in or out or completion of induction will be carried out verbally and clients are requested to complete any necessary documentation.

- We will follow any government guidance on isolation and/or testing regimes for engineer surveyors who have suspected COVID-19, or had close contact with persons with / suspected to have COVID-19. This protects our clients, their workforce and the general public. You may therefore receive contact from an unfamiliar engineer surveyor.
- We've instructed our engineer surveyors not to work in clinically high risk areas, patients/residents rooms except where the room is declared vacant and has been suitably cleaned prior to our inspection.
- Inspection in private dwellings requires the involvement of the client to ensure that safeguarding of vulnerable persons can be assured. In the case of extreme clinical vulnerability or shielding for Covid-19, our engineer surveyors have been instructed not to proceed with inspections.
- We've enhanced safety protocols for hospital and care home visits to protect our engineer surveyors and clients, minimising the potential for cross contamination from site to site.
- Engineer surveyors will only work where the client can **ensure two metres social distancing** between our surveyor and

the workforce or members of the general public on their premises.

- Standard PPE and face coverings are issued to our engineer surveyors in line with Government guidelines. Enhanced PPE required for given sites should be supplied by the client.
- Face coverings should not be considered a reason to reduce the two metre social distancing guideline.
- Should conditions change when we're onsite, we reserve the right to halt examinations at any point, should we consider that the safe system requires review. If the situation cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the engineer surveyor, he/she will advise his/her site contact and issue a suitably worded "Plant Not Available" notice advising of the reasons why the examination cannot continue.

Everyone at Allianz is committed to providing our normal high standards of service and reducing any disruption to our clients, operations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

For further important information and guidance for specific industries please refer to the following government guidance for the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

For the ROI: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/>