

International requirements for employers when lifting restrictions during Covid-19

Every country is experiencing different rates and peaks of Covid-19, but as many start to ease restrictions, international employers may need to adopt multiple strategies for returning to places of work, based on the government guidance in each jurisdiction.

We have summarised some of the key measures governments across the UK and international jurisdictions are adopting, which aim to start lifting restrictions and for workforces to return to some form of normality.



Face masks

The majority of countries will require face masks to be worn in the workplace, if social distancing measures cannot be maintained.

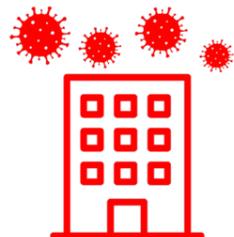
47% of the countries offering government guidance, have stated that face masks will only be mandatory within specific client facing industries, such as hospitality, the sale of goods, commercial and service sectors.



Track and Trace App

It is not mandatory for employees to download any form of Track and Trace mobile application in **81%** of the countries offering government guidance.

Installation of such tracing apps could be regarded as excessive intrusion into employee privacy. It is only permitted in Austria and Singapore, if the employee is provided with a work mobile device.



Fear of Infection

Generally, across countries, employees are not entitled to refuse to return to the workplace based on a fear of infection.

Across all countries providing guidance, **just over half** stipulate that employees cannot refuse to return to work onsite, unless there are clear indications that the working environment is unsafe or they have specific high-risk group concerns.

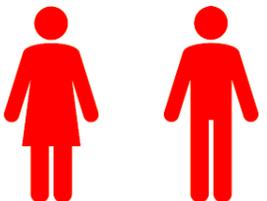
Health Screenings

Whilst very few countries have the authority to enforce mandatory health/Covid-19 testing on employees, **61%** of the countries offering government guidance can request for employees to be tested if they are displaying Covid-19 symptoms in the workplace.



Social distancing measures

100% of the countries offering government guidance, expect the same social distancing measures that are expected in public places, to be upheld in the workplace. This would see employees keeping up to 2 metres of distance apart from each other.



Countries implementing the most measures

Some countries within the APAC region were particularly cautious with lifting their workplace restrictions, such as Singapore, Thailand and China.

Singapore's guidance permits face masks to be worn while on public transport and in the workplace, temperature checks on arrival, social distancing measures within the workplace and various adjustments to be made to accommodate this, such as staggering work hours and mandatory downloading of track and trace apps on work mobile devices.

This data represents the situation in each jurisdiction between 11th – 15th May 2020 and the figures discussed are based on the jurisdictions which have published guidance relating to these requirements. To view the latest updates across multiple jurisdictions please visit the [Ius Laboris site](https://www.lewissilkin.com/ius-laboris).

To find out which measures apply to each jurisdiction please [click here](#) to view our table of requirements.