



Covid-19 Contingencies Plan

SAIF Members Information

Why a CoVid-19 Contingencies Plan?

In early March 2020 representatives from SAIF joined a number of National, Regional and Local Authority planning committees to ensure that the independent funeral sector was informed and represented in CoVid-19 Contingency planning activities.

As we move through the second wave a great deal of work has been done to ensure preparations have been made to support the various stages of death certification, funeral planning and excess storage.

In October the SAIF Scotland Executive tasked the CoVid-19 Contingencies Committee to develop a plan to assist SAIF independent funeral directors who experience a critical shortfall in HR or physical resources during the winter period and have exhausted all existing supply lines and local reciprocal agreements.

The plan focuses on utilising the funeral director, supplier and human resource networks across the UK to provide help if available to ensure the continuity of funeral operations.

It is important to note that the plan relies on third parties to have the availability of resources to assist. Extensive work has been done to extend the resource network as far as possible but there is always the possibility that with time constraints and challenges of Test and Trace isolation requirements there may not be the resources you require at the time of need.

The first step

The first step of the plan is to assist with preparing for the months ahead. Mitigating the risks of CoVid-19 in your business is paramount.

We are all well versed in social distancing and protective measures. It is important, now more than ever to ensure that these are maintained. In our profession we are not afforded the opportunity to remain 2 metres apart at all times. We work in close contact and in closed space environments on a daily basis, therefore adherence to the guidance provided by the Health Boards and Devolved Administrations is vitally important.

If you require any assistance or clarification on the guidance you can contact our Operations Lead is Joe Murren on the Slack channel or on **0141 628 9996**.

Stay Informed

Over the last 9 months SAIF Scotland have provided regular updates on a wide range of issues through the Slack app and it has proved very successful in keeping all our Scottish members informed and up to date with guidelines on Covid - 19. We have now installed a slack app for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and will in future use this to keep all SAIF members updated. Access to the app is available to any member of SAIF or designated staff within a member firm. As the demand on your own time increases, we would encourage business owners to nominate at least one other member of their company to join the Slack app to ensure that updates are monitored regularly.

We plan to send out invitations to join SLACK for your area and It is vitally important that you respond to this immediately to ensure you are registered on the app enabling you to receive information and updates.

To add another staff member to the Slack app you can email govliaise@saifscotland.org, message Dec Maguire or Joe Murren on Slack or call **0141 628 9996**.

Staff Planning

Typically, every funeral firm maintains a roster of casual staff to assist with an increase in demand for funeral services over the winter period.

Planning measures should include an increase in standby casual or temporary staff to accommodate:

- An unusual increase in demand to accommodate Covid-19 deaths.
- Isolation of key staff due to Test and Protect requirements

Back-up for key roles within your business

Wherever possible you should have a backup for each key role within your business in the event that any individual has to isolate.

This would include:

- The authorisation or ability to make financial transactions
- Sharing access to any password protected online booking / submission portals
- Mortuary Care / Embalming
- Funeral Director / Funeral Arranger

What does the Covid-19 Contingencies Plan Cover?

The Covid-19 Contingencies Plan (CCP) specifically addresses two types of assistance:

1. HR Resources
2. Physical resources

HR Resources relate directly to the staff required to ensure:

- The timely collection of the deceased
- The timely arrangement and booking of a funeral service
- Administration and Management Support
- The timely delivery of a funeral service

Physical Resources include:

- Operational and Ceremonial Vehicles
- Coffins, furnishings and other related products
- PPE
- Any other physical item that is vital to deliver funeral operations / service

How does it work?

In the event that a SAIF member business has exhausted their own contingencies plans and has suffered a severe business disruption due to:

- Key staff requiring isolation at short notice
- A severe shortfall of HR or physical resources that effects timely funeral service delivery
- A level of demand that exceeds the business ability to deliver timely funeral services
- Requires help or information on local support resources

Members can contact SAIF for assistance through the following channels:

1. Slack App – Direct Message Joe Murren or Dec Maguire
2. Email – sccc@saifscotland.org
3. Telephone **Slack Tech Support: 0141 628 0700**
4. Telephone Covid-19 Contingency Team (Urgent): 0141 628 9996
5. Telephone **SAIF Business Centre: 0345 230 6777**

The SAIF Covid–19 contingency team will make every effort to source assistance to ensure continuity of your business.

Finance

The provision of this service is free to members.

In the event you do require third party assistance from another funeral service / goods provider the cost of that service should be met by your business as you would in a trade hire agreement with another funeral business. E.g. From time to time you may require an additional limousine for a funeral service. Your business and the hiring party agree a fee for that hire. SAIF has no transactional role in the agreement between member firms or between a member and non-member firm.

SAIF has always maintained a small reserve fund of membership fees for the purpose of emergencies. Whilst it was never envisaged that we would be required to use these funds, Covid-19 has presented a unique challenge and one that requires us to designate these funds to support our members.

In the event that your business experiences a major business disruption event due to the isolation of key members of staff and we are able to source an interim staff member, an application for short term funding to cover the immediate and short term costs of transport and accommodation of the replacement staff member can be made to SAIF through the Covid Operations Lead, Joe Murren.

Business Continuity Checklist for November – March 2021

Whilst many of you will already be prepared for the months ahead it is important to continually review your business continuity plan.

We have prepared an easy to use checklist below:

Business Issues to Address

Not Started	Underway	Complete	
			1.1 Assign responsibility for Winter CoVid-19 planning and monitoring to a senior staff member
			1.2 Download the SAIF Slack App for up to the minute news on CoVid-19 guidance, news and legislation changes.
			1.3 Consult within the business to share information and processes.
			1.4 Consult with suppliers on measures they are taking and on potential disruptions to supply chains. e.g. PPE, Coffins, Furnishings.
			1.5 Assess 'high level' impact on your business and attach appropriate priority to the planning process
			1.6 Develop a business continuity plan
			1.7 Establish authorities, triggers and procedures for implementing plan including SAIF Scotland.
			1.8 Test the plan in exercises – e.g. Simulate the isolation of key staff and test the response of the business.
			1.9 Share best practice with other businesses through the Slack channel.
			1.10 Revisit plan periodically

Planning Issues

Not Started	Underway	Complete	
			2.1 Identify critical activities and the employees and inputs required to maintain them. e.g. collection of the deceased.
			2.2 Consider the possible impact of employee absences.
			2.3 Consider the possible impact of disruption to the supply of inputs from suppliers in the UK and overseas suppliers
			2.4 Examine the likely impact of CoVid-19 on your services and on your families' requirements
			2.5 Identify and agree strategic imperatives
			2.6 Understand the business need for face-to-face meetings should there be community transmission of CoVid-19 with a risk of person to person spread. Consider the potential for remote working.

			2.7 Establish authorities, triggers and procedures for implementing plan.
			2.8 Consider the issues for business related travel due to COVID-19
			2.9 Consider the financial management implications due to COVID-19
			2.10 Examine the extent to which others will be dependent on your business due to CoVid-19

Measures to underpin continuity

Not Started	Underway	Complete	
			3.1 Nominate deputies for key roles within the business. E.g Financial matters
			3.2 Cross-train, and identify alternative sources of labour. E.g Increase part time staff pool.
			3.3 Communicate with staff in a manner appropriate to the current state of CoVid-19 phase as guided by national recommendations
			3.4 Prepare emergency communications plan
			3.5 Plan for increased take-up of employee welfare services
			3.6 Prepare policies on sick leave and compassionate leave due to CoVid-19
			3.8 Plan for the needs of the business in the event of staff absences due to isolation.

Responding to Workplace Risks due to Co-Vid-19

Not Started	Underway	Complete	
			4.1 Prepare policies on hygienic behaviour for employees and visitors to premises as guided by national recommendations. Adhere to respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene policies.
			4.2 Plan to provide for hand washing, hand hygiene, tissue disposal and other facilities as per national recommendations
			4.3 Plan for frequent and effective cleaning of the workplace as per national recommendations
			4.4 Prepare policies as per national recommendations to advise those who are infected, or are suspected to be infected with COVID-19
			4.5 Plan measures to reduce face-to-face contact with customers / suppliers and between employees from different sites
			4.6 Identify work organisation measures that can be taken to reduce potential for employees who are in the workplace to infect each other
			4.7 Prepare policies on flexible work locations (e.g. teleworking) and flexible working times (e.g. shiftworking)
			4.8 Provide ICT infrastructure to support teleworking and remote customer interaction