

Guidance for Energy Assessors on property visits to conduct assessments.

General Guidance

On 11th May the Government issued Guidance on how social distancing and other measures might be implemented by employers in England to help protect their workforce and customers from coronavirus while still continuing to trade.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#overview>

Advice for business in other nations of the UK is available:

- [Northern Ireland](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)

The Government also issued Guidance on Working safely in other people homes during Coronavirus on the 11th May:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

The Property sector issued General Guidance and Consumer Guidance on 13th May:

<https://www.pepassociation.org/2020/06/02/industry-guidance-for-re-opening-the-home-moving-market-safely/>

Specific Guidance for Energy Assessors from Government

Working in people's homes as a tradesperson

Government guidance on home moving during the Coronavirus outbreak was updated on 21st May and can be seen here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

You will see that there is a specific section on Surveyors and EPC Assessors

PEPA Guidance

The purpose of this part of the guidance document is to provide Energy assessors with practical hints and tips on inspections while considering social distancing measures.

Note that:

- a. No work should be carried out in a household which is isolating because one or more family members has symptoms or where an individual has been advised to shield.
- b. You should not carry out any work if you, or anyone in your household has symptoms or where an individual in your household has been advised to shield.
- c. When working in a household where somebody is clinically vulnerable, but has not been asked to shield, for example, the home of someone over 70, prior

arrangements should be made with vulnerable people to avoid any face-to-face contact, for example, when answering the door. You should be particularly strict about handwashing, coughing and sneezing hygiene, such as covering your nose and mouth and disposing of single-use tissues.

Overriding advice, to be considered at all times, and in all circumstances is:

- Washing your hands more often than usual for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing, and blowing your nose.
- Reducing the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you do not have a tissue, and throw the tissue in a bin immediately, then wash your hands.
- Cleaning regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- Communicating with households prior to any visit to discuss how the work will be carried out to minimise risk for all parties.
- Maintaining social distance as far as possible.

Physical inspections of residential property

Energy Assessors need to provide the highest levels of service while maintaining social distance, ensuring the health and safety of consumers and professionals carrying out services in people's homes. In line with current government guidelines, we recommend the following:

Pre- inspection/ visit

- Act in a transparent and professional manner with all parties involved.
- Assessors should take all reasonable steps to ensure the client and property occupier are provided with as much information as possible about proposed conduct while visiting the property.
- Secure as much information as possible from the client and/or occupier prior to the visit and as part of pre-inspection research, including property use, occupancy, location and potential risk to occupants, including carrying out a pre-inspection risk assessment.
- Ensure client/occupier communication is issued and the visit, service and nature of the inspection are agreed by all parties prior to the inspection.
- Request that occupiers remain in a single location during relevant parts of the inspection, for example, restricting to one room, transferring to another location to facilitate a full inspection of the property.
- Request that occupiers open all internal doors, access hatches (i.e. loft) and windows so as to minimise contact with handles and other surfaces.
- Liaison with agents: avoid physical contact while social distancing measures apply and adhere to current social distance measures at all times.
- Minimise physical contact during key handover.

During inspection/visit

- Consider health and safety in relation to traveling to the property, accessing the property, carrying out an inspection and service delivery.

- Carry out a risk assessment including additional COVID-19 risks or concerns, as well as those risks or concerns that would normally be considered. This should consider risks to the occupier as well as to the Assessor.
- Whenever possible request that occupiers are not in the property to avoid physical contact and ensure compliance to existing social distancing measures.
- When this is not possible, it is important to ensure government guidelines are followed, including maintaining a 2m distance from others.
- Regularly wash hands thoroughly in line with current government guidelines prior to entering the property and during the course of the inspection if possible.
- Minimise contact with surfaces when inspecting the property.
- Keep a record of the visit in particular any limitations of the inspection as a result of the current restrictions.
- Upon leaving the property wash hands thoroughly.
- Dispose appropriately of masks and gloves and any other appropriate PPE used during inspection/ visit.
- Assessors should adhere to current PHE guidance relating to health and safety and PPE. At the time of writing there are no requirements for any additional PPE over and above that which would normally be used. While face coverings may only provide minimal protection against spread of coronavirus, their use may provide occupants with additional confidence.

Post inspection/ visit

- Any restrictions of information should be made clear and clearly stated in report/s and client correspondence.
- Note any limitations to inspection as a result of social distancing measures and health and safety risks.
- Highlight any risks and hazards found during the inspection with your client, depending on the service delivered.

Construction

Whilst most assessments will be done on existing buildings, some assessments may be completed on buildings that are being constructed, or around construction sites.

- You should only attend site if you are well and no one in your household is self-isolating.
- Energy Assessors should wash their hands frequently using soap and water for 20 seconds, and especially after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, on arrival at site, before and after eating, after using public transport, and when they arrive home.
- Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser should be used.
- Keep 2 metres apart from other site workers as much as possible.
- You should plan work to minimise contact between other site workers and avoid skin-to-skin and face-to-face contact.
- Where face-to-face contact is essential, this should be kept to 15 minutes or less wherever possible.
- You should try to use stairs in preference to lifts or hoists

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#construction>