

EA Restart Update

The Business Continuity Planning (BCP) Team continues to progress work to help EA return to normal operations and we want to update you on the progress we're making.

Overview of EA's Restart Plan

To align with the Northern Ireland Executive's five step plan, we have developed an 'EA Restart Plan' that clearly sets out our pathway to a return to business as usual. EA services will return to normal operations using a phased approach which will be prioritised by business criticality, when it is safe to do so, following guidance from the Public Health Agency (PHA) and Northern Ireland Executive. An overview of the 'EA Restart Plan' can be found below:



What services will return to offices first?

Services have been categorised by business criticality and in priority order into four groups; Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze.

- Platinum and Gold Services that cannot work from home will be required to return to the office first.
- Silver and Bronze Services will follow when it is safe to do so.

How do we decide the time is right to move to each step of our plan?

Progression to each step of our plan will occur when a risk and readiness assessment confirms all necessary measures are in place. The plan will consider the impact on all types of staff and their working environments. The progression or timescale is difficult to predict due to the impact of changing circumstances. As information becomes available through government guidance we may need to reshape our approach, and consider what is achievable under variant degrees of lockdown and social distancing.

The way forward - moving to step 1 of our plan

All necessary measures are now in place (which we will continue to review) and it is safe for us to commence the restart of our services. This means that we can move to Step 1 of our 'EA Restart Plan' and that some staff in Platinum and Gold Services where roles are critical and not fully operational from home will begin to return to the main office buildings this week.

How will staff be notified of a return to main offices?

Senior management and line managers have been notified by the BCP Team that the named staff members for Step 1 may now return to offices. You should discuss with your senior manager if your name has been included to date, or if you should now be added to the list for your service.

All staff where their role can be fully operational working from home should continue to do so regardless of their service category. Only staff identified and agreed with the service lead and names provided to BCP Team should be returning back to offices.

Measures we have put in place in offices

If agreed with your senior manager that you may now return to offices, you will notice that we have introduced new working practices across all of our sites to support the safe return of staff to our offices. We have:



Provided generic COVID-19 risk assessments for our premises to ensure a safe working environment for all our staff

Assessed office buildings to ensure social distancing can be observed in offices



Installed hand sanitizer dispensers at different locations throughout office buildings

Installed signage and posters to remind staff to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines



Increased the frequency of cleaning throughout the office buildings

Installed protective screens to protect reception staff



Identified first aid and fire marshals for each site

One-way systems will be implemented where feasible





Desks in Offices

As part of our building risk assessments, we have identified that some desks in offices do not meet social distancing requirements. This means that some desks will be unavailable for use by staff. These desks have been labelled with red 'Do Not Use' stickers. Any staff member authorised to work from an office buildings affected by this should move to the nearest available desk and take their ICT equipment with them. This is the first step in the process of increasing capacity in our buildings while maintaining social distancing. It is therefore important that all staff adhere to the new desk allocation to support planning for additional staff returning in subsequent steps.

Staff Guidance

We have developed guidance documents to support the safe return of staff to our offices. It is important you read these documents prior to first attendance at offices. Guidance includes:

- Guidance for staff returning to buildings.
- Guidance for staff working from home.
- Guidance on ICT support available during COVID-19.
- When you are notified that you can return to the office, you will be required to undertake Fire Safety Awareness Training. This training can be accessed [here](#).
- A FAQs section on the EA Website [here](#) and on SharePoint [here](#).

The information noted above will be made available on the COVID-19 Hub on SharePoint [here](#). Keep checking the COVID-19 Hub for new updates.

Introduction of new processes

We have also introduced some new processes to help keep staff safe.

Access to buildings processes to follow:

As per all previous communications, staff are reminded that for now, they should not access buildings unless authorisation has been granted to do so by a Head of Service and a risk assessment form has been completed and approved. Requests to access office buildings should only be made if business critical work must be done in an office and cannot be done remotely. We ask that those staff who have been working from home, continue to do so.

1. Ad-hoc visits to buildings by staff

Complete an online form providing information about their visit. This will allow for daily monitoring of capacity in the buildings, and also support track and trace efforts in the event of a member of staff reporting symptoms of COVID 19. Staff can access the form [here](#)

Meeting Room / Interview Space Requests

The use of meeting/ interview rooms will be limited to essential activity only, with only one or two meetings spaces available in each site. All meeting room requests must have the approval of an Assistant Directors, some limited pre-approval has been provided for a number of scenarios, for example Interviews and Appeals processes. A new process for booking rooms has been developed and the following form will need to be completed to ensure BCP have oversight of all requests. You can access the form [here](#).

Important to follow Public Health Advice

We all have a personal responsibility to ensure we follow the public health advice to help stay safe and work safe. It is important that all staff continue to:

- Follow the advice and guidance set out by the Northern Ireland Executive.
- Wash our hands regularly and in line with the best practice guidance.
- Have good respiratory hygiene in terms of coughing or sneezing into a tissue or the crook of elbow.
- Follow the social distancing guidelines
- Abide by the need to self-isolate either because you have symptoms or because you have been in touch with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for Coronavirus.

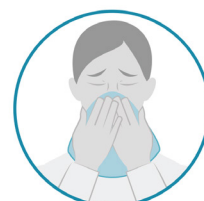
An approach that works for EA

We will continue to base our plans on what's best for the collective health, safety and wellbeing of all staff. This is a complex task and we are working to find the right approach. We plan to move to Step 2 of our plan at the end of July. For now, for most of us, our virtual business world continues.

Advice for stopping virus spread



Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel



Catch coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues



Throw away used tissues (then wash hands)



If you don't have a tissue use your sleeve



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are unwell

NHS

School Staff Update

Education Restart

We continue to work with Department of Education (DE) and sectoral partners on the Education Restart Programme. Last week, DE issued guidance setting out how special schools should plan for the new school day. A copy is available [here](#).

End of Term Thanks

As you approach the end of the school term, thank you again for your continued commitment and your highly valued support during this unprecedented time. The entire Education sector has come together as a united community and you have played a vital role the delivery of critical school and support services. We will continue to work together as we move forward to support our children and young people.

Who to contact if you have enquiries

We will continue to provide regular updates on our plans. If you have any enquiries in the meantime please email EA_BCP@eani.org.uk.