



Visiting Yards/ Client's Property for the Provision of Goods & Services

Standard Operating Procedures during Coronavirus (Covid 19) Protecting You and your Customers

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Introduction

These operating procedures are based on BETA's Retail and Manufacturing Operating Procedures and complimented by Sue Carson Saddles specific saddle fitting procedures and risk assessment (with the kind permission of SCS).

These are exceptional circumstances and the industry must comply with the latest Government advice on Coronavirus at all times.

Government, through both their recent [guidelines](#) and their [FAQ's](#), have made it very clear that it is important for businesses to carry on, providing they do not fall into the category of prescribed businesses such as specific retailers and public facing operations that have been asked to [close](#)

Equestrian businesses play an important role in the economy.

As an equestrian business who continues to trade it is important to trade in accordance with the Social distancing guidelines wherever possible.

Public Health England (PHE) advises that where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff. [What you need to know](#) .

This may take the form of appropriate PPE as well as changed work practices and client communications and other actions identified as part of your risk assessments.

Equestrian businesses operating during the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and customers and minimising the risk of spread of infection.

This guidance is intended to introduce consistent practices amongst professionals visiting customer premises of all sizes in line with the Government’s recommendations on [social distancing](#). Although written with the saddle fitter in mind they can be adapted for other professions visiting yards such as bit and bridle fitters, nutritionists, farriers and similar.

We are aware that emergency services are also under great pressure and may not be in a position to respond as quickly as usual. The health and safety requirements of fitting saddlery must not be compromised at this time. If you cannot carry out your work safely, it should not take place and a record should be noted and kept.

You should ensure that you and your employees follow these Operating Procedures at all times, aimed as they are at protecting you, them, their colleagues and families, your customers and the UK population.

It is also suggested that you advise your insurance company of your intention to undertake client visits and provide them with a copy of your procedures, if requested.

If appropriate procedures are not consistently implemented you may be required to cease activity.

1. General Principles

Social distancing	Fitters and clients must always observe social distancing advice, or additional measures should be brought into action. Social Distancing Guidance										
Self-isolation	<p>Anyone who meets one of the following criteria should not undertake fitting work or go to work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a high temperature or a new persistent cough - follow the guidance on self-isolation • Is a vulnerable person (by virtue of their age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or are pregnant) • Is living with someone in self-isolation or a vulnerable person. <p>Checking on this and status should be part of the pre-visit check</p> <p>Symptoms to look out for include:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="459 1532 1385 1731"> <tr> <td>• Unusual tiredness</td> <td>• Fever or high temperature</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Dry cough</td> <td>• Aches</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Pains</td> <td>• Nasal congestion</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Runny nose</td> <td>• Sore throat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Diarrhea</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	• Unusual tiredness	• Fever or high temperature	• Dry cough	• Aches	• Pains	• Nasal congestion	• Runny nose	• Sore throat	• Diarrhea	
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Persons at increased risk	Anyone who has been advised by the doctor that they are at an increased risk should not go to work. Any client that is also in this category, should ideally not be visited for a fitting unless additional measures are put into place at all times during the fitting. Checking on the up to date status should be part of the pre-visit check.										
Persons defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable	Anyone identified in this category has been advised by the doctor and must follow the guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable people. No fitting should take place at this time until clearance is given from the government that all restrictions are lifted Checking on the up to date status should be part of the pre-visit check.										
Living with a person in one	Anyone living with anyone in the above group is at increased risk and should follow stringently the guidance on social distancing and minimize contact outside										

of the groups above	the home. It is not recommended that a fitting take place at this time. Checking on the up to date status should be part of the pre-visit check.
If you fall ill	If you fall ill, or display any of the symptoms above you should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the office is informed immediately. Consider advising clients visited recently of heightened risk. • Return home immediately • Avoid touching anything • Follow guidance on self-isolation before returning to work.

Driving to and Visiting Clients' Yards and Properties

In the Government guidance published on 27 [March](#) (questions 4 & 5), it clearly states “that you may travel for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home. Certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work. This is consistent with the Chief Medical Officer’s advice.

Important points to remember

Driving to appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always travel alone in the company vehicle, unless with a family member with whom you live. • The vehicle should be cleaned regularly, using gloves and standard cleaning products, paying particular attention to the wheel, handles and areas that anyone could have had contact with. • Minimize times of refilling, if possible, use the same service station (close to home). Gloves to be worn at the services and wipes used on any areas touched on the vehicle. Used PPE to be disposed of appropriately. • Keep a record of areas visited including service stations/ stops / food if purchased away from home, in case there is a need to track back should the virus be contracted. • Limit or minimize the volume of clients visited on any one day. • Allow and plan for additional time for hand washing and implementing protective measures to yourself and the stock. • In the case of break down or other issue avoid public transport at all costs, if possible. • Plan the journey to minimize travel time on the road and stay in the vehicle whenever possible. • Prior to every visit contact should be made either by email, text or WhatsApp with a request to confirm the status on the yard and confirm what your requirements are during the visit. • Clients must accept that they allow you to visit their yard entirely at their own risk and if at livery should obtain the permission of the yard owner. • See Appendix A for suggested text.
At the appointment/ client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits should only be made to existing yards, where you are aware of the set up to ensure social distancing takes place. Any new yards/ clients requesting a visit, should only be agreed to during this time after an individual risk assessment of the yard has taken place, based on the details given by the client in accordance with this SOP. • On arrival at the yard, consider parking arrangements for any other additional vehicles that may be there already or that may be arriving during your visit. • Hand washing facilities should be made available at all yards

	<p>visited with soap and water whenever possible for the fitter and hands washed on entering. If this is not possible at the yard, hand sanitizer should be carried and used and then surgical or nitrile gloves should be worn whilst at that yard and dealing with the client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitizer should be minimum of 70% alcohol based to be effective. • The Client has a responsibility to ensure that there are always adequate supplies of soap and water or sanitizer whilst the fitter is on site and that the area is clean. If this is not found to be the case the fitter should request an alternative area and report back to head office, or LEAVE. By agreeing to the visit, the client has a responsibility to supply this.
Toilet facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash/ sanitize hands before and after using the facilities. • If using soap and water, disposable hand drying methods should be provided. • Put on a new pair of gloves after using the facilities. • Dispose of used gloves appropriately. • Avoid portable toilets whenever possible.
Food and Drink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take you own food and drink with you on visits. • Do not accept offers of either and advise clients beforehand of this. • If appropriate use disposable cups, plates and utensils.

Procedure Prior to Appointment

Carry out a risk assessment prior to confirming your visit to enable you to better assess appropriate procedures. Refer to Risk Assessment document available from BETA.

Procedure during the Appointment

Social distancing should be maintained whenever possible and additional measures and PPE should be used throughout. **N.B. If the service provider is not feeling well then he/she should not travel or attend work and visits.**

Eliminate Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified areas, of limited or no traffic, should be designated for the fitting by the yard or property. • The service, eg. Fitting, should take place in an open area such as an outdoor school whenever possible. • Maintain social distancing unless unavoidable. • Client to bring horse with bridle on and head collar over, to specified area to be tied by owner, for fitter so ready for measuring and fitting. • If horse is not trained to stand quietly whilst tied, the fitting should not start as this places the fitter/service provider at risk. • Fitter to wipe over any existing saddle/ girth before touching and altering. • Fitter to place on the horse and tighten girth ready for the client. • New saddles, identify types required, can be placed safely against van or wall for client to view/ discuss. • Saddles to be wiped before returning to van along with all items used during the fitting. • Consideration needs to be given to the effect of sanitizer on leather.
Reduce risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When social distancing cannot be maintained, fitter should take additional measures i.e. appropriate face mask and gloves to be worn by fitter and client. Please see BETA note on face masks. • It is recommended that long sleeves be worn wherever possible. • Consider wearing eye wear, such as sun glasses or other forms of eye protection which can also reduce the risk of infection. • When checking the clearance on the saddle gullet- fitter to stand at the front of the saddle and client to look away from the fitter/ behind them at

	<p>all times until instructed by fitter to do otherwise. Fitter to consider the implications of the rider twisting and placing their weight differently to when sitting normally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When checking or pumping the airbags, fitter to be at the back of the horse and client must remain looking forward until instructed to not do so. • If applying new blocks to the saddle- this can be done under instruction from the fitter to the client in order to place them correctly
Isolate risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure visits are not at the same time as other service providers (feed merchants/farriers/vets) and at quiet times on the yard when lower numbers of staff and other riders are on the yard whenever possible. • If present, ask that clients' friends or associates watch from a safe distance beyond 2m.
Control risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If working within the social distancing limit, restrict this to 15 minutes maximum and ensure PPE (face mask and gloves) is worn.
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be used as appropriate by both the service provider and the client to protect both, especially where social distancing requirements cannot be maintained. • All items to be wiped if the client has touched them (blocks/saddle) before service provider touches them. • Single use PPE should be disposed of appropriately and not re-used
Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients must agree to the conditions laid down by the service provider prior to visit. • The measures necessary to minimize the risk of the spread of the infection need to be observed by everyone. We are all responsible for our own actions in the fight against Covid19. • Hygiene is key to the control of the virus. Coronavirus is passed from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. • Encourage an open and collaborative approach to the fight against this virus. You should openly discuss any issues that arise and address them appropriately. • It is important that you observe isolation away from your clients as much as possible to ensure that you not only do not put yourself at any further risk, but also reduce the risk for your clients. Please make it clear to them that it is as important to them as to you that you both follow these procedures.

Payments

During this time, the client should be made aware that it is preferred that payment be made by BACS/ card payment/ Prepaid via the office.

Avoid cash or cheque payments at this time due to this increasing the risk of transmission as well as restricted access to banking facilities and their inability to accept cash payments. If payment must be made in cash, this should be counted out in front of the fitter and the placed in a sealed envelope and presented to the fitter as so.

Consider prepayment before the visit if you think the client will not take the measures sufficiently seriously.

First aid and emergency service response

The primary responsibility of first aid is to preserve life and first aid should be administered if you are required to do so until the emergency services attend.

- Consideration must also be given to the fact there may be potential delays in emergency responses due to the current climate.
- Ensure you advise the office if you have been involved in an incident whilst fitting and consider whether it needs reporting under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). Familiarise yourself with the requirements for reporting during the Covid-19 pandemic. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm>

Cleaning

Enhanced cleaning procedures should be in place during this time particularly in communal areas at touch points:

Be aware of

- Taps and washing facilities
- Toilet flush and seats
- Stable doors, arena gates, handles, grooming tools, yard equipment
- If fitting, saddles, blocks, girths, bridles, bits, templates etc.
- If offering other services, relevant equipment such as weigh tapes etc.
- Other items: Pens, iPad, paperwork, payment devices, telephone if used whilst on the yard and briefcase.
- Vehicle surfaces and door handles etc.

Ensure that any item taken out of the vehicle is thoroughly wiped before returning it to the vehicle. (which should be treated as a sterile area) and to avoid cross contamination to sterile items inside the vehicle.

- Boots / shoes / footwear should be sprayed or dipped before getting back into the vehicle.
- Any PPE should be removed and disposed of appropriately before getting into the vehicle and leaving the yard.

APPENDIX A

Example of Note to customer prior to visit

I am due to visit you on DD/MM/YY to carry out XXXXXX (eg Dietary advice or saddle fit on Name of Horse for Client Name)

If you have any symptoms at all of coronavirus or have been in contact with anyone who has please advise me and rearrange the appointment.

I will not require food or drink.

Please set aside a clear space for me to park in, away from other vehicles and people.

I require hand washing facilities with soap, water and paper towels (or other form of disposable drying means) but if this is not available please advise me in advance to ensure that I have the necessary sanitizer available.

I require your horse or pony ready for me and would ask that you minimise contact with me unless required as part of the service being provided. I may require you to wear PPE such as a face mask and gloves. If you do not have this available please advise so I am prepared and able to provide.

I will not be accepting cash payments so a bank transfer (on the day/in advance/within 24 hours) would be appreciated. Please advise if this is not possible. [add bank details here to avoid delay]

You accept that my visit to your yard is entirely at your own risk and if I am not visiting you are your own yard, that you have obtained the permission of the yard owner for me to attend you and your horse(s).

Please acknowledge receipt of this note and confirm acceptance of the requirements set out above.