

## Federation of Master Builders

# Guidance for clients on building work during the coronavirus pandemic



The Federation of Master Builders (FMB) is the UK's leading trade association for small and medium-sized building companies, setting standards and offering support since 1941.

The Government advised on 10 May 2020 that work should recommence in several sectors in England, including construction. The FMB supports the policy that the building industry should return to work, **provided it is safe to do so**. The FMB has also issued guidance to members, **to help them decide whether work can be carried out safely on their specific site, and what steps they might consider putting in place as they return**.

The FMB member, as the responsible building contractor, must make the decision about whether work can be carried out safely or not, in collaboration with their client. It is important to note that clients also have responsibilities under [Health and Safety law](#). The FMB is advising members and their clients to work together collaboratively to ensure that work can be completed safely.

FMB members are committed to protecting the health and safety of their workers, workers' families, their supply chains, their clients, and the public. They will therefore take the following factors into account when deciding whether it is safe to return to work:

- Their own health and that of their workers;
- The health and status of any clients or others who are resident on site (for example whether anyone is vulnerable, or self-isolating);
- The specifics of the particular site and tasks required to complete the project. For example, the layout of the building, whether sections can be isolated, and whether the work can feasibly be carried out without compromising safety; and
- Current relevant Government advice for [England](#), [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) or [Wales](#).

If planning to start or restart building works when it is safe to do so, members and clients should discuss measures to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus. This may include agreeing working hours on site, access to tap water for hand washing, calling ahead each day to check the health of residents at the property, and agreeing access to the site.

In most cases applying the additional safety precautions required to maintain social distancing and adhere to other health and safety measures, will mean that work takes longer, which could affect the cost of the work. Clients are encouraged to maintain open lines of communication with their builder and not to apply pressure to return to work if it is deemed not safe to do so.

Before work goes ahead, it is important for clients to also address any concerns from neighbours and reassure them that works are being carried out in accordance with health and safety guidelines.

**Further guidance from the FMB on restarting building work is available on the [FMB website](#). Call the FMB on 0330 333 7777 or email [membership@fmb.org.uk](mailto:membership@fmb.org.uk).**

*Disclaimer: This document offers general guidance only, and official advice is changing daily. Members and clients should check official sources of information before making any decisions about how to proceed and keep the situation under review.*