

## **RETAILERS SELLING SHOES, CLOTHES AND SOFT FURNISHINGS**

Some tips and suggestions for Officers advising businesses. This is not comprehensive or mandatory and is intended to give officers a starting point when considering these matters and advising businesses.

Other guidance directed at the retailer can be found at;

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-retail-sector-guidance/>

<https://www.usdaw.org.uk/BRCguide>

It is normal practice whilst retailing shoes, clothes and soft furnishings to display them for sale in such a manner that the customer can touch them to feel for quality, softness, drape etc and also to facilitate trying on for fit. These practices can provide an opportunity to spread coronavirus.

The business owner should assess the risks from Coronavirus and may want to implement the following:

### **1. General**

- a. Provide a hand sanitizing station and masks at the entrance of the premises and encourage shoppers to use it on entering and leaving the shop
- b. Advise customers to not use purchases for 48 hours in case they have been contaminated by others.
- c. Ensure goods in contact with customers are sanitised or quarantined for an appropriate time.
- d. Where seating is provided in stores ensure that these are washable (particularly for shoes fittings and general retail). If soft furnishings are in place advise that these are covered to ensure that they can be effectively cleaned.

### **2. Shoe sales and measuring of children's feet**

The measuring of feet is considered essential by many for the purchasing of children's shoes. To carry out this activity effectively it will require the shop assistant to come within the 2m physical distance zone and to use shared equipment (measuring plate). It is suggested that;

- a. The measuring of feet should be arranged on an appointment basis where possible
- b. Shop assistant wear disposable gloves or washes hands after the measuring/shoe fitting of every customer
- c. All the adults wear face coverings
- d. Consider providing 'single-use' foot coverings for customers who come to try on shoes with bare feet
- e. Sanitize the foot measurer before and after use
- f. Shoes that have been tried on and rejected are then wiped with sanitizer before returning to stock or alternatively and especially if a delicate fabric or finish, quarantine for 48 hours before putting back to stock
- g. Advice is given to the customer at sales point to wipe down the purchased shoes with sanitizer if to be worn immediately or keep in quarantine for 48 hours before use.

### **3. Bra Measure Service**

It is recommended a bra measure service is not provided for customers at present because;

- a. The customer and shop assistant will usually have to be together in a changing cubicle for privacy reasons and changing cubicles are generally small and poorly ventilated
- b. Measuring involves the shop assistant being in very close proximity to the customer and being face to face
- c. Checking of the fit and adjusting the bra involves physical contact with the customer and being face to face
- d. It is normal practice to try on numerous garments which would require some sort of mitigation such as quarantine for 48 - 72 hours, as appropriate, before going back into sales stock

#### **4. Formal and occasion wear (e.g. wedding dresses)**

It is normal practice for the purchaser (e.g. bride) to try on many garments before choosing the correct one which will then need to be fitted and altered. The nature of many wedding/evening gowns is that they often require assistance to fasten complex laces, hooks and eyes, or buttons which will require entering the 2m physical exclusion zone.

The more exclusive outlets are often on an appointment basis which will allow for better control of coronavirus measures. The following practices are suggested;

- a. All adults involved in the trying on and fitting of clothing to wear face coverings
- b. Hand sanitizing station or access to hand washing facilities be made available for customer and staff use
- c. The assistant is often in close, face to face proximity to the customer trying on the clothing to do up fastenings or put in the temporary alterations to make fit. This activity should be minimised as much as possible and the shop assistant wear gloves and a face covering
- d. All clothes, shoes and accessories tried on will need to be either quarantined for 48 hours before the next customer or disinfected. Fabrics can be disinfected by steaming and shoes and accessories by disinfectant wipes
- e. Changing rooms (general clothes retailers) – it is recommended that changing room facilities are not provided as they are generally small, have multiple hand contact areas and do not allow staff or customers to physically distance easily. In addition, many items of clothing would need to be kept out of stock circulation for 48 hours which is impractical.
- f. Changing rooms (exclusive, appointment basis) – it is recommended that an area of the store or separate room is set aside for changing and privacy is provided by the use of screens. There should be sufficient room for the customer and assistant to separate to 2m, the area capable of being naturally or mechanically ventilated and disinfection of hand contact surfaces should take place after each use.
- g. Returned items of clothing – ensure they are quarantined for 48 hours before going back out on sale.

#### **5. General clothing retailers**

- a. Changing rooms – consider keeping changing rooms closed as they are generally small, have multiple hand contact areas and do not allow staff or customers to physically distance easily. If this is not possible, you must have a colleague in place at all times to ensure social distancing is maintained and introduce additional cleaning measures to

- make sure hand contact surfaces are disinfected on a regular basis.
- b. In addition, many items of clothing that have been tried on would need to be kept out of stock circulation for 48 hours which is impractical.
  - c. Remove or limit customer seating in store. If seating is provided, space out appropriately.
  - d. Stop services which require direct interaction with customers such as providing make up advice, nail bars or personal shopping.

**6. Furniture salesrooms with fabric upholstery/mattresses etc.**

It is normal practice to view and “try out” sample stock for large items of furniture such as sofas and beds. These items could potentially be handled by multiple customers in a day and thus could spread coronavirus

- a. Provide notices to customers to advise sanitizing and/or washing their hands before and after touching/examining goods
- b. Consider the use of plastic coverings for mattresses that can be cleaned down with disinfectant wipes on a regular basis
- c. Consider the use of spray disinfectants on upholstery and fabrics on a regular basis
- d. Advise customers to leave unwrapped, purchased soft furnishings such as cushions, towels, and throws for 48 – 72 hours, as appropriate, in quarantine before using them