

BAEM Covid-19 Health and Safety Guide

Introduction

BAEM workers contribute considerably to every sector in the UK and are essential to the UK economy and fighting the threat of Covid-19 at all levels.

Data from the UK and overseas shows that the Covid-19 virus has a disproportionately significant impact on black and Asian ethnic minority people.

- People of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity
- People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to people of White British ethnicity
- The reasons for this effect on people from a BAEM background are complex.

Underlying health conditions, e.g. higher levels of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, alongside gender, physiological, and socio-economic factors, need to be considered together with the current science. Please refer to PHE guidance:

[Disparities in the risk and outcomes of Covid-19](#). Also see the follow up guide: [Beyond the data: Understanding the impact of Covid-19 on BAEM groups](#).

BAEM-sensitive risk assessment considerations

Workplaces should consider setting up a specific task group to manage BAEM sensitive issues related to COVID 19, this should include the most senior people and union reps. Risk assessments need to incorporate and take into account any additional controls that would assist in reducing the burden of Covid-19 on the BAEM workforce.

Ensure that risk assessments involving BAEM employees addresses the elevated risks of COVID -19 for this group, using this guidance to inform decisions and implement control measures. Employers have a duty to consult union representatives on all health and safety matters, this includes how they manage elevated risks to BAEM employees from Covid-19.

Additional controls

- As part of a back to work process employers should assess and prioritise who can return, taking into account any specific vulnerabilities they may have.
- Organisations should arrange virtual meetings with BAEM employees to discuss concerns and issues and what support they will need
- Working from home where possible
- Flexibility in start and finish times to allow for social distancing on journeys
- If possible select jobs that can accommodate physical barriers.
- Social distancing needs to be stringently followed, BAEM groups not given tasks which may lead to short breaches
- Consider temporary redeployment with no loss of pay or benefits
- Devices are available that alert the user if they are about to breach 2 metres and lets them have a personal warning. Consider using these items.
- Diligence in achieving social distancing should be monitored along with regular, thorough hand-washing
- Cleaning of work areas, and the use of personal protective equipment where needed
- BAEM employees may be worried about their own and their family's health, and extremely worried about coming back to work
- Provide counselling services for BAEM group and a service which allows sign posting to various support organisations.

Risk Assessment process

This document offers practical solutions for BAEM workers in regards to, additional control measures that can be put in place as part of a risk assessment. For guidance on the risk assessment process please see [Unite risk assessment guide](#) on Unite COVID 19 web pages.

Also check the [NHS risk assessment tool](#) that advises on how to calculate risks for BAEM and those with additional health issues and a higher risk of developing more serious symptoms.