



Social Distancing in Jewellery Stores: Preliminary Guidance

This preliminary guidance aims to help NAJ members and supporters with a list of things to think about when deciding how to go along with government advice as well as considerations for the reopening of their Jewellery stores. This is an agile document and so we will keep changing it as more information and ideas come along. We will be updating the document over the next fortnight as we receive further feedback from members and HM Government updates (released daily). Members are advised that they should always ensure that they consult the latest version of this guidance at naj.co.uk/coronavirus.

About

The safety and wellbeing of all staff and customers is number one priority, and therefore it is important that virus control restrictions continue to limit transmission.

This preliminary guidance is intended to help Jewellery retailers figure out how to achieve social distancing in their store and draws on experience from 'essential' retailers such as food and pharmacy who have been working with social distancing rules for several weeks. The guidance also gives various considerations for the jewellery industry to maintain the sector's long-standing reputation for personal, luxurious and often intimate buying experiences.

It is critical to point out that outside of the non-exhaustive recommendations below, it is the responsibility of each business to decide the most appropriate methods to implement social distancing and other coronavirus control measures in their business. Managers should keep an open dialogue with colleagues/ team members to reassure and discuss any concerns regarding their health and safety and that of those around them.

All recommendations are in addition to ongoing Health and Safety requirements which can be understood by NAJ Members by calling the Better Business Health and Safety Support Service on 0116 243 7627 with your membership number.

Disclaimer

This is presented in good faith but is for guidance only. The National Association of Jewellers accepts no liability incurred by any member or other person arising as a result of anything set out in or omitted from this document. You are strongly advised to take independent legal or other professional advice on any specific facts or circumstances that concern you. Any recommendations or changes to normal practice should be communicated to your insurance provider without delay.

Feedback

Suggested enhancements to this document would be warmly welcomed, and should be communicated to marketing@naj.co.uk

Introduction

Flexibility is important to consider at this time. Jewellery stores' architecture and layouts are all different, so what works for one store may not work for others. Store Managers should be flexible and act within the principles of the following guidance. Recommendations can of course change over time, so the ability to adapt accordingly is likely to be required, which is also considered below.

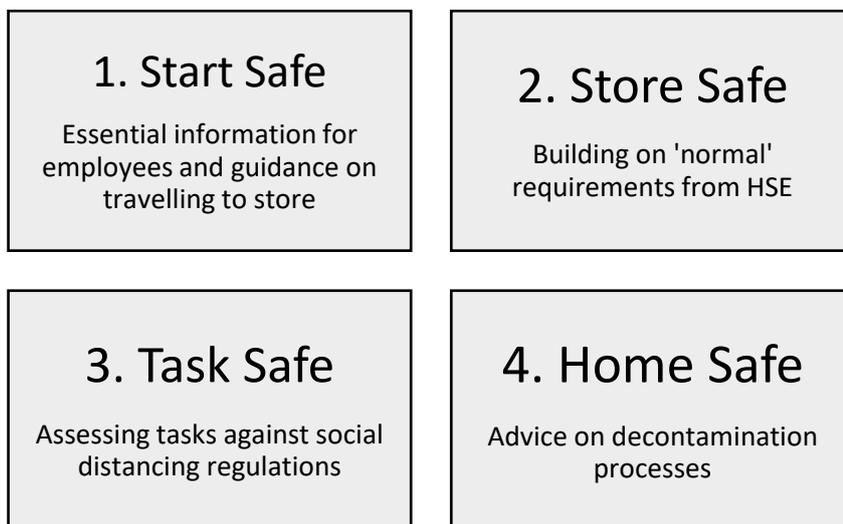
Consistency of approach regarding how the rest of the high street is responding to social distancing is important. Customers will be greeted with a different approach in each store and therefore inconsistent approaches will be noticed. Where possible, liaison with central organisations such as Shopping Centres, High Street groups or email/ WhatsApp groups is recommended so local customers experience a consistent experience in the retail neighbourhood - this may form the basis of a common approach regarding a range of topics such as opening hours and sharing of best practice.

Luxury and emotional relevance are central to the heart of the Jewellery industry. One risk for the jewellery industry could be that by following guidance, the buying experience is adversely affected, and what has long set jewellers apart from the rest of the high street is no longer present. Jewellers should look to maintain the luxury

buying experience and ensure that customers continue to recognise the important role Jewellery plays in their life.

The People first approach: Four Steps

NAJ recommends the various items be considered as part of a four-step approach to support Jewellers in managing their return to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.



HM Government currently states:

- You run a retail outlet which, in line with the government advice on retail, remains open.
- To protect staff and customers, you should manage entry into the store, only allowing a limited number of people into your store at any given time.
- You should put up signage to ask customers with symptoms not to enter the store, and to remind both staff and customers to always keep two metres from other people, wherever possible.
- You should regularly encourage staff to wash their hands with soap and water as often as possible and for 20 seconds every time.
- If feasible, you should also put up plexiglass barriers at all points of regular interaction to further reduce the risk of infection for all parties involved, cleaning the barriers regularly. You should still advise staff to keep two metres apart as much as possible.
- To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues on a daily basis to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.

1. Start Safe - Essential information for employees and guidance on travelling to store

- a) Before a member of your staff enters the store, they should be fully briefed on the hazards associated with the virus, the symptoms and how they can travel to work in such a way as to minimise the risk to infection of themselves and their colleagues.

- b) It is recommended that this is managed through daily reminders and regular briefings. All workers should complete a re-induction to the store emphasising the COVID-19 protocols before they return.
- c) You may wish to request staff to check their temperature and or symptoms before they're allowed to come into the workplace each day.
- d) Employees who have travelled outside of the UK in the last 14 days should stay away from the store for at least 14 days, returning only if neither they or any one they live with has shown possible COVID-19 symptoms within that period.
- e) Any employees living with another individual at home who has shown possible COVID-19 symptoms should stay away from the store.
- f) If an employee feels unwell and displays COVID-19 symptoms they should go home immediately and follow then-current Government guidance, staying away from the store for at least 14 days (after symptoms disappeared). After the employee has left the the store it should be cleaned throughout, and all employees should follow disinfection guidance including washing hands regularly. You may choose to temporarily close the store while these actions are taken.

2. Store Safe - Building on 'normal' requirements from HSE

Outside store

- a) Limit number of entry and exit points into and out of the store. If possible, consider having separate entrance and exit points or if a larger entrance is present such as a shopping centre, aim to influence flow into and out of the shop floor/ store.
- b) Limit the number of customers in the store at any time. Assess the size of the store and its layout, enabling you to calculate the number of customers who can reasonably follow the two-metre social distancing rule. For example, it is anticipated to allow no more than 3-4 people into store per 1,000 square foot of space. Jewellers that have operated 'book by appointment' procedures may wish to continue to do so and advertise such procedures via communication channels.
- c) Use a colleague to meet customers at/outside the door, explain the social distancing requirements, and control the number of customers entering the jewellery store at any one time. In some circumstances, that colleague may need to be SIA licensed; <https://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/Pages/changes-other-organisations.aspx>
- d) Consider whether temporary barriers should be available in case it is necessary to stop people joining a queue or ensure appropriate social distancing is observed by those queuing. Again, jewellers may offer appointments in order to ensure limited visits into stores are spread out throughout the day.
- e) Place clear signage outside of the store explaining the social distancing measures in place that customers should follow. On the signage you may also choose to point out those measures which may be different to normal practice, such as for example if some staff members have made their own decision on whether they would like to wear a visor and/or mask. You may request than any customers who have COVID-19 symptoms (or have had) make this clear to staff and suggest an alternative means of jewellery purchase. You may choose to decline entry.
- f) In the event of a queue outside the store, markings outside the store can assist but it is recommended to liaise with nearby premises to work together to manage possible shared queuing areas, or an unwanted flow outside of the jewellers. You may consider whether additional security staff are required to support staff.
- g) Schedule deliveries to avoid crowding in delivery areas and consider non-contact stock deliveries.

Inside Store

Hygiene and cleaning

- h) Provide cleaning stations at front of store including:
 - a. Hand sanitiser, if available and
 - b. Disinfectant wipes or spray and tissue for trolley/basket handles.
- i) Identify and regularly clean key touch points eg. door handles, lift buttons, keypads, stair/escalator handrails.
- j) Staff may request PPE and it is important any PPE sourced is FFR approved and not FPR approved as the latter is for frontline workers only. Some retailers have reported that visors have been a more comfortable alternative to face masks and can be wiped down. In addition, the customer is also able to see the full face of the Jewellery Store Assistant.
- k) Protective gloves should be worn for cleaning duties and double bag all rubbish for disposal.

Social distancing

- l) An issue highlighted in retailers to date is what steps will be taken by managers and staff where customers are not following social distancing measures. Consider developing a plan for this occurrence.
- m) When opening and closing the store, be considerate of security threats.

- Shop Floor and Till Areas

- n) Certain retailers have used floor markings inside to facilitate compliance with the social distancing advice of two metres, particularly in the most crowded areas and where queueing is likely. However, in jewellery stores it may be more sensible to manage access and flow at the point of entry to the store.
- o) Place clear signage throughout the store reminding customers of the social distancing measures and asking them to follow these rules for the safety of all involved.
- p) Review the layout of the store to ensure aisles/walkways are as clear as possible to accommodate two metre social distancing, including the removal of promotional fixtures if necessary.
- q) Consider one-way systems using floor markings and signage to highlight system and direction
- r) Make regular announcements to politely remind staff and customers to follow social distancing advice.
- s) Erect physical barriers at till points using flexiplastic to provide a barrier for those working on the tills. These should be included in your store cleaning programmes. You may also wish to purchase clear plastic face shields instead of or in addition to physical screens - the former allow staff to move around the shop more easily.
- t) If necessary, use staff to manage the flow of customers to checkouts.
- u) Where till points are close together, consider closing every other till point. Assess whether this is also necessary for self-scan tills.
- v) Leave non-essential doors open to minimise the number of people who touch them. This does not apply to fire doors.

- w) Customer order collection points should be set up to ensure the two-metre separation by floor markings and/or by limiting the number of customers that can wait at a time.
- x) Consider limiting the number of customers in enclosed spaces such as lifts.
- y) Remove promotions and features where customers are likely to congregate.
- z) To limit congestion, consider dressing/ restocking/replenishing only outside of store opening hours. If replenishment must be done during opening hours, assess how this can be done without compromising employee or customer safety.
- aa) Encourage cashless purchases and consider requesting card sales only.
- bb) Touch screens/keypads – If these remain in operation a member of staff must be available to regularly wipe these areas, ideally between each use.

- *Customer Seating, Special Assistance and toilets*

- cc) Consider whether to provide customer seating, and whether this can be provided while maintaining social distancing. If this is not possible, you should consider removing, limiting or spacing out such seating and should always have a colleague in place to ensure social distancing is maintained.
- dd) Where customers require specialist advice/assistance in store, ensure colleagues giving the advice have a clearly designated position, ideally with a secure barrier as provided at till points.
- ee) Consider whether it is safe to keep customer toilets open or if these should be available only on request. If open, regular cleaning should include manual multi-person touch points such as door handles, flushes, taps. etc.
- ff) You may choose to not make drinks for customers (and/or making drinks as a team).

3. Task safety - Assessing tasks against social distancing regulations

As a Jeweller you may choose to temporarily suspend services such as ear piercing and suspend or limit other activities that would require close interaction with customers.

Trying on Jewellery

If you decide to allow customers to try on jewellery in-store, the following advice should be considered:

- a) Limit the number and range of items available to try on.
- b) Ensure staff carry out a cleaning/disinfection programme prior to every customer approaching their work area. Clean everything beforehand.
- c) Ensure staff wear plastic/disposable gloves (not cotton) and if re-used, ensure they are cleaned and disinfected. If you wish to use cotton gloves for the 'look, place them under the plastic ones and change frequently, washing the gloves at at least 60C.
- d) Use social distancing to keep staff apart from customers and create procedures for handling jewellery to/from customers safely. One suggestion is to place specific items on a disposable pad, step back, and only then allow the customer to approach.
- e) Ensure staff wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds between handling items passed between customer and staff. In accordance with the general guidance, no-one should touch their face after handling items.

- f) Each staff member should have their own loupe and pens, and other items which are traditionally 'shared'. Jewellery should be cleaned before use, especially customer jewellery with loupes for example, given close interaction with face. You may source an alternative means of inspection, using a microscope for example.

Security

- g) Review security procedures and, if changed, alert your insurer without delay.
- h) Consider security when allowing customers to try on jewellery as your staff will have to be 2m away (lock door or perhaps do not allow try ons until after purchase (eg for those stores that have no doors)).
- i) Consider passing things through a screen on a tray which is regularly cleaned between customers but also distance away from the screen too.
- j) In Italy, jewellers are requesting that customers have to show their face outside the door before they put their mask on and come inside the door due to security concerns. Other approaches include showing ID to permit entry.
- k) It is common for Jewellers in other countries out of lockdown to keep the door shut (if they have one). That may be the only way to be sure you have only got the permitted number of people in the shop.

Cleaning Jewellery

- l) All jewellery that the customer has touched must put into a cleaning/ disinfection process before being returned to the shop floor. Any jewellery you take in should also be cleaned thoroughly. Clean incoming customers own jewellery thoroughly with soap/water/ultrasonic as is appropriate for the jewellery type; however, please see point (o) below. (Please note - pearls cannot be ultrasonically cleaned or cleaned with detergent/water so are problematical. You may feel it best to decline rather than accept such jewellery for cleaning in the circumstances). Then package it.
- m) Most jewellery can be quickly cleaned in store with ethanol alcohol spray or wipes, but of course it can't be used on some gemstones such as opals, emeralds, coral and pearls. You may wish to request that customers use hand sanitising gel before they are allowed to handle the jewellery they are trying on to reduce risk.
- n) Don't forget to also clean ring sizers and other tools etc when passing to and from customers as well.
- o) Ultrasonic machines and UV light boxes can also be used to clean jewellery. Ensure the system you use actually kills the virus – check with product manufacturer.

Please note further research is being conducted on cleaning jewellery with regards to tasks such as changing watch batteries, optimum levels for ultrasonic machines and other products which offer disinfection. If reading this, you can share independent research for such activities by please communicating it to marketing@naj.co.uk.

Other Considerations

- p) Quite a lot of people will be very nervous about coming into shops at all after lockdown and so you may wish to consider offering a service where people can drive to your business and then take what they have ordered out to them in their cars, provided payment has already been made and cleared.
- q) After lockdown finishes, people will feel extremely attached to everyone they love and jewellers are well placed to celebrate this – remember to accentuate how jewellery commemorates milestones, marks human connection, and personal meaning. Love isn't quarantined!

4) Home Safe - Advice on decontamination processes

Leaving the store

- a) All employees should sign out before they leave the store, ensure that any single use PPE is suitably disposed of (double bagged) and acknowledge their obligation to inform the appointed person if they become unwell or become aware they have had contact with a suspected COVID-19 case; avoiding the store for 14 days after no symptoms.
- b) Employees should be encouraged to wash hands with soap or use hand sanitiser as they leave.
- c) As well as travelling home safely it is advisable to offer employees guidance on travelling home, disposing of PPE, and ensuring that they minimise risk of infection to themselves or others elsewhere.

Arriving home

You should consider advising all staff to:

- d) Remove as much clothing as possible outside before entering their home and put into a plastic bag or bucket. Leave shoes outside and wash any protective eyewear with hot water and soap.
- e) Put all dirty clothes in the washing machine and wash as soon as they enter the house.
- f) Shower and get dressed in clean clothes before doing anything else.
- g) Get rid of the plastic bag or wash the bucket your clothes were in with soap and hot water.
- h) Wash hands with soap and water and dry.

5) Links and references

British Retail Consortium Guidance: <https://brc.org.uk/news/corporate-affairs/social-distancing-in-retail-stores-and-warehouses/>

HM Government Guidance for non-clinical settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance#guidance-for-non-clinical-settings>

Business closures and stay at home FAQs: <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/business-closures-and-stay-at-home-faqs/>

Jeweller Support Network (COVID-19 resource, advice and guidance hub); <https://www.naj.co.uk/jewellersupportnetwork>