

## **Cleared statement from HSE 7 January 2021**

Employers are required to ensure that their staff are trained and competent to operate any industrial lift truck equipment they use. Initial or refresher training may be required for new starters, for existing staff using new types of equipment, or as a refresher for existing staff.

Lift-truck operators, even those who are trained and experienced, need to be routinely monitored in the workplace and, where necessary, retested or given refresher training to make sure they continue to operate lift trucks safely. There is no specific time period in law after which refresher training or a formal assessment is required. However, employers may decide that automatic refresher training or a retest after a set period (for example 3-5 years) is the best way to make sure staff remain competent.

**To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, employers and training providers should apply the hierarchy of control to manage the risks of training and consider:**

- **Whether the training needs to be done urgently, based on their own assessment of drivers' competence and experience;**
- **If there are other staff with the appropriate training who could carry out the tasks on a short-term basis;**
- **Checking in advance of the training going ahead that no one is exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms;**
- **Providing a system for entering and leaving sites that maintains social distancing and minimises touch points and shared contact surfaces, such as pens, pointers, or touch screens;**
- **Ensuring that staff and all visitors have easy and safe access to toilets and handwashing facilities with hot and cold running water, and that handwashing is carried out at regular intervals;**
- **Considering how social distancing can be maintained. This may mean reducing class size where suitable distancing cannot be maintained otherwise;**
- **Sanitising shared surfaces such as equipment controls between users;**
- **Providing fresh air ventilation wherever possible by opening windows or doors. Mechanical ventilation should not be set to air recirculation mode;**
- **Considering use of alternative learning methods such as e-learning or webinars where practicable;**
- **Minimising face to face work wherever possible.**

Face coverings are not PPE and should not be used as a substitute for suitable risk control measures.

Employers should consult the Government COVID-19 guidance at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-and-support) when deciding how training can be carried out safely. It remains the employer's responsibility to not allow anyone to operate lift trucks on any premises without authorisation.

Authorisation should only be given where employees have completed suitable training in line with the guidance at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg462.pdf> and have achieved an appropriate level of operating ability.