



Queue Management Guidance with Social Distancing



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1. Summary

This document has been produced to support businesses reviewing queuing arrangements for their individual premises, with consideration to social distancing measures. The document was written in line with the Government guidance released up to the 28th May 2020 and as best practice is developed and will be reviewed as required.

It should be noted that Norwich BID will make best efforts to support businesses with external queuing requirements, it will not be feasible in all locations and Norfolk County Council are the statutory highway authority.

Queuing arrangements will need to consider various factors and therefore should not be devised or established in isolation. A collaborative approach between neighbouring shops, offices and other organisations will be needed to ensure a safe and managed system. Norwich BID will work with all partners to ensure effective collaboration.

When designing a queuing strategy, consideration should be given to the physical area, your immediate street scene, and other nearby premises such as residential, retail, businesses, schools, health establishments and transport hubs. This document is a guide and not exhaustive and focuses on key considerations for external queuing systems and social distancing. It does not cover internal queuing measures required within your premises.



2. How to Plan a Queuing Area

We would expect businesses to constantly review their process as the situation requires and as people adapt to the new measures being put in place. As in national guidance, a set queuing space location will need to have sufficient space for a queue and an additional 2m of pavement space for passing pedestrians. A queue management plan and risk assessment of all elements should be undertaken.

Capacity

- Firstly, calculate the store capacity with social distancing measures in mind. Its recommended not to work back from the existing store capacity, start from zero. Think about how many people can safely fit inside the business with a 2m distance between each person as well as a reasonable space for circulation. Next, how the business has previously managed its space taking into account pinch points, dwell spaces, customer movement and infrastructure positions.

Entry/Exit Points

- Review the entry and exits to the premises. Is it possible to introduce a one-way system to minimise people crossing at entrances? Where possible, allocate different doors for entry and exit, use staff at each door to monitor numbers within the store.
- If it is not possible to have separate doors for entry and exit, consider marking a line on the floor or signage within the premises to separate entry and exit by a 2m distance. If the door is not wide enough, staff will need to manage the entry and exit of people to ensure social distancing is managed.



- If there is a high volume of persons leaving the premises, can a holding area with social distancing enforced be set up inside the exit for people to queue as they exit.
- Ensure emergency exits remain accessible at all times.

External Queuing Space

- Each premises should review its business operation, anticipated footfall and dwell time to assess how much queuing space they would aim to create.
- Measure the queuing space outside your business by firstly allocating 2m of pavement for pedestrian movement and then reviewing how much remaining width there is outside the premises. Divide this space into 2m units to allow for social distancing within the queue.
- The queuing time can be calculated by understanding the difference between the anticipated arrivals and the departures. Remember that arrivals are not constant, depending on the type of business, some people will arrive in clusters of family or household groups.

3. Queuing Within Premises Curtilage or Utilising Pavement

- Individual premises will need to assess what space is available to carry out appropriate queuing within their curtilage (externally along the side of their business).
- Ensure 2m width of pavement is free for pedestrian access at all times. If the pavement is less than 3m then there may be insufficient space to safely manage a queue.
- Queue spaces should not be located near live traffic where possible. When this is unavoidable, they should be away from the kerb edge.
- If additional pavement space is required to create a



safe queue, businesses should liaise with the Norwich BID to help facilitate, then with neighbouring premises on the street to ensure that their plans are fully coordinated. These plans must ensure that proposed queues do not overlap.

- A staffing plan should be set up for the queue space to ensure sufficient resource is allocated to manage the queue space (for further information see 'How to Manage a Queue' below).
- Consider existing street furniture near the premises, as well as bus stops or waste collection routes. Plans must ensure that a pinch point for pedestrians isn't created.
- Where appropriate, consider a queue will impact on operating external tables and chairs (whether licensed or on private forecourts). Similar consideration should be given to forecourt trading.
- Please utilise floor markings to show waiting points in the queue, as available from Norwich BID. If not use anti-slip vinyl stickers. This should be included in the risk assessment. When using floor markings, consider that customers may need guidance on whether to stand 'on' the marking or 'between' the markings. Also consider using window displays to place markers at height. For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise agreed by the Council, the use of signage should be limited to communicate COVID-19 related information only, namely social distancing measures and queuing procedures. Footway markings should be no more than 40sq cm in area.



- Where there is management of multiple queues for different businesses, ensure there is clear signage and the use of staff as appropriate.

4. Queuing Areas on the Road

- It is never acceptable to allow queues to form in the live traffic lane of a road.
- It is acknowledged that in some areas, where the useable pavement is below 3m wide, there may be a desire to create additional space by using the road. Liaison with all neighbouring premises within the same street is required to coordinate plans prior to approaching the Council with proposals for a traffic management solution (TRO).

There will be very limited locations where this would be deemed suitable. Any such requests should be emailed to highways@norfolk.gov.uk for consideration.



5. How to Manage a Queue

- Identify an agreed queuing capacity.
- Ensure there are sufficient numbers and suitably trained staff resources to manage the queuing area.
- Ensure signage is visible and displayed in appropriate locations including at the end of the queue.
- Clear lines of communication are crucial to ensure staff and customers are provided with accurate information.
- Queues need to be monitored to ensure they do not exceed capacity.
- At the end of the trading day, only allow customers in the queue who will be able to enter the premises before closing.

Queuing Behaviours

- During CoVid19 there is a likelihood that customers will have a heightened anxiety around social distancing measures. Create reassurance that there is compliance with Government advice and guidelines to create trust with customers. Ensure that staff are briefed to show empathy and understanding.
- People may become frustrated with long wait times. To help with this, give customers information about queuing times to manage their expectations when they join the queue.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the queuing experience for customers. For example, in-window displays or views of the new store layout.
- Consider the type of demographic visiting the premises and queuing behaviour. Family groups or groups of friends prefer to move together as a unit rather than as individuals. Mobility should also be considered.
- Place hand sanitiser stations at entry and exit points (considering pedestrian flows).



6. Security

Where possible, monitor behaviours in and around the queue. This should include monitoring for people loitering, so they know they have been seen and noted.

Those staff involved in managing the queue should engage the public using tact and good humour. People in queues may become increasingly intolerant of other people's behaviour at social distancing queues. The time waiting in the queue and seasonal heat will affect people's behaviour.

Recommendations

- Use a 'meet and greet' style at entrances – you can control numbers, convey any instructions, etc. whilst giving confidence: control the door, control the crime.
- Have a qualified first aider identified to administer basic first aid should someone faint in a queue.
- Be aware of begging and take action to ensure this behaviour does not establish itself. If a problem persists or person becomes aggressive, call 999. The personal safety of the queue staff and people in the queue is the primary importance.
- Engage in positive crime prevention measures. Use Norwich BID Alert crime reduction system or DISC to assist. It will be harder for offences such as pickpocketing to be committed with social distancing in place. However, those managing the queue should remind those queuing to keep bags closed and valuables out of sight.
- Keep an eye out for individuals loitering nearby or other suspicious activity.



7. Technology

- Use existing Social Media and digital communication methods to update customers on new opening procedures.
- Could online technology such as popular times graphs, live visit data and wait time estimates be used to inform customers how long the wait time is before they visit? If the data is not currently collected by the business, it may be collected by Google from users that have opted in to sharing their location history. Learn more here – <https://support.google.com/business/answer/6263531?hl=en>
- Consider a virtual queuing solution to allocate shopping time slots.

8. Other considerations

- Provide clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to people on arrival.
- Consider the size of groups allowed and the impact on queue space required (as well as inside).
- Review opening hours when considering how to manage deliveries to reduce conflicts where possible.
- Ensure any changes to entries, exit and queue management consider reasonable adjustments for those who need them, such as those with accessibility requirements.
- Consider support that may be required for those with hidden disabilities such as deafness and visual impairments when following instructions and queueing.
- Always maintain emergency access.

All employers must carry out a CoVid19 risk assessment which should take into account internal management of the premises, staff and visitor welfare as well as external plans. Norwich BID has support on risk assessment at work along with specific advice to help control the risk of coronavirus in workplaces (also see the HSE guidance).



9. Contact Us

Should you have any queries, please contact us on: office@norwichbid.co.uk

Further information on the all the Norwich BID guidance is available at www.norwichbid.co.uk

10. Further information

References

This document has utilised best practice from the Association of Town & City Management (ATCM) and is substantially based on the Coronavirus guidance from City of Westminster

Government Guidance

The UK COVID-19 Recovery Strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

Shops and Branches – Working Safely During Coronavirus:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>

Guidance for Employers and Businesses:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Safer Public Places, Urban Centres and Green Spaces:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spaces-covid-19>

Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure

CPNI Advice Note – Protecting pedestrian queues from Vehicle As a Weapon Attack:



<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/system/files/documents/9f/8f/CPNI%20and%20NaC%20TSO%20Advice%20Note%20-%20Protecting%20pedestrian%20queues%20from%20Vehicle%20As%20a%20Weapon%20Attack%2014%20May%202020.pdf>

Highways Guidance

Safety at Street Works and Road Works – A Code of Practice:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321056/safety-at-streetworks.pdf

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016: <https://tsrgd.co.uk/pdf/tsrgd/tsrgd2016.pdf>

Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/203669/traffic-signs-manual-chapter-08-part-01.pdf

11. Disclaimer

Please note that the guide is provided in an effort to be helpful. It is for each business to decide which safety measures are appropriate for it to take, relative to its own individual circumstances. Norwich Business Improvement District does not advise the measures that you should or should not take. We cannot accept any responsibility for any measures that you do choose to adopt or any liability relating to your use of the guide, save to the extent that our liability cannot be limited by law.