



VICTORY SERVICES CLUB



# THE VICTORY SERVICES CLUB - RESPONSE TO COVID-19

29TH SEPTEMBER 2020

## **SUMMARY OF ENHANCED HEALTH & SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

Keeping our staff, members, guests, and event clients safe remains the Victory Services Club's (VSC) highest priority. As we closely monitor and adhere to changes in Government policy, the VSC has enhanced our health & safety precautions to comply with the recommendations and guidelines set by the World Health Organization (WHO), the NHS, UK Hospitality, The Institute of Hospitality, and the Meetings Industry Association. We will continue to improve our standards as best practices evolve. The detail of our work is contained in the followings:

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## 1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLUB SECRETARY

At the Victory Services Club, the Trustees and staff are focussed on creating the best possible Covid-19 compliant conditions within the Club, for the safe enjoyment of our members and guests.

To this end, our Senior Management Team has meticulously reviewed every detail and area of our operations to implement enhanced safeguards. Some of these changes will be self-evident when you are in the Club, while others will be invisible to you when you are visiting.

Nonetheless, all are important and will contribute collectively to a safe, enjoyable experience for our members and guests, and how we deliver a good working environment for our staff.

The purpose of this document is to brief members, guests and staff about the precautions which have been taken to date. We hope we have anticipated your questions and explained that our efforts will meet and exceed all Government guidelines and industry recommendations. We will continue to update this document as soon as new developments are identified which will clearly our members, guests, and staff when they are in the VSC.

We look forward to seeing you back in the Club, so that you can enjoy the wonderful Value, Service, and Courtesy on which we pride ourselves.

Yours sincerely,

*Nigel Beet*

## 2. HEALTH & SAFETY

**Member's Reservations & Arrival.** To help protect fellow members, guests, and staff and as a condition of making a reservation, guests are kindly requested to attest that they are, to the best of their knowledge, free of COVID-19 symptoms and exposures. Please note that at every entrance into the Club, we will be using temperature screening systems to aid the detection of elevated body temperatures as part of our plan to help protect every Member, Guest, and Staff member. You should note that every member of staff will have self-tested their own body temperature before leaving home for the Club, using an individual digital thermometer which the Club has purchased for them. Every member of staff will also have their temperature scanned. The information which is observed is not stored, shared, or used for any other purpose. From the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the UK Government required that face coverings which safely cover the nose and the mouth must be worn in England in premises providing hospitality (which includes bars, pubs, restaurants, and cafes), except when seated at a table to eat or drink; and in public areas in hotels. This is now enforceable in law, and naturally this encompasses the VSC. We appreciate that many of our members cannot wear a face covering for entirely legitimate reasons, which is very often based on personal medical, or mental health grounds. Accordingly, and to avoid any embarrassment or discomfort, please make us aware of these reasons before travelling to the Club, if they are not wearing a face covering. Without a legitimate reason you will be required to leave the Club. If members or guests do not have their own face covering when they arrive, disposal face masks are available at the Porters desk. Signage will be posted to remind all visitors of the Club's policies which accord with the Government's requirements.

**Health Concerns.** Our staff have been trained on how to respond swiftly and report all member, guest or employee presumed cases of Covid-19 to their Manager, who will engage with the Senior Management Team, to coordinate the Club's response. The detail is as follows:

- a. For presumptive cases, such as if a member or guest advises or displays symptoms of Covid-19, the member will be requested to self-isolate in their bedroom, and to make contact with the National Health Services, via Telephone Number 111, so that medical advice can be obtained. This may lead to the individual and their accompanying partner (if present) remaining in their bedroom, until such time that they are safe to leave, or until they are assessed or collected by the Paramedics.
- b. Isolating members guests should not engage with others. Staff will be able to deliver food and other supplies that the guest may require, in a contact-free manner. Isolated guests will not receive any housekeeping services during this time.
- c. Our Senior Management Team during the day, or the Night Manager will facilitate medical attention if necessary and liaise with the NHS is required.
- d. If we are alerted of a positive case of Covid-19 at the Club, we will communicate with Public Health England and follow their recommended actions.

**Medical Services.** In the event that members, guests or staff express any Covid-19 health related concerns we will refer them to a healthcare facility as designated by Public Health England.

**Physical Distancing.** Mobile perplex partitions have been added in many locations around the Club, providing an extra level of precaution for members, guests, and employees. Members, Guests, and staff will be reminded to remain at the Government recommended social distancing measures in place away from others. Restaurant and bar seating has been arranged to provide appropriate distancing. Government mandated occupancy limits will also be closely monitored and enforced.

**Sanitizing Resources.** Hand sanitizer stations have been placed in all public spaces and staff entrances, particularly at key areas and 'touch' points.

**Signage.** Visual reminders for health, hygiene and physical distancing practices are displayed throughout the Club in both member and staff areas.

**Staffing Capacity.** The Senior Management Team will carefully assess the necessary staffing requirement based on business levels while ensuring the highest standards of service. We are revising our operational plans and service delivery options to maximise our ability to maintain social distancing.

### 3. EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

**Hand Washing.** Proper hygiene and frequent handwashing are vital to combat the spread of Covid-19. All employees have been instructed to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using a WC, blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before and after eating meals, starting their shift or having a break. Sanitising stations are available throughout staff areas.

**Health Screenings.** Staff have been issued with digital thermometers to use each day before travelling to work. If they have a temperature they are to stay home and not travel to work until the cause is confirmed. Upon arriving for work, employees will be screened daily for Covid-19 symptoms and temperatures over 38°C. Employees confirmed to have symptoms or a temperature over 38C will not be allowed to enter the Club, until the cause is investigated.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** Appropriate PPE will be worn by all staff based on their role and responsibilities, and in adherence with Government guidelines. The Club has provided every necessary item of PPE for the staff.

#### **Face Coverings.**

All of the Club's staff will wear a face covering when on duty, unless they are working behind screens, or in an office on their own. A face covering will be worn by staff who are walking in busy footfall areas. Naturally, if our staff have a medical reason for not wearing a face covering they will not be compelled to wear one. Where possible we will always endeavour that our staff who are regularly facing our members will work from behind clear screens, rather than masks. Every employee has been issued with two cloth face coverings to wear when travelling to and from work.

**Social Distancing.** Employees are regularly reminded to practice social distancing whenever possible. This will include seating in all break and dining areas, shared offices, workspaces, meeting rooms and other high-traffic areas. Flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and staggered shift times, have been offered to maximise social distancing.

**Policies.** Safe return to work guidance have been provided to our staff. This includes flexible leave options, protocols for daily health screenings, personal hygiene and social distancing requirements, property and workspace cleanliness standards, business and personal travel policies, and detailed steps for responding to presumed Covid-19 cases.

**Pre-Shift & Timekeeping.** Daily pre-shift meetings will be conducted in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing. Larger departments will stagger staff arrival times to minimise the transit of staff in the back of house areas. Hand sanitiser is provided next to our time clock location.

**Shared Employee Space.** The use of shared employee spaces has decreased as we practice social distancing and flexible work arrangements. Our staff canteen has been extended into the El Alamein Room for use, when required. All office and break areas are being cleaned and disinfected daily.

**Shared Equipment.** Shared tools and equipment are being cleaned and disinfected before, during and after each shift, or anytime the equipment is transferred to a new employee. Examples include work phones, keyboards, pagers, and tools.

**Signage.** Signage is displayed throughout work areas to remind employees of social distancing and personal hygiene practices, such as hand washing.

**Training.** Staff will continue to train in all enhanced health, hygiene, and social distancing practices to ensure they are consistently followed. Staff have all been trained to recognise and report Covid-19 symptoms and follow medical care and isolation procedures as recommended by the Government.

#### 4. THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE

**Pre-Arrival.** It would be helpful if members could provide an estimated arrival time to check in time to allow us to best manage the process efficiently and safely.

**Arrival.** Upon arrival at the Club, members and guests will need to maintain social distancing when gaining access. This process will inevitably take longer than before, and some waiting may be outside of the Club. We would ask you to be patient with the staff during the arrivals process, which we will deliver as quickly as possible.

**Member's Guests.** If you have made a booking for a guest, it is very important that they have this information. Should you have guests visiting you at the Club, or you intend to arrive with guests, please email the Porters who will sign your guests in for you on arrival. If we do not have this information before arrival waiting times will be increased.

**Check-In & Front Desk.** A maximum of two receptionists are stationed at the front desk and they will utilise every other workstation to ensure separation between staff and to minimise shared equipment. A roped barrier and mobile perplex screens have been added to separate the receptionist from the guest.

**Digital Transactions** Contactless payments and room account only transactions will be expected.

**Lifts.** Lift buttons are being cleaned with a long lasting advanced anti-microbial technology product. Capacities will be limited to one family or party of two from the same household at a time. Otherwise the lifts will be for single use.

**Hygiene Kit.** A Hygiene kit featuring hand sanitiser, mask and disinfecting wipes is available to purchase from the Club Shop and from Reception.

## 5. **CLEANING PRODUCTS & PROCEDURES**

Prior to Covid-19, the VSC already employed extensive health, safety, and hygiene measures across the Club. These operational practices will continue, but we have implemented additional systems and new technology for cleaning and disinfecting. These are as follows:

- a. **Air Filtration Systems.** There is increased cleaning frequency of our Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning systems.
- b. **Cleaning Products.** A variety of anti-microbial and surface disinfectants are already utilised in the Club. In high impact areas long lasting advanced anti-microbial technology products are being used as protection against Covid-19. The layer of molecular anti-microbial substance carries on working for up to thirty days on surfaces. Routine cleaning can continue and does not disrupt the molecule or its antimicrobial activity which provides 30-day protection.
- c. **Communal, meeting, and public spaces.** The frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of all public spaces has increased. There is emphasis on high-traffic areas and key touch points, such as check-in desks, lift landings, meeting rooms, WCs, door handles, stair handrails, bins, restaurant entrances, dining surfaces and seating areas. Furniture has been arranged to allow for social distancing.
- d. **Front Office & Porters Desk.** A roped barrier and perplex screens have been added at the Front of House desks in the Club's Reception desks, and at the Porter's desk. The desks and screens are cleaned and disinfected with the anti-microbial technology product. Room keys are disinfected after every use.
- e. **Bedrooms.** New advanced cleaning procedures are in place for bedrooms with particular attention paid to high-touch items, such as doors, furniture handles and pulls, nightstands, toilet seats and handles, telephones, air-con controls, light switches, TV remote, luggage racks, safe keypads, carpet, and flooring. In room coffee and tea stations stock will be reduced, and new for each guest, strict stock rotation procedures are in place to ensure safety and reduce waste. The Bible will be available on request.
- f. **Housekeeping.** A member or guest can accept or decline housekeeping service, by displaying the card door hanger each day, on their door handle on the corridor side. For your room to be serviced please display the ROOM READY FOR SERVICE. If no Service is required please display the use DO NOT DISTURB side of the hanger card. Rooms without a door hanger will not be serviced. To minimise contact with guests while cleaning, the room must be vacant for service. Housekeeping trollies and equipment will be cleaned and disinfected at the start and end of each shift.
- g. **Laundry.** All items will continue to be washed at a high temperature by our linen company and in accordance with current guidelines. Bed linen and towels will be changed in response to guest preferences during a multi-night stay. After departure, all linens, and towels, whether they appear used or not, will be cleaned.
- h. **WCs.** All WCs will be cleaned and disinfected frequently. In-house guests are encouraged to use the facilities in their own bedroom.

i. **Room Recovery Protocol.** In the event of a presumptive case of Covid-19, the guest's room will be removed from service and quarantined. The room will not be returned to service until the case has been cleared. In the event of a positive case, the room will remain out of service for the recommended time frame needed for the virus to die, and it will then be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before being used again.

## 6. CLUB OPERATIONS

Owing to Covid-19 members and guests will wish to note the following:

a. **Member Activities.** Club social events and club activities will be permitted up to a maximum of 30 attendees, in a socially distanced environment. Each event will be considered in accordance with our Risk Assessments.

b. **Reading Room.** The Reading Room will be closed until further notice as will access to shared computers for use by members. Should you need printing services, please ask the Front of House team.

c. **Accommodation.** We are able to offer all of our 144 air-conditioned en-suite bedrooms. Currently, we are not allowed to sell all of our shared facility bedrooms at present, as we are unable to keep cleaning them between users, nor can we guarantee Social Distancing regulations owing to the close proximity of many of those bathrooms. However, we can sell fourteen shared facility bedrooms which have been made available by allocating to them single-use lockable bathroom facilities. Accordingly, the Club now has 156 bedrooms which are available to members and their guests.

d. **Luggage service/storage.** The Porters will only be able to help members with luggage who are unable to help themselves, for instance those who are infirm or pregnant. The Porters will wear appropriate PPE. Luggage can continue to be stored at the Club, but members and guests will be required to place their luggage in storage themselves.

e. **Food and Beverage.** The VSC had high food safety standards in place prior to Covid-19, but owing to the pandemic the Club had to amend our food offer. One of those changes is that we have suspended all buffet food options for now. Our breakfast offer is, therefore, an a la carte menu served to your table. Similarly, lunch and dinner is only be provided through an a la carte service, and our Events team will offer table service, or pre-packaged food items depending on Government guidance. Menus are only on printed paper and are disposed of after each guest. We will continue to follow the Government's recommendations for hand washing and the staff will wear masks and use disposable gloves in all food service areas.

f. **Banqueting and Catering:** Each event area has hand sanitiser stations for attendee use. All equipment, linen and meeting amenities is cleaned, disinfected, and replaced between every event. Due to the discontinuation of buffets, we have introduced individually packaged, fresh- food options. Modified menus will showcase available service styles and food selections. Coffee and other meeting break refreshment items will be attended and served by staff. Individual bottles of water are provided which is in lieu of shared larger bottles. Single use notepads and pens are also. Seating capacities and floor plans have been reviewed and customised for each event to ensure appropriate social distancing.

- g. **Food Safety.** We will continue to work with Food Alert, our Food Safety company, to enhance our guidelines for hygiene and disinfecting, as well as provide training for all food service staff. All food handlers and supervisors are trained in food safety.
- h. **In-Bedroom Dining.** This can be arranged prior to arrival. Please contact the Operations Director for further details via [mark.field@vsc.co.uk](mailto:mark.field@vsc.co.uk). In-bedroom dining will provide no-contact delivery. Food is pre-set and served with plate covers and placed outside each bedroom for the bedroom occupant to retrieve.
- i. **The Club Dining Room, The Grill and Lounge Bar.** One menu is available in our dining space for lunch and dinner, with reduced seating capacities in compliance with Government guidance. Staff will manage social distancing. Those wishing to dine will be required to pre-book. Hand sanitising stations are available in the restaurant. In the Lounge Bar we will provide table service only. Payment terminals are cleaned and disinfected between each user and before and after each shift. Dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs are cleaned and disinfected after each use. Menus will be single use. From Monday 14 September, you must not meet with people from other households socially in groups of more than six. Bookings will not be accepted for more than six individuals. All members and guests must depart the restaurants and bars by 22:00, and either leaving the Club or move to their bedroom accommodation if a resident. The last time for a food order is 21:00 and the last time for a drinks order is 21:30.

## 7. **MEETINGS & EVENTS**

The Club's meetings and events are being managed in a different way as follows.

- a. **Meeting & Event Space.** Floor plan layouts and seating capacities have been reviewed on an event-by-event basis to ensure that social distancing guidelines follow Government guidance.
- b. All conference room door handles, tables, chairs, light switches, and other equipment are cleaned and disinfected after each group use.
- c. Every event area has a dedicated hand sanitising station for attendee use.
- d. Show arounds with clients will be conducted appropriately socially distanced.
- e. Thermal scanning is in place to check all Club staff, visitors and contractors entering the Club.
- f. All restrooms are assigned with attendants during events to carry out on-going cleaning and disinfecting work and ensuring a monitored 'one in one out' distancing system.
- g. Face masks and gloves are available for all staff members.
- h. Hand sanitizing gel is readily available throughout the Club.
- i. Signage specifying venue and event-specific social distancing measures is deployed around the Club.
- j. The VSC Events team will work with event organisers to prevent congestion such as staggered arrival / departure times, executive individual packed lunches.