**Mile End Climbing Wall**

COVID19 Risk Assessment

And Procedures



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**1) OVERVIEW**

* This document has been created following ABC and government guidelines to minimise the risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19 at Mile End Climbing Wall. Whilst it is recognised that completely removing the risk in climbing walls is impossible, we will do everything we can to keep customers and members of staff as safe as possible, while bringing back our so much loved and awaited sport; climbing.

These are the government guidelines followed to create this document: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers> (accessed 12/04/21)

And these are the ABC support documents:

<https://www.abcwalls.co.uk/news/coronavirus-updates-and-weekly-news/>

* Following these guidelines will certainly have an impact on the customer’s experience, and, whilst we recognise the potential frustration that this might cause on some climbers, we all need to do everything we can to keep the COVID-19 health crisis under control and provide the best possible environment for customers and MECW’s workers.

1. **MANAGING CONTACT**

Objective: To minimise contact with surfaces, workers, other customers and contractors within facilities or while participating in sport and physical activity.

Primary control for minimising transmission through contact is through handwashing and sufficiently frequent washing and avoiding sharing of objects.

* Keeping customers and staff informed of how to minimise these contacts is key. This information is displayed on our website, social media and posters all around the centre.
* Hand sanitisers and or hand washing stations are provided at the entrance, exit and all around the centre. We have 2 hand washing stations by the entrance and hand sanitiser stations strategically placed around the centre. Customers will be encouraged to wash/sanitise their hands before entering, during their visit and before leaving the premises.
* All doorways will be kept open during opening hours to reduce contact points
* Water fountains will only be used for personal bottles, no mouth to water fountains will be operational.
* No shared chalk bags will be available.
* Customers will be encouraged to bring their own shoes, harnesses, and equipment.
* Rental shoes will be available but customers will be encouraged through signage and staff communication to wash their hands before and after handling rental shoes. Staff will spray shoes with anti-bacterial spray after use as normal
* Rental harnesses will be quarantined after each rental (reused on rotation basis).
* We remain cashless to minimise contact between staff and customers through money handling.

1. **MANAGING CAPACITY**

In line with the current situation we have removed all capacity limits relating to COVID-19 measures.

With doors open and extractor fans active, air circulation will not be a problem and certainly will meet the government guideline of keeping an air flow of 20L per person per minute. This is considered very low and easily achievable simply by opening doors and windows even without mechanical systems, which we have.

* Our maximum capacity at any given time is currently 300 customers.

1. **MOVING IN AND OUT OF MECW**

Objective: To ensure distancing among workers, customers and contractors when moving in and out of the premises.

* A hand washing station outside the entrance will encourage customers to wash their hands before entering the wall.

1. **MOVING AROUND THE FACILITIES (SOCIAL DISTANCING)**

Objective: To ensure distancing among workers and customers when possible whilst moving around inside the facilities.

* Sanitising spray and tissue will be available for customers to use in their locker and locker key if they wish to do so.
* Wearing face masks is encouraged for customers (unless a medical exemption is communicated to staff), unless they are on a climbing surface.
* Changing rooms are available for use, as well as showers.
* Social distancing is facilitated as far as possible by managing the centre capacity (see 4) and customers are reminded to maintain distance.

1. **PROTECTING MECW’S STAFF**

Workplace testing:

* lateral flow tests will be available for all staff to take home and use
* In the case of a positive test result, staff should follow government guidelines, isolate and book a PCR test and inform MECW as soon as possible

PPE:

* + Counter staff: Protective screens are installed on the counter to shield the counter staff when interacting with customers. Counter staff will not be required to wear a face mask behind the counter should. Masks are available if requested and should be worn if close working is required.
  + Route setters: masks are provided for route setters when stripping holds. As the holds have been previously cleaned, masks can be removed whilst setters are up on the wall.
  + PPE is available for any staff member that would like to go beyond the measures that MECW is taking to protect its employees.
  + Hire shoes are sprayed and rotated to allow time between users. Whilst there is no evidence of virus transfer through sweat, for confidence, staff completing this work should wear gloves or wash their hands immediately after this task. Contact between staff and customers is reduced by customers placing shoes into a container and customers are encouraged to wash hands before and after handling shoes
* Higher Risk workers:
  + To help identify and address any particular cases where our workers might be at higher risk due to pre-existing conditions we have emailed all the workforce to ask about it and each individual case will be studied and addressed following the government guidelines copied below:

*“Objective: To protect clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.*

*Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home.*

*Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness (for example, people with some pre-existing conditions), have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role.*

*If clinically vulnerable (but not extremely clinically vulnerable) individuals cannot work from home, they should be offered the option of the safest available on-site roles, enabling them to maintain social distancing from others. If they have to spend time closer to others than set out in the government guidance, you should carefully assess whether this involves an acceptable level of risk. As for any workplace risk you must take into account specific duties to those with protected characteristics, including, for example, expectant mothers who are, as always, entitled to suspension on full pay if suitable roles cannot be found. Particular attention should also be paid to people who live with clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.”*

* It is inevitable that at times, workers will be unable to maintain social distance at MECW. We advise staff to keep away from each other as much as possible and if there is a need for close working then masks should be worn as virus transmission is more likely with face-to-face contact.
* Masks, face visors and gloves are readily available should any staff member prefer to use these even when not mandatory.
* Upon commencement of employment, staff will be trained on all the protocols and procedures related to minimising COVID-19 risks (they are all listed on this document). Any updates will be communicated to staff via email and DM shift updates.
* All rules applying to the public (hand washing/sanitising, social distancing when possible, climbing capacity, etc.) also apply to workers both when working and not working.
* Before or after hours climbing for staff only will be allowed as long as the guidelines listed in this document are maintained, in the presence of a manager as usual.
* Shall any MECW worker have any doubt or disagree on any of these guidelines and procedures, they should contact a senior manager immediately and, if possible, before their return to work.

1. **ACCIDENTS, SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Objective: To prioritise safety during incidents.

In an emergency (e.g. an accident, provision of first aid, fire or break-in) people do not have to stay appropriately distanced if it would be unsafe.

People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay particular attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards including washing hands.

* Although there may be heightened concerns around first aid, this will continue as normal.

The below adaptations will be used when needed:

* 1. Staff undertaking rescue at height will use suitable PPE.
  2. Gloves and resuscitation face masks will be provided to all first aiders for emergency first aid.
  3. Face masks will be worn when administering general first aid.
  4. Government Guidance here will be followed.
  5. If the first aider deems the situation too urgent they should continue with administering first aid and medical advice should be sought afterwards.
  6. Used PPE should be disposed of in line with government guidelines.

1. **VENTILATION**

Ventilation is an important part of mitigating against the transmission of COVID-19. Ventilation into the building should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided to all areas of the facility and increased wherever possible.

Due to the amount of air flow and space usually present in our facility, it is not a concern that lack of ventilation will be a problem at MECW.

* All extractor fans will be on during opening hours.

1. **CLEANING**

Objective: To keep the workplace clean and reduce the risk of transmission by touching contaminated surfaces. To help everyone keep good hygiene through the working day.

* Regularly used surfaces and touch points will be cleaned throughout the day (reception counter, toilet cubicles, door knobs, self-scan machine, water fountains, etc.).
* The facilities will be professionally cleaned daily after closing or before opening the centre.
* Sanitising spray and tissue will be available for customers to use in their locker and locker key if they wish to do so.
* All rental harnesses will be quarantined on rotation basis after each rental rather than being cleaned.
* Climbing holds are cleaned within route-setting schedules as normal and are considered as part of the infrastructure of the facility, as per ABC guidelines. During normal centre use, hand hygiene practice for customers is encouraged and facilitated to reduce risk of transmission: holds aren’t cleaned between customer usage

1. **COURSES**

All instructors have attended a basic skills refresher and COVID-19 specific course workshop.

1. **APPENDIX**

APPENDIX 1: REDUCED SERVICES:

To minimise the risks of COVID-19 we have decided to limit some of the services that we usually offer.

Current restrictions will be:

* No spectators

APPENDIX 2: CHALK:

We believe that liquid chalk is an appropriate back-up to practicing good hygiene and sanitising hands but we currently don’t recommend it as a replacement.

Customers will be able to purchase liquid and regular chalk at the Rock On shop, as usual.

APPENDIX 3: IF COVID-19 CASE IN FACILITY:

MECW will follow the PHE Guidance – ‘COVID-19 – Cleaning in non-healthcare settings’ while cleaning all areas of the facility.

*“In the event of an identified case in your centre, you will be asked for customer data – who attended on the same date at the same time as the infected case. You must ensure that you are able to produce this data and you may want to inform your customers that you will be doing so.”*

MECW supports test and trace:

If a case of Covid-19 is identified at Mile End Climbing Wall we will be asked to provide customer/employee data to aid the government track and trace system. It is a condition of climbing/attendance at the centre that MECW will provide personal data to the track and trace authorities of all persons at MECW at the same date and time as an infected person in its support of the fight against the virus.