

Air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus pandemic

This guidance is based on the latest information and may be updated as and when new information becomes available.

General ventilation

Employers must, by law, ensure an adequate supply of fresh air in the workplace and this has not changed.

Good ventilation can help reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus, so focus on improving general ventilation, preferably through fresh air or mechanical systems.

Where possible, consider ways to maintain and increase the supply of fresh air, for example, by opening windows and doors (unless fire doors).

Also consider if you can improve the circulation of outside air and prevent pockets of stagnant air in occupied spaces. You can do this by using ceiling fans or desk fans for example, provided good ventilation is maintained.

The risk of transmission through the use of ceiling and desk fans is extremely low providing there is good ventilation in the area it is being used, preferably provided by fresh air.

Air conditioning

The risk of air conditioning spreading coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace is extremely low as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air and ventilation.

You can continue using most types of air conditioning system as normal. But, if you use a centralised ventilations system that removes and circulates air to different rooms it is recommended that you turn off recirculation and use a fresh air supply.

You do not need to adjust air conditioning systems that mix some of the extracted air with fresh air and return it to the room as this increases the fresh air ventilation rate. Also, you do not need to adjust systems in individual rooms or portable units as these operate on 100% recirculation. You should still however maintain a good supply of fresh air ventilation in the room.