



**CIBSE COVID-19
LIFT USE AND
OCCUPANCY**



Version 2

29 June 2020

Lift Use and Occupancy during COVID-19

Introduction to Version 2

Although this guidance was prepared before government adopted the advice that separation of 1m supported by other mitigating measures is acceptable, the physical constraints of lifts are such that the original version of this advice provided guidance on how to mitigate the risks of people from different household groups entering lifts and standing within 2m of each other, and the introduction of the 1m plus advice does not change the original guidance.

With offices and other buildings re-opening there is a need to use the lifts safely.

Lifts are generally small confined spaces where a two-metre separation is not possible. However, the time spent traveling in a lift is less than 15 minutes. The largest lift you might encounter is rated at 2500 kg and only has a car platform of five square metres. If the platform were to be square (which they generally aren't) four people could get in and stand in each corner and meet the two-metre guidance. This limits the occupancy to four people and reduces the lift handling capacity to one sixth of its normal capability. But most lifts are much smaller. So, what can be done to permit lifts to be used during COVID-19 with the lowest risk? The following pages provide guidance on reducing the risk of using lifts in the current circumstances. This guidance is primarily intended for application in offices, but may be applied to other buildings subject to an appropriate risk assessment¹

The following guidance interprets the government guidelines at the time of writing that should reduce the risk of using lifts, but not eliminate it.

1. All intending lift passengers should decide whether they wish to use a lift under, at least, the recommendations below or use some other method to reach a floor in a building.
2. The lift car occupancy should **only** be one person per car up to a rated load of less than 800 kg.
3. For lifts with a rated load of at least 800 kg the permitted occupancy should be one person per square metre, rounded down.

Example 1: An 800 kg lift has a maximum car area of 2 sqm and can accommodate two passengers.

Example 2: A 2500 kg lift has a maximum car area of 5 sqm and can accommodate five passengers

See also Table 2.1 CIBSE Guide D:2015, Transportation Systems in Buildings.

Note: To determine the permitted occupancy, each lift car should be measured to determine its exact area.

4. Hand sanitising facilities and waste bins should be provided in all lift lobbies. All intending passengers should sanitise their hands, before touching pushbuttons or entering the lift car.
5. All passengers entering a lift **must** wear an effective face covering as minimum PPE.

¹ [Further CIBSE information](#) on re-occupying buildings is available.

Note if an intending passenger does not have an effective face covering they **must** acquire one or be supplied one by the building management.

In addition, other PPE can be used such as: gloves, glasses, visors, etc. to the preference of the passenger.

6. On entry all passengers should operate all the pushbuttons using a clean disposable object such as a coffee stirrer, straw, tissue, glove, etc.
7. All passengers should space themselves uniformly in the car, maximising interpersonal spacing and facing away from each other and towards a car wall or the car doors as much as possible, although they may need to check the location of the lift when it stops if the lift does not have voice annunciation.
8. After exiting the car any disposable objects should be safely disposed of in the bins provided in the lift lobbies.
9. After exiting the car all persons should sanitise their hands.
10. All surfaces touched or likely to be touched including the lift push buttons, doors, door frames, etc. should be cleaned regularly according to a risk assessment. The frequency shall be determined by the lift usage. In a large busy office building it might be every 15 minutes. In a small care home possibly once every three hours.
11. Those responsible for the management of the lift should strictly control passenger behaviour by posting notices explaining the conditions of lift usage.

Additional information

It may be possible for the lift maintainer to increase the car fan speed, where fitted.

It may be possible to keep the lift doors open for one parked car at the main entrance to avoid touching landing call pushbuttons or panels.

If the government advice was to be one metre physical separation it would not help the density of lift occupancy, owing to the small size of the lift cars. But it might reduce the challenges of waiting for lifts in smaller lift lobbies.

The building management may need to consider restricting the number of trips a person makes in a lift whilst in the building. This may then match the lift capability with a reduced demand. This may also reduce queueing in lift lobbies to a safe level.

Example: Each person may make no more than two up trips and two down trips per day.

This could be managed by a token scheme.

The building manager may wish to display and distribute guidance on the use of the lifts in the building. An example notice is given below but will need to be reviewed in relation to the particular requirements and risks of the building under consideration.

By ORDER of management of XYZ Ltd

All intending lift passengers or travelling passengers shall:

1. Decide whether they wish to use a lift under these rules.
2. Observe the maximum permitted lift car occupancy posted by each lift.
3. Sanitise their hands, before touching pushbuttons or entering the lift car.
4. Wear an effective face covering in the lift as minimum PPE (see notes 1 & 2).
5. Operate all the pushbuttons using a clean disposable object such as a coffee stirrer, straw, tissue, glove, etc.
6. Space themselves uniformly in the car, maximising interpersonal spacing, facing away from each other and towards a car wall or lift doors as much as possible.
7. After exiting the car place any disposable objects used to operate the lift safely in the bins provided in the lift lobbies.
8. After exiting the car all persons shall sanitise their hands.

Note 1 If an intending passenger does not have an effective face covering they MUST use one provided by the building management.

Note 2 Other PPE can be used in addition to a face covering, such as: gloves, glasses, visors, etc. to the preference of the passenger.

Note 3 Each person may make two trips up and two trips down per day only.

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This document is based on the best knowledge available at the time of publication. Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the COVID-19 epidemic this guidance should be read in conjunction with the relevant government guidance, in particular that relating to [“Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)”](#)

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