

INTRODUCTION

Social distancing requirements bring particular challenges for recruiters who are required to interview, test and train workers as part of their day to day operations. This guidance supports recruiters to access the latest guidance to ensure that their recruitment processes remain compliant with current advice and will be updated as and when official advice changes.

Please visit our [Coronavirus Support Page](#) for more guidance, tools and templates to support you through these unique times.

This Brief has been produced for information only and is not exhaustive nor a substitute for legal advice. ALP and its advisors exclude liability for any claim or loss alleged to have arisen from or in connection with use of the information included within.

Members are invited to contact the ALP if they have any other questions about this document.

REMOTE INTERVIEWING AND INDUCTION

Remote interviewing and induction of agency workers reduces face to face interaction between applicants and interviewers and limits time spent outside the home by not requiring travel. Both are practical ways of complying with government guidance and reducing the risk to your employees and workers.

Any changes to agreed processes should be discussed and agreed between the labour user and the labour provider to ensure that all parties remain compliant with their supply chain agreements.

1. Job adverts and information can be sent via email, text or app. There are several commercial options where a record can be kept of delivery.
2. Online application forms can be provided as part of a recruitment software package by commercial providers or can be designed based upon your own in-house forms. Applicants can complete application forms online and send to you prior to interview. You should include an agreement on the application form requiring the applicant to confirm that they have filled in the form personally, and that they will not distribute it, but careful interviewing will be needed to validate the applicants capability.
3. Most people have a smartphone so interviews and induction can take place using Facetime, WhatsApp, Zoom, Skype or other software. Follow these tips for successful online interviews:
 - a. Ensure that interviewers have fast, stable internet connections so that interviews run smoothly. Try to schedule interviews when fewer people in your home are online.
 - b. Make sure you have the applicants phone number and email address in case the technology lets you down.
 - c. Minimise distractions by switching off your phone along with alerts and chats. Try to avoid remote interviews from a place in your home where other people are around.
 - d. Dress as you normally would for an interview – at least on the visible part of you! It will make you feel and look more professional.
 - e. Pay attention to your tone of voice, facial expressions and mannerisms – it can be difficult to engage remotely so try to look directly at the camera, speak in the same way that you would if you were face to face and remember to smile when appropriate.
4. Avoid conducting interviews over the telephone. Video interviewing makes it easier to establish rapport and being able to see the applicants expression and reactions makes it much easier for the interviewer to gauge the applicants suitability.



5. E-signatures (see government [guidance](#)) can be used for key information documents, contracts, assignment details etc. Alternatively, send documents to your worker to review and agree, and have them sign them before commencement on the first day of work.
6. Usually recruiters must be in possession of original ID in order to establish a statutory excuse during video interviewing as per page 14 of the [guidance](#). The Home Office has authorised [temporary changes to right to rent and right to work checks](#). The temporary changes will mean the Home Office will not require employers to see original documents and will allow checks to be undertaken over video calls. Please see the Home Office "[Right to work checks: COVID-19 guidance factsheet](#)". Labour providers should ask new recruits to bring their original ID to their first day at work to be checked and copied where possible. When the temporary changes have ended, Home Office have indicated that they will require employers who have conducted remote right to work checks to complete a full face to face check in order to maintain their statutory excuse. ALP will update members with further advice or dates of changes as we get them.
7. Workers with digital evidence of their right to work, and who use it during the recruitment process (such as workers with status under the European Settlement Scheme) are not subject to original document checks. They need to provide you with a share code which enables you to access their digital status. You will need to make a visual check that the person you are interviewing is the person who appears in the photograph in the digital status and check the date of birth and other details to ensure they match the details given in the application form, and are consistent with the appearance of the applicant.
8. Inductions and other pre-employment training can be achieved either remotely by webinar, or on the first day of work. Businesses should risk assess the training and introduce any necessary measures to reduce risk to a safe level. In line with [government guidance](#), such measures could include ensuring that delegates are seated at least 2 metres apart, wash their hands on entering and leaving the room, are briefed on the [NHS guidelines](#) for stopping infections spreading and ensuring that the room is thoroughly cleaned between uses, following [government guidelines](#).

USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE REMOTE RECRUITMENT

ALP members can watch 'Using Technology to Enhance Remote Recruitment' available from the [webinar section](#) of the ALP website. It contains many tips and recommendations for both free and paid for tools to support remote recruitment including:

- Online application forms
- Applicant tracking systems
- Candidate relationship management systems
- Communication tools
- Interview and meeting tools
- Testing and assessment tools
- Document management tools including e-signatures for remote agreement to terms
- Onboarding tools



MANAGING THE INCREASED RISK OF EXPLOITATION

The impact of coronavirus increases the risk of worker exploitation by unscrupulous labour providers and criminal gangs. Read more about how and why this happens in the [‘Practical Guide to Responsible Recruitment During and Coming out of Covid-19’](#) freely available from the Responsible Recruitment Toolkit.

Added to this, remote recruitment and management of agency workers makes worker exploitation harder to detect by removing many of the opportunities to engage with workers directly.

Just Good Work is a free, interactive app to help all jobseekers and workers understand their UK employment rights, recognise poor treatment at work and access remedy. It’s a useful engagement tool to support remote recruitment and management and ensures that all workers have access to the same guidance on good recruitment and employment practices so that they know what good looks like, and when to report issues.

The app is made freely available in a range of languages to all UK employees, employers and labour providers through the collaboration and support of ALP and its partner organisations and is funded entirely through donations and customisation revenue.

For labour providers exploring technological solutions to remote recruitment and management of workers, Just Good Work can perform many of the functions listed in the technology section of this brief and offers additional benefits around worker feedback and the ability to audit remotely. The price point is designed to encourage take up, starting at just £149 a month.

Find out more on our [Just Good Work](#) page or contact [Just Good Work](#) directly.

ALP and partners have produced a short animated [Worker Rights Video](#) explaining how to avoid problems, rights at work, and where and how to report issues. The film is in four sections covering:

- Before work during recruitment;
- Getting the correct pay;
- Staying safe and well at work;
- Key rights at work.

It’s freely available to download in English, Bulgarian, Gujarati and Romanian and can be used in inductions, displayed on your website and social media, or sent directly to applicants and workers.

Both Just Good Work and the Worker Rights Video reduce the risk of exploitation by ensuring that workers are aware of their key rights whilst working in the UK and know where to go to report issues. Labour providers who use these free tools should include their use in their Modern Slavery Statements.

WHERE REMOTE INTERVIEWING AND INDUCTION IS NOT POSSIBLE

Working from home is one way to protect workers, but workplaces can also be made safe by following [COVID-19 Secure guidelines](#).

Labour providers must follow government guidance on [working safely during coronavirus](#) and the specific guidance for [Offices and contact centres](#) and [Shops and branches](#).

ALP has produced an **Offices and Branches Risk Control Checklist** available from the [ALP Coronavirus Support](#) page, which lists all of the actions that government guidance suggests are appropriate for workers to work safely in offices, contact centres and branches. This includes during interview, induction and training of workers.

Labour providers should use the checklist both in their own working environments to ensure that staff and visitors are safe, and collaboratively with their clients to assess compliance with government guidance to ensure that clients sites are safe for agency workers supplied to work in an office, contact centre or branch.

