



# The Safe Guide for Homeowners

Employing a glazing company to improve your home during the COVID-19 crisis



Glass and Glazing Federation

**myglazing.com**

This Safe Guide covers:

Repair, maintenance and replacement of Windows and Doors plus Installation of: Conservatories • Orangeries • Extensions • Glass Structures • Garden Houses • Porches and replacement Roofline



# Welcome to your Safe Guide

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, lifestyles and attitudes around practically everything have changed. However as the situation evolves and we emerge from the crisis, there is now an even greater respect for health and safety than ever before.

- ✓ The Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF), the sector's main trade organisation has produced this Safe Guide to assure homeowners that when it comes to any glazing home improvements, your health and safety is of paramount importance.
- ✓ Please use this Safe Guide as your reference to make sure the company you employ is adhering to this advice and the latest Government guidance from both central and devolved Governments in the UK.
- ✓ This guide highlights the checkpoints for your installation for repair, maintenance or replacement of windows, doors or installations of conservatories or extensions or other external glazing related home improvements.
- ✓ So if you are getting a quote and/or a survey right through to installation and inspection, this Safe Guide should help you make sure the company you employ will operate in line with the latest Government health and safety guidelines.

## Keeping you protected

This Safe Guide should prove more than useful and should give you peace of mind during these extraordinary times. The information in this Guide, should help you decide which company to employ to ensure the work in your home is done safely and professionally.





## SECTION 1

# Current Government Guidance

The current Government guidance (as of 7th May 2020) to Tradespersons carrying out agreed work in people's homes is detailed below:

- A Tradesperson can continue work in a domestic home, providing that the Tradesperson is well and has no symptoms of COVID-19.
- A Tradesperson/Company should notify all homeowners in advance of arrival.
- On entry to the home, Tradespeople should wash their hands using soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Tradespeople should wash their hands regularly, particularly after blowing their noses, sneezing or coughing, and when leaving the property.
- Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser should be used, and Tradespeople should carry this with them at all times.
- Tradespeople should maintain a safe distance (at least 2 metres) from any household occupants at all times.
- Tradespeople/Companies should ensure good ventilation in the area where they are working, including opening the window.
- No work should be carried out in any household which is isolating or where an individual is being shielded, unless the work is to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household, such as an emergency glazing or repair.
- No work should be carried out by a Tradesperson who has COVID-19 symptoms, however mild.



The key questions and considerations to ask yourself before carrying out any home improvements.

## SECTION 2

# How healthy is your home?

Before employing a company to carry out a home improvement in your property, it might be worth asking yourself, "how healthy is my home?" Undertaking a healthy home assessment not only protects the health of those living in your property but also safeguards the health of any tradespeople entering and working in your home.

### Making your home healthy and safe may require some assessment.

For example, is your home draughty or damp? Does it urgently need new windows and doors? Is it heated and ventilated properly? Is it cramped? Does it lack natural light?

These are just some of the questions you might ask when thinking about the kind of home improvements that would make your home healthier.

Your physical home may be healthy, but are the occupants, perhaps your family, at risk?

### Ask yourself:

- Is there anyone with underlying health conditions living in my property?
- Is there anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 living in my home?
- Could anyone entering my home, affect my health or those living with me?
- Are there any sick or elderly people living in my home who could be affected by external Tradespeople?
- Will anyone (such as a tradesperson or surveyor) visiting my home be affected by working in my home?
- Can I isolate anyone who is sick or elderly from the Tradespeople in my home?

### SECTION 3

# The working environment

**Most companies in the construction and home improvement sectors aim to do the best job they can to ensure they leave their customers satisfied and with a healthier and improved home.**

A Tradesperson's working environment may change from day to day. For example, one day they may be installing windows in a small flat and the next day they could be starting to build a conservatory on a large property.

Regardless of the environment, companies should adjust their safety equipment and practices to suit and in line with the Government health and safety guidance.

See opposite, some of the safety measures you should expect from the company you employ.



### SECTION 4

# What to expect from a company?

- They should be working to this Safe Guide or something similar that references the Government guidelines.
- All their employees should be safety aware and adhere to Government health guidelines. So:
  - Expect workers to operate 2 metres apart.
  - They should wear gloves and/or face coverings when in enclosed spaces.
  - They should have hand sanitiser available and make a commitment to frequently clean/wash hands.
  - They should be aware of the areas of your home where they can enter or not – please make it clear which parts of your property that are prohibited.
- They should have floor coverings (dust sheets) laid out and in some cases taped to the skirting.
- They should clean down with disinfectant all surfaces they have handled or installed at the end of each day – including cleaning any new window or door frames and any glass/seals or beading.
- They should eat away from the property – either in their van or outside.
- They should bring their own food and drink for refreshment breaks and lunches.
- They should make their own plans for any access to washroom facilities / toilets.
- They should make the working area safe at the end of each day.



## SECTION 5

# Letting workers into your home

**When you decide you need to make an essential home improvement and have chosen a company to carry out the work, it is advisable to:**

- Agree a suitable arrival time.
- Ask them to email identification and names of the Tradespeople who will be working in your home.
- When the company's employees (e.g. salesperson, surveyor or tradespeople) arrive and you open your door, stand 2 metres back and please confirm that neither you or any other member of your household is suffering from any symptoms of COVID-19. Ask the company's employee(s) to confirm the same. Please then guide them to an area where the work or a conversation can take place with at least a 2m distance between you and the company's employee(s).

**Ask the company you employ to ensure their employees;**

- ✓ Show you identification – particularly at the point of sales and survey.
  - ✓ Are aware of and are following the Government Health and Safety guidelines (as per Section 1).
  - ✓ Meet your expectations (or those listed) in the previous section (or those listed in the Section 4).
  - ✓ Are in a Competent Person Scheme such as FENSA (only applicable in England and Wales) and can legally certify your windows/doors.
- Note:** Ask for your Certificate after the job has been completed but before the work begins tell the company you expect the certificate and please check the FENSA website [www.fensa.org.uk](http://www.fensa.org.uk) to ensure that the installer is registered.
- ✓ Are wearing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) (listed in Section 6).
  - ✓ Have confirmed that none of them have shown signs of COVID-19.
  - ✓ Confirm they have been briefed on health and safety awareness and the government guidance – please ask them to show you how they have been informed/briefed to work safely in your home.

Expect tradespeople working on your property to take the necessary PPE measures...

## SECTION 6

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE or Personal Protective Equipment is an often used phrase since the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19), but what exactly does it include?

Expect Tradespeople working on your property to wear;

- Gloves
- Masks (face coverings)
- Protective footwear
- Possibly overalls
- Possibly hard hats
- Possibly goggles or visors

Though not all PPE will be directly related to COVID-19, it is worth insisting that the tradespeople working in your home are wearing gloves and masks and visors if they are likely to be within 2 metres of another person in your home.

You should also note that COVID-19 can be transferred from PPE and other surfaces such as fabrics, plastics, metals, wood and glass. It is therefore advisable not to touch any PPE or other materials that are being used for your home improvement until the job has been completed and all surfaces have been thoroughly cleaned with soap and water or chemical cleaners.



## SECTION 7

# Health and Safety Risk Assessment Checklist

Ask the company you employ if it has carried out a proper Health and Safety Assessment in relation to your installation. The Assessment should include questions such as those listed below.

- Can Tradespeople work 2 metres apart?
- Have any Tradespeople shown symptoms of COVID-19?
- Are any Tradespeople shielding or living with anyone who has shown signs or symptoms of COVID-19?
- Have customers or suppliers shown any signs of COVID-19?
- Can Tradespeople wash their hands or use sanitiser at work?
- Do all Tradespeople have sufficient appropriate and fully adequate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves?
- Have all Tradespeople been given health and safety awareness training?

Ask the company to show evidence that employees have received information and briefing on the health and safety measures included in this Guide.

## SECTION 8

# Insurance and Warranties

When employing a company to carry out work in your home make sure you ask for evidence of the guarantees and insurances that are in place. Every company should be able to provide evidence of Employers' Liability & Public Liability insurance policies.

## Contracts

Health and Safety should be included within any contracts. Prior to signing make sure that companies are committed to following the Government Health and Safety Guidance.



## SECTION 9

# Deciding to employ

Taking the decision to have repair to, maintenance of, or replacement windows and doors or a conservatory or extension installed in the current climate should be easier if you have taken the right precautions as outlined in this guide and the company you are employing has ensured it is safe to carry out work in your home.

The GGF recommends its Members operating in the home improvement sector adhere to the highest industry standards and must follow the latest Government and Public Health England guidance. The GGF has issued this Safe Guide in digital format to all Members so that they can provide this key information to homeowners.

**Your final checklist before deciding to safely employ a company for your glazing home improvements.**



Check your home is safe.

Check the occupants in your home are safe and are not at risk.

Check the company you are employing is operating according to Government health and safety guidelines and has briefed their employees.

Check the company you are employing has carried out a Health and Safety Risk Assessment for the work in your home or on the land around your property.

Check with the company you are employing that they will ensure all Tradespeople and other company representatives will be provided with appropriate PPE.

Check the company has valid insurance cover and that its terms and conditions comply with the latest Government guidance.

## SECTION 10

# Further information

**This Safe Guide covers the key checks and balances you should ensure are in place before you employ a glazing company to repair, maintain or replace your windows and doors or install your conservatory, orangery, extension, porch, roofline, glass structure or garden house.**

Please see web links below for further information.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes)

[www.MyGlazing.com](https://www.MyGlazing.com)

[www.ggf.org.uk](https://www.ggf.org.uk)

The information in this Safe Guide is aligned to the Government and Public Health England health and safety guidance regarding tradespeople working in homes during the COVID-19 pandemic, as published on 11th May 2020.

This Guide will be updated as and when the Government guidance is updated or there is any change in legislation. If you are in any doubt regarding the content of this guide please visit the Government website for the latest guidance on tradespeople working in domestic properties.



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