

Handling Guidelines for Books and other resource materials During Covid-19

What You need to know:

With workplaces reopening after the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions (*Roadmap to Re-opening Ireland*) [click here](#). Safe systems of work need to be put in place by employers to ensure the continued health, safety and welfare of employees and to reduce the potential risk of the spread of Covid-19 (*Returning to Work Safely Protocol*) [click here](#). Fórsa have produced a comprehensive guide to understanding these documents that can be read in full [here](#).

We are aware that schools will need to allow for the return of books and other resource materials to allow that these be available for next year's students upon the re-opening of schools (currently set for September 2020).

This handling should be done in accordance with the two documents, as agreed with Trade Unions and other stakeholders, named above.

SNAs: This document may not wholly apply to SNAs as handling of books (book rental scheme) is not an accepted duty. However, SNAs may need to be aware of these guidelines for assisting in compiling resource packs etc.

Secretaries: While this document may not wholly apply to School Secretaries you may need to be aware of these guidelines as you may be the point at which these items are received back by the school.

This body of work should be incorporated within the schools' covid-19 relevant Risk Assessments and all identified control measures should be put in place, including provision of disinfecting equipment and training.

The following guidelines have been developed with the Deputy Chief Medical Officer to protect against the spread of Covid-19 when handling books and other physical materials. These are the standard that all schools should implement [click here](#).

Guidelines:

- Maintain physical distancing
- Observe good hygiene (hand washing and respiratory etiquette, don't touch your eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands etc.) before and after handling books and other materials returned to the school
- Follow the protocols if you are displaying symptoms of Covid-19
- Any books or other items (e.g. resource packs etc.) that have been returned to the school since the 12th of March 2020 should be quarantined for 72 hours. Quarantining means placing these items in sealed boxes that are labelled with the time and date of the start of the 72 hours quarantine period. These should be stored in a separate location to active work areas.
- After moving materials hands should be washed as per HSE guidelines
- After the quarantine period of 72 hours expires the items may be unboxed and cleaned and prepared for the next school year.

If you are in doubt at any stage contact your local workplace rep or Fórsa directly at <https://www.forsa.ie/contact/>

Protect yourself, join your union online now - [click here](#).