



The Covid diaries: Day 31 - Open for Business (Sort Of)

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A daily fly-on-the-wall blog about running a legal business during the Covid-19 crisis.

By Dónall Breen - 29 April

Open for Business (Sort Of)

If all good things must come to an end, then by definition all bad things must come to an end too. That conference call that started (what feels like) 6 days ago eventually finishes. The treadmill that counts down to 0:00 in extra slow time, it eventually stops. And at some stage the restrictions we are currently living with will end in some form or another.

Running a law firm we generally deal in the short to medium term. Issues faced by clients tend to be on the 2 week to 6 month timeline. But now and again we get something like Covid-19 that potentially stretches years into the future. We need to start thinking about what happens when we reopen for business, and how that will affect how we engage with employees in the long run.

That process has already started. Even when most governments still haven't published their plan, businesses are looking at what will happen if testing is mandatory, forcing people to socially interact (or distance) is a HR decision, and choosing who works from home will be a discussion fraught with tension.

Just like any good exam question, the answers to these issues are rarely straight forward and typically requires some mental horsepower to tease them out.

But unlike an exam question, the answers have some serious real world implications. Not just financially, but it is starting to look like employment law and social policy are going to mesh in a new public health debate. Lawyers and HR practitioners alike may need to start dusting down some of those old academic articles, listen to Radio 4 more often (for non-UK readers: a *serious* radio station for *serious* discussions) and engage in lively debates with people outside of law (horror!) so we can clue up on this.

No doubt it will be hard, but no doubt it will be interesting too.

All good things must come to an end, even this blog post...

If you would like to read our **Covid diaries starting from day 1** please click [here](#).