

## AGENT PROTOCOLS

To reduce the spread of coronavirus and keep the market moving, it is important that only consumers who are serious about making an offer can physically view property:

- Identification, moving and financial situation will be checked prior to consumers viewing property
- No speculative viewings
- Follow a two-step process. Step one virtual viewings, step two controlled viewings
- Open house viewings are not allowed
- Viewings can only be attended by people from the same household and children are discouraged from attending (Distinct's policy is no children below 16 years' old)
- We will accompany viewings and would maintain, where possible, a minimum two metre distance from others
- Viewings should be carried out by our agents rather than the occupiers. If the agent cannot attend, then owners and occupiers will be fully briefed in terms of social distancing obligations
- Agents should not drive clients to appointments

### Step 1, virtual viewings

Once the property is on the market all viewings should be done virtually and online initially (e.g. by viewing a video of the property).

### Step 2, controlled viewings

Visiting property is a crucial step when purchasing or renting a new home. To assist this process:

#### Before the viewing:

- No viewing should take place if any person in a property is showing symptoms of coronavirus, self isolating or shielding
- Controlled viewings of property should be made by appointment only, subject to all parties providing a declaration of coronavirus symptoms (current or previous) before viewing the property. A declaration should be made in writing or via email and records kept accordingly
- Anyone living at the property must agree via email or text or on the phone through company landlines (not mobile) as the calls are recorded, to each physical viewing.
- Consumers (viewers) should confirm in writing or via email that they have appropriate protective equipment (e.g. gloves and face mask) before attending the viewing. Without confirmation the viewing should not go ahead. As an extra precaution shoe covering can be worn
- All use of protective equipment should be disposed of appropriately by consumers
- Make sure the owners or occupiers are out and the property is hazard free, including where possible any communal areas

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

Distinct Property Consultants is trading name of Distinct EA Ltd – Registered in England under Company No: 8940586 VAT: 190 3670 08

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## PRIOR TO BOOKING A PHYSICAL VIEWING OR PROPERTY VISIT

- Agents should always ask whether any party is showing symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate before going ahead with any viewing. At this time, no members of the public are to enter our premises and this should be made clear straight away.
- If the property to be viewed is still occupied, agents should contact the tenant in situ or vendor to establish whether they are happy to receive viewers (see Occupied Properties below). The wishes of tenants in situ or vendor should be respected at all times.
- All viewings must be recorded on Acquaint to ensure that we have an audit trail for all appointments.
- Agents should not carry out any open house viewings.
- Agents should strongly encourage clients to view properties virtually in the first instance and then only physically inspect properties which they have a strong interest in.
- Agents should establish through detailed questioning whether a prospective viewer is suitable for the property (lettings) and pre-qualify a buyer (sales) and there is a strong possibility that an application will be taken (lettings only) before committing to a physical viewing.

## PHYSICAL VIEWINGS

- All appointments must be confirmed on the day. Again, agents should ask whether any party is showing symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate before going ahead with any viewing. Also, it should be reiterated that office visits are not taking place at all.
- Agents can accompany physical viewings and seek to maintain a minimum of 2 metres distance from others wherever possible. Where social distancing is not possible and the visit is within an enclosed space, they are required by the Company to wear a face covering in line with government guidance. Agents may wear their own face covering or face masks and disposable shoe covers provided by the Company. The external contractors (i.e. inventory and viewing clerks) are required to have their own Personal Protective Equipment.
- Agents should not drive clients to appointments.

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- All parties viewing a property should wash their hands with soap and water (or hand sanitiser if not available) immediately after entering the properties, with internal doors opened and surfaces having been wiped down before they enter. Separate towels or paper towels should be used if possible and washed or disposed of safely after use. Agents will be provided with a 'sanitising kit' to take to every viewing.

## **VIEWINGS – ESSENTIAL INFORMATION PROSPECTIVE TENANTS OR BUYERS**

Prospective tenants should use virtual viewings before visiting properties in person where possible, in order to minimise public health risks. If any member of either the household being viewed, or the household undertaking a viewing is showing symptoms of coronavirus or is self-isolating, then a physical viewing should be delayed.

- Initial viewings should be done virtually wherever this is possible and physical viewings should only be conducted where buyers are seriously considering making an offer on a property.
- All viewings should take place by appointment and only involve members of a single household.
- Young children below age of 16 should not be present at the viewing in order to comply with our 'non-touch' policy.
- Viewings should be conducted by appointment only and no open house viewings should take place.
- All internal doors must be opened prior to the viewing and accessed allowed to handwashing facilities and ideally separate paper towels.
- When viewing a property, prospective tenants or buyers must not touch surfaces at all.
- Once the viewing has taken place, the homeowner should ensure surfaces, such as door handles, are cleaned with standard household cleaning products and towels disposed of safely or washed as appropriate.
- Prospective tenants or buyers have to have their own personal protective equipment. Agent will not conduct a viewing if the prospective tenant or buyer is not wearing face covering and does not have either gloves or hand gel.

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## UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES

- Properties must have been vacant for a minimum of 72 hours prior to any viewing or check out taking place. As an extra pre-caution , we would not enter the property first 4 days after it has been vacated.

## OCCUPIED PROPERTIES

- If there are current tenants or vendors still at the property, they must be advised to vacate the property whilst viewings are taking place in order to minimise contact with both agent and viewer.

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