



ALLIANCE SHOWCASES BEST PRACTICE IN LOCKDOWN AND ENSURES A SAFE RE-OPENING

“Make UK has been a great support to me in my role during these difficult times. They are and will remain a trusted partner of ours, facing any challenge with you, head on.”

Melissa Walstrom, National HR Manager, Alliance Flooring Distribution Ltd

ALLIANCE FLOORING DISTRIBUTION LTD

Alliance Flooring Distribution Ltd is one of the UK's leading dedicated floor covering distributors, with over 25 years of experience in providing trade delivery solutions.

With a Head Office in Kidderminster, the business employs approximately 160 highly trained staff who operate throughout the UK, from depots in the Midlands and Hemel Hempstead to a hub in the North.

Melissa Walstrom, National HR Manager, explained, “Alliance Flooring Distribution is a dedicated carrier of all types of floor coverings including carpet, hard flooring and even artificial grass, servicing 40 European and UK customers, so when lockdown was announced the business acted swiftly to adhere to government directives.”

As a Make UK member, Alliance Flooring Distribution Ltd has been accessing Make UK services for many years and knew that faced with this unprecedented situation they would be able to turn to Make UK for first-rate HR & Legal support and guidance.

LOCKDOWN

Melissa described how Alliance, as a 'non-essential company' whose customers would also be required to lockdown, responded to the developments brought about by Covid-19. "In just one day we had to prepare agreements for all staff, enabling us to implement a full lockdown for everyone. Once lockdown was implemented, regular contact with our team became a priority as we navigated this unprecedented scenario."

Fortunately, the business which divides approximately into 40% warehouse staff, 40% drivers and 20% office-based workers, had been gearing up for homeworking prior to lockdown.

Melissa continued, "When we went into lockdown, I think we all had a feeling it was coming, so had already placed employees into 4 groups, using a fair process. This meant that drivers and warehouse operatives left site knowing that, as and when we could return, teams would be called back in group order. Being volume driven, it was unlikely we would need the whole workforce to return at the same time, so we wanted to do all we could to make the furlough and ultimately un-furloughing process fair."

KEEPING IN TOUCH

During lockdown Alliance ensured that employees were emailed on a weekly basis and kept fully informed of the steps the company was taking in readiness for a safe re-opening.

This included the writing of a plan and policy for social distancing, full PPE packs being ordered, packed and ready for distribution as well as health and well-being advice being sent out.

For those coming back to work, a pre-return telephone interview is conducted where employees are asked about health and well-being concerns, and if they have any initial questions regarding their return. When arriving onto site employees are given a full site induction to show them the changes that have been made before a further return to work briefing and health and safety brief is carried out.

HERE FOR YOU

For Alliance, like the majority of UK manufacturers, navigating the complex HR and Employment law challenges faced as a result of the coronavirus crisis has been demanding; implementing furlough processes, maintain contact with employees, providing reassurance and supporting well-being, and then successfully bringing people back into the workforce.

Make UK's Legal Services really has made a difference, Mel concluded, "They have been a great support to me in my role during these difficult times. They are and will remain a trusted partner of ours, facing any challenge with you, head on. A fantastic support to the business."

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