

Health and safety

The safety of our colleagues, members and everyone who visits our premises is always a priority for our business.

In a difficult year, we remained committed to enhancing our positive safety culture and developing our Co-op minimum safety standards, recognising that strong risk safety governance is key to the health, safety and wellbeing of our colleagues. Despite our focus turning to creating Covid-safe environments for our customers and colleagues, we have continued to drive improvement through training and further developing our incident management system 'MySafety'.

Our response to Covid-19

From the onset of the pandemic, our priority has been to protect the health and safety of our colleagues. We had to work in a more agile way to support colleagues with practical safety measures and, while acquiring protective equipment for our key workers has been critical, ensuring that colleagues felt informed and assured of our support has been just as important.

We supported our colleagues to work at home where they could, but also ensured we provided a safe environment for those who couldn't.



Last year as part of our campaign to protect frontline colleagues from violence, we committed to engaging with partners and statutory bodies, including the Police and Home Office, to develop partnerships to make our colleagues feel safer at work. We launched Project Zeal - a collaborative partnership with Nottinghamshire Police to tackle persistent and violent offending within Co-op stores and have also supported other pilot projects to enable direct incident reporting to Police.

Case study: Keeping our customers and colleagues safe

From the start of the pandemic, great logistics has been key to ensuring our stores received what they needed to service all our customers safely.

We needed to react quickly and, using government guidance, we removed and reduced risk across all high volume touchpoints and processes supported by social distancing measures. Within a couple of weeks we had an anti-bacterial spray and enhanced cleaning regime in place alongside a communication routine which connected every colleague across the whole of logistics to any changes and advice on a daily basis supported by regular senior team updates and clear and decisive decision making.

Throughout this period, we've continued to review and refine our controls responding to colleague feedback and changes to guidance to ensure we remained compliant and where possible exceed the expected measures.



5,897 Non-reportable accidents (colleagues) in 2020 (2019: 4,406)

6,280 per 100,000 colleagues (2019: 7,037)

233 Reportable accidents (colleagues) in 2020 (2019: 243)

340 per 100,000 colleagues (2019: 388)

How we manage safety

Colleague accidents is one of the key indicators of how effectively we're managing workplace safety. Our accident data enables us to review trends and take more proactive steps to avoid them. Using more mobile technology, such as tablets, has also made it easier for colleagues to report accidents, increasing reporting rates as well as our ability to react quickly and look for lessons learned.

We also record customer accidents. We've seen a decrease in non-reportable accidents and a small increase in reportable accidents but the numbers remain low, reflecting our ongoing commitment to provide a safe environment for our members and customers.

We measure progress on how we're driving improvements through a 'Balanced Scorecard' approach, using indicators such as how our colleagues are trained. This is reported to the Board on a monthly basis and has been developed further this year to drive continuous improvement.

Looking ahead

Our focus will always be on continuous improvement through embedding our Co-op minimum safety standards, using KPIs and colleague feedback to ensure we have the right processes in place. We recognise the strong link between work and wellbeing and led the way in 2020 with our leadership messaging and support for colleagues during a challenging year, and we want to take this further by reflecting this in our safety governance.

In 2021 we will be creating a new Co-op Minimum Safety Standard¹ to formally recognise the link between work and wellbeing, incorporating into our Health and Safety Governance Framework.

🎯 2021 targets

In 2021 we will create a new Co-op Minimum Safety Standard¹ to formally recognise the link between work and wellbeing and to incorporate wellbeing into our Health and Safety Governance framework.

¹ Standards set across the Co-op to set out how we achieve legal compliance or higher.