

Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Policy

This Policy/Advice is based on the recommendations of the UK Chief Medical officers and current Government guidelines.

What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

Generally, coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China.

Symptoms of coronavirus

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- A cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness.

The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How coronavirus is spread

Because it's a new illness, we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person.

Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets or actual contact such as shaking hands or kissing.

It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food.

Do public places need to be avoided?

Most people can continue to go to work, but the advice is to allow employees to work from home where possible. Schools are now closed unless the parents of children are classed as 'key workers', and the Government are telling cafés, pubs, clubs, theatres, leisure centres, gyms and restaurants, typically where there may be social gatherings, to close.

You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if you have any of the symptoms of the virus mentioned above and then follow the self-isolation advice detailed below.

Social distancing in the workplace

Where workplaces are still running, where possible you should look to social distance in offices, keep a desk length apart, or separate offices and welfare facilities such as canteens where breaks can be staggered, or sitting at separate tables etc, this will reduce the risk of spreading the virus between work colleagues if they are unaware that they have it and are not self-isolating.

How long does the coronavirus last on surfaces?

In the workplace you should be aware how long the virus can survive outside the human body, especially when handling packaging.

Studies on similar viruses found that they can survive on metal, glass and plastic for as long as 9 days unless properly disinfected.

It is also known to stay on cardboard for up to 24 hours.

As a result, it's good practice to clean your mobile phone, laptop, keyboard etc where the virus may be present.

How to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus

Do

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- Follow social distancing advice, including at work where possible

Don't

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Work in close contact with colleagues if it is not necessary

Self-isolation

The main messages are:

- Anyone with symptoms should stay at home for at least 7 days.

- If you live with other people, they should stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home.
- After 14 days, anyone you live with who does not have symptoms can return to their normal routine.
- But, if anyone in your home gets symptoms, they should stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms start. Even if it means they're at home for longer than 14 days.

Information:

If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.

If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

If you still have symptoms after 7 days

- After 7 days, if you no longer have a high temperature you can return to your normal routine.
- If you still have a high temperature, stay at home until your temperature returns to normal.
- If you still have a cough after 7 days, but your temperature is normal, you do not need to continue staying at home. A cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

This action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious.

What else you can do?

- Plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure you can successfully stay at home
- Ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- Stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home and at work whenever possible
- Sleep alone, if possible
- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- Stay away from vulnerable individuals, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, as much as possible

You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

Social Contact – which may include employees

By next weekend (21/03/2020), those with the most serious health conditions must be "largely shielded from social contact for around 12 weeks"

The group of people who should take "particular care to minimise their social contact" are:

- People over the age of 70
- Other adults who would normally be advised to have the flu vaccine (such as those with chronic diseases)
- Pregnant women

Medical Help

NHS 111 has an online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

Use this service if:

- You think you might have coronavirus
- In the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see coronavirus advice for travellers
- You've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus

Travel

Employees should avoid 'non-essential' travel, especially overseas.

Advice for Returning Travellers

Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people if you've travelled to the UK from the following places, even if you do not have symptoms:

- Anywhere in Italy on or after 9 March
- Specific areas in northern Italy in the last 14 days
- Iran in the last 14 days
- Hubei province in China in the last 14 days
- Daegu, Cheongdo or Gyeongsan in South Korea in the last 14 days


Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people if you've travelled to the UK from the following places in the last 14 days and have a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath, even if your symptoms are mild:

- Italy (outside specific areas in northern Italy) before 9 March
- Mainland China outside of Hubei province
- South Korea outside of Daegu, Cheongdo and Gyeongsan
- Cambodia
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Laos
- Macau
- Malaysia
- Myanmar

- Singapore
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

Note that this list is ever mounting, you should reference the Government website for the latest information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Director's Signature & Date:


23/3/20

