

## Management of Covid-19 cases and outbreaks in non-education settings

### No one should attend work if they have any Covid-19 symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell

However, people with COVID-19 can present with a wide range of symptoms including headache, sore muscles and joints, tiredness, sore throat, cold-like symptoms and diarrhoea and vomiting. If you or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek further advice from [NHS Inform](#)<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1. **Advice to staff if you test positive or show symptoms**

- a. If any employee has symptoms of Coronavirus infection or if feeling unwell or has tested positive by either Lateral Flow Device (LFD) or PCR test, report this to your Line Manager and **DO NOT come into the workplace.**

Please note if you test positive on a LFD, arrange a PCR test and log the LFD result online, following the guidance supplied with the LFD kit.

- b. If you develop Covid-19 symptoms at work, return home and self-isolate immediately and arrange a PCR test in accordance with government guidance.
- c. If you or a visitor who has been in the workplace is subsequently identified as a positive Covid 19 case, please inform your line manager

#### 2. **Advice to staff if you may be a close contact of a Covid-19 case**

By following the [general Scottish Government guidance on Covid-19](#)<sup>2</sup> and workplace risk assessments you reduce the risk of being identified as a close contact. However, you may still receive information from your line manager, a colleague or friends or family that you may be a close contact of a Covid case.

**If this occurs, please immediately minimise contact with colleagues if in the workplace, and always contact your line manager by phone.** On a precautionary basis it is recommended you leave the workplace. Scottish

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-infection>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Government advice on this is available [here](#)<sup>3</sup>. You should arrange to get a PCR test.

**This action should be taken ahead of any formal identification of close contacts by NHS Highland (NHSH) Health Protection Team (HPT) through contact tracing. Close contacts MUST NOT return to the workplace whilst waiting for their PCR results. Please contact your line manager immediately if you have a positive result.**

A general definition of a close contact is provided in [Scottish Government guidance](#)<sup>4</sup>: 'a 'close contact' is someone who has been physically close enough to the confirmed case for a long enough period of time, that they may have had the virus transmitted to them. The risk of the virus being transmitted is higher the closer the contact, the greater the exposure to respiratory droplets (for example from coughing), and the longer the duration of the contact.'

Further guidance on close contacts is available [here](#)<sup>5</sup>. Detailed definitions from guidance to contact tracers are below (full document [here](#)<sup>6</sup> if required)

- Face to face contact with a case for any length of time, within 1 metre including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, unprotected physical contact (skin to skin). This includes exposure within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- A person who has travelled in a small vehicle (e.g. car or van) with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 or in a large vehicle near someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.
- Extended close contact (less than 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with a case. The duration of contact should be considered cumulatively over a 24 hour period, where exposure is within the infectious period (48 hours prior to symptom onset, or positive test if the case is asymptomatic, for 10 days from the date of symptom onset, or positive test if the case is asymptomatic).

### **3. Advice to line manger if single positive case or symptomatic employee**

The aim is to take reasonable, sensible precautions as an employer ahead of NHSH's HPT undertaking detailed contact tracing. Guidance on this is available [here](#)<sup>7</sup>

- a) Please discuss with the symptomatic/positive employee any obvious close contacts. Advise employee you may need to share their name for public health purposes with NHSH if further cases arise (see data protection advice below).
- b) Inform any close contacts to follow advice in section 2 on close contacts.
- c) The NHSH's HPT do not need to be informed of a single suspected case or positive case of COVID-19.
- d) [HPS Guidance](#)<sup>8</sup> will be followed on arrangements for the workplace following report of suspected or positive case.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/advice-for-employers/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/who-needs-to-self-isolate/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/advice-for-employers/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/9149/2021-09-13-covid-19-guidance-for-hpt-v12.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/advice-for-employers/>

- Arrange deep clean of immediate workplace of those tested positive.
  - Consider arranging deep clean of shared areas such as toilets & kitchen (these should be getting regular cleaning particularly of contact surfaces).
- e) For rest of team, please encourage them to be vigilant for Covid-19 symptoms, continue to follow the workplace risk assessment (recommend this is recirculated to all staff) and continue to encourage use of lateral flow tests.
- f) Inform RPO of the case

#### 4. **Advice to line manager if 2 or more positive or symptomatic cases in the same location**

The aim is to take reasonable, sensible precautions as an employer ahead of NHS HPT undertaking detailed contact tracing and cluster/outbreak management. NHS HPT are available to assist in the event of an outbreak and can be contacted on 01463 704886. General Scottish Government guidance on Covid-19 outbreak management in a workplace is available [here<sup>9</sup>](#). More detailed guidance on outbreak management is available [here<sup>10</sup>](#) if required.

- a) Please discuss with symptomatic/positive employees any obvious close contacts. Advise employees you may need to share their name for public health purposes with NHS if further cases arise (see data protection advice below).
- b) Inform RPO
- c) Inform close contacts to follow advice in section 2 on close contacts.
- d) Inform NHS's HPT on 01463 704886 and follow any guidance from NHS's HPT.
- e) [HPS Guidance<sup>11</sup>](#) will be followed on arrangements for the workplace following report of suspected or positive case.
- Arrange deep clean of immediate workplace of those tested positive.
  - Consider arranging deep clean of shared areas such as toilets & kitchen (these should be getting regular cleaning particularly of contact surfaces).
- f) For rest of staff in the location, please encourage them to be vigilant for Covid-19 symptoms, continue to follow the workplace risk assessment (recommend this is recirculated to all staff) and continue to encourage use of lateral flow tests.

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings-version-48/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/pages/test-and-protect-and-self-isolation/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-covid-19-workbook-2020/pages/5/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings-version-48/>

The RPO should make other managers in the location aware of a possible outbreak and inform the Tactical team by emailing Ruth Cleland and Nicola Nixon.

Types of control measures that may be considered for an outbreak include enhanced hygiene, hand washing and cleaning regimes; enhanced testing and contact tracing; increased staff/visitors' awareness of and adherence to preventative measures; and/or additional measures to limit access or temporary partial closure of the setting or building.

Following the immediate response:

- Line managers should continue to liaise with NHSH's HPT on managing the situation.
- A [RIDDOR report<sup>12</sup>](#) may be required to be submitted to the HSE by the line manager. Please discuss any queries on this with the HSW team.
- Positive COVID-19 cases in the workplace will often lead to heightened anxiety amongst staff who will be concerned about exposure risk. Ensure good communication routes are in place with teams to address any concerns.
- The line manager and RPO should consider an internal review of the workplace's assessment of risk and mitigation measures and implement any identified improvements.

In large, multi-occupancy workplaces senior managers and the RPO should consider identifying an officer to undertake role of 'Covid-19 officer', with stand-by cover, to lead on this policy in the event of an outbreak. This officer would act as contact for compiling any reports of positive cases/close contacts, support line managers and the RPO, and would liaise with NHSH HPT. The officer would co-ordinate suitable updates to staff in the location and to the Tactical team.

**Note – data protection & employee confidentiality**

**Managers must make every effort to avoid and minimise sharing of any data that could identify or comment on someone's health. Naming individuals should be avoided wherever possible.** For example, when identifying close contacts refer to teams or meetings where possible close contact occurred.

---

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/riddor/index.htm#disease>