

Guidelines to Self-Isolation and Covid Absence

Updated 18th January 2022

Covid infections remain high throughout the UK, with the Omicron variant spreading rapidly. We would therefore like to remind you that we continue to remain cautious and operate in a controlled manner in order to safeguard our colleagues and our customers.

Following a recent change in government advice, it is a requirement for everyone to wear a suitable face covering whilst inside any retail shop environment (see further details below).

In addition to following our social distancing protocols, it is imperative that you continue to consider your own actions outside of work given the consequences of being unable to attend work should you need to self-isolate. The reporting of covid cases and self-isolation, whatever the reason remains very important to us to review and contain any potential outbreaks.

Some of our guidelines have changed slightly and as always will be reviewed over the coming weeks as we continue to monitor our cases and government advice and react accordingly.

To remind you all, our procedures, risk assessments and guides are available via our [Colleague Communications Hub](#) and remain valid and current and you should continue to follow the guidance at all times.

COVID Guidance- Colleagues with Symptoms or a Positive PCR

(UPDATED) What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

The most important symptoms of Covid-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

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

What do I do if I am experiencing symptoms?

If you are at home and experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 or have a positive home test result you must remain at home, get a PCR test and contact your line manager immediately to inform the reason that you will not attend work. If you are at work and experiencing symptoms of COVID you will be sent home immediately.

You will be required to self-isolate for at least 10 days if:

- you have symptoms and test positive,
- have had an unclear result, or
- did not have a test

The 10 days starts from when you first have symptoms.

You may return to work after the 10-day period if you no longer have any symptoms

(UPDATED) Can I end self-isolation before the end of the 10-day period?

It may be possible to end your self-isolation period before the end of the 10-days if all the following apply;

- you no longer have the symptoms defined above
- on the 5th day from the start of the isolation period you take a LFD (Lateral Flow Device) test and then another 24 hours later
- both those tests are negative
 - if one of the results is positive, you should continue with the 24 hour LFD test until 2 consecutive negative tests are provided at which point the isolation period can end or until 10th day of isolation is reached, whichever is sooner.

In this case you may return to work or end your isolation period early but should remain cautious of contact with others. If you have the agreement of your line manager to work from home, you should do so until the 10-day period is up, but if you are unable to work from home, you should return to work immediately but observe distancing guidelines carefully.

What if I exhibit symptoms of Covid-19 and receive a PCR test result which is NEGATIVE?

In this instance you do not need to self-isolate for 10 days – you can return to work once you are fit and have not had any fever for at least 48 hours.

Will this be treated as sickness absence?

If you have COVID-19 symptoms and are unwell, then your absence will be recorded as sickness absence by your manager in My Hendy. Please note that company sick pay is paid at the discretion of the company and currently we are continuing to pay statutory sick pay only (at £96.35 per week) for periods of intermittent/short term absence. You must provide evidence of your positive test result as failure to do this could result in your time off being unpaid.

Colleagues who find that they experience further symptoms following a period of isolation and a positive test (known as 'long Covid') will be treated in line with our current sickness absence policy.

You must provide a copy of the positive test result as failure to do this may result in your time off being unpaid.

COVID Guidance- Contact Tracing

How will colleagues who have been in contact with colleagues with symptoms be identified?

It is important to identify anyone who is a close contact of someone who has tested positive. The RFM will carry out their own assessment in parallel with the NHS Track and Trace to assess the likelihood of contact between colleagues.

Colleagues that have been in contact with someone who has tested positive (known as a “case”) should be identified from 48 hours before someone develops symptoms (or 48 hours before the date of the test if they did not have symptoms) and up to 10 days on from the start of symptoms. This is the exposure period when the case could be infectious to others.

What is the definition of ‘a close contact?’

- **Direct close contacts** – 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
- **Proximity contacts:** extended close contact (within 2 metres for more than 15 mins as a one off contact or added up in total over one day) with a “case”
- **Travel** in a small vehicle with a “case” or in a large vehicle near a “case”

All colleagues must give consideration of contact during breaks, car sharing, or socialising with other colleagues outside of working hours.

If colleagues have been following our correct procedures the risk of these contacts being triggered will be very low.

COVID Guidance- Self-Isolation of colleagues defined as a ‘close contact’ or those living with someone with a positive PCR Result

When do I need to isolate?

If you have been identified as a close contact of a positive case or have been advised by Track and Trace that you are likely to have been a close contact of a positive case or you are living with someone who has had a positive PCR test result, then:

If you;

- are fully vaccinated for more than 14 days or
- are under 18 years old or

Then you are not legally required to self-isolate - but you should arrange a daily Lateral Flow Test (LFT) each day for the following 7- day period.

1. If the results of the LFT are negative and there are no symptoms then you should attend work as normal and continue to repeat the LFT for 7 days
2. If the results of the LFT are positive, then
 - a. You should self-isolate for the 10-day period and follow that guidance.
 - b. You should log that positive result with NHS Track & Trace
 - c. You do not need to arrange a further PCR test unless you develop any one of the three main symptoms.
 - d. You can take further LFD tests from Day 6 onwards and 2 consecutive negative results will mean they can leave the self-isolation.

If you are not fully vaccinated and over the age of 18 years and 6 months, then you are legally required to start a self-isolation period for the full 10 days as detailed. There is no way to end this Self-isolation period early for this group of colleagues even with a negative LFD or PCR result.

In any case of self-isolation, you must provide a copy of that notice (e.g. text message, email, screen shot from the T&T APP) and:

- Report it through your line manager who will update the Regional Facilities Manager with a copy of the notice.
- The RFM will work with the line manager and Site Champion identify any other colleagues at work that have been in contact.
- If you are able to work from home, then it will be treated as such and so you will be expected to work.
- Where working from home is not an option then your manager will log on My Hendy as Covid- Isolation No Symptoms.

If symptoms develop whilst you are self-isolating, then you should arrange a PCR test.

- If you test negative, you will need to complete your self-isolation period unless you have been free of symptoms for 48 hours.
- If you test positive, then you will need to start a new self-isolation period from the onset of symptoms and you must report your results as above.
- You can return to work after your full isolation period unless you have any of the symptoms listed above, in which case you should remain in isolation until you have been free of symptoms for 48 hours.

Line managers should continue report all self-isolation and COVID-19 positive cases via the Covid Notification webform link on our intranet home page.

Vaccination

Vaccination Policy

Information regarding our Vaccination Policy can also be found separately which is also available on the [Colleague Communication Hub](#)

Vaccination, Travel & Quarantine

The rules for international travel to England changed from a traffic light system to a single red list of countries. The rules for travel from countries not on the red list will depend on your vaccination status.

If you have a holiday booked in one of these countries, you must take advice from the government guidelines in respect of whether you should travel. If you are safe to travel but are required to quarantine on your return, you must discuss this with your manager before you travel. It may not be possible to accommodate extended leave and therefore you may be required to cancel your booked holiday. We will take a reasonable view of the circumstances, but you must agree any return-to-work plan **before** you travel and take your leave. Therefore, please consider this before committing to travelling outside of the UK.

If you book a holiday that now requires you to quarantine on your return and this is known at the time of booking, you must reconsider your plans. You should not assume that an additional period of leave to allow you to quarantine will be approved and without approval this period of time will be treated as unauthorised and unpaid leave. We strongly encourage you to consider the safety of yourself and your colleagues and to support the business during this time. If you have to self-isolate as you have only had one dose of the vaccine or you are within the 14 days of receiving your second dose, and you choose to travel abroad then your time off will be authorised unpaid leave.

Please consider the consequences of travelling outside of the UK in these uncertain times given how quickly the restrictions can change. Visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for the latest government advice on travelling to and from the UK.

Absence & Pay Guidance

What has changed?

There has been a recent change to help free up GP time whilst the booster roll out is ongoing. The Government has introduced temporary SSP changes, if you are off sick on or after 10 December 2021, up to and including 26 January 2022, you may not be provided with a Statement of Fitness to Work from your doctor, and we will be aware of this.

If you are provided with one, then please do pass that on to your manager as usual. You will, however, have to be provided with a Statement of Fitness to Work from your doctor if you are off for 28 days or more during this time frame.

This change will be in place until 26 January 2022 and covers absence since 10 December 2021.

If you were off sick before 10 December 2021 for more than 7 days in a row (including non-working days), then you must provide us with your Statement of Fitness for Work as usual.

What about Sickness Absence (non-Covid related) & Pay?

If you are not well and cannot attend work, you will be deemed to be on sickness absence and company policy will apply. Please note that company sick pay is paid at the discretion of the company and currently we are continuing to pay statutory sick pay only (at £96.35 per week).

Group COVID Procedures and guidelines

What is the latest advice of the wearing of masks?

It is currently a requirement for everyone to wear a suitable face covering whilst inside any retail shop environment. As such you are reminded that you should always be wearing a face covering in the dealership or site unless you are behind a screen separating you from any other person.

Colleagues should also wear a mask when circulating around the building or when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Colleagues that are exempt from mask wearing must wear a lanyard / badge to make colleagues and customers aware.

If customers arrive without a face covering, we should politely ask them to wear one, offer them one if they don't have one on them and treat them with respect at all times.

Mitigating risks

We urge you to continue to keep washing and sanitizing hands as well as workstations. We will also continue to sanitise cars both on arrival and prior to departure. Our sanitising stations will also remain on site.

Meeting etiquette

Meetings can take place however a maximum number of 4 people be applied. Meetings with more than 4 participants should be conducted via Teams.

Wipes will be provided, and each table must be wiped down before and after use. Windows and doors should be opened (where possible) to create ventilation, and the door should be left open after usage.

Business critical meetings of more than 4 participants, that are best served on a face-to-face basis, will be permitted but only in exceptional circumstances. For example, development modules or classes at the Academy. For these meetings to be undertaken, then the following controls MUST be satisfied.

- Ops Director must have authorised a request and in turn, receive sanction from a main board director.
- Only large meeting rooms can be used. These must be able to be adequately ventilated and each occupant must be separated by at least 2m from the next nearest when seated (for example by using a 'spare' chair between each participant).
- Participants MUST take, and give evidence to the meeting owner, of a negative Lateral Flow Test prior to the meeting.

Team dinners and team social events must also cease until further notice.

Car Sharing

Car sharing should be discouraged; but if it must take place all occupants must be wearing masks.

Test Drives (Sales colleagues)

We will allow accompanied Test Drives, but with face masks worn by both the customer and our colleague, with the colleague sitting in the rear of the car.

We will also continue to use the [Colleague Communications Hub](#) to keep you updated.

END.