

Covid Policy - revision

Updated 15 October 2020

Date: 21 October 2020
To: All employees
From: Alan Webb

Over the last day or two, there have been significant developments in the spread of Covid-19 and the actions to control it. In Dorset, there is a marked increase in the rate of growth of the virus, so we cannot be immune to the need to take action.

Therefore we have reviewed the risk assessment and there will be additional controls implemented

1. Return To Work.

The RTW will now include specific reference to Covid symptoms. You will need to complete a RTW with the relevant manager by phone before you come onto the company premises, to protect everyone.

- a. Night shift – Grahame Grant 07775 812133
- b. Poole – Rhys Jelfs 07795 951788
- c. Blandford main building – Steve Crane 07891 115498
- d. Blandford all others – Richard Harrington 07769 650288
- e. Staff – your line manager
- f. If you cannot speak to these individuals,
 - i. Paul Lambert for Blandford 07384 461009
 - ii. Alan Palmer for Poole 07795 951786

2. Personal Protection

- a. To minimise the risk of cross infection, PPE will become mandatory for all persons working at Iracroft when not in the specific working area. Specifically this includes when moving work from one station to another, going to the vending machine or toilets, or entering or leaving the building

- b. The company will provide visors, in line with all other company PPE, it is your responsibility to maintain it (keep it clean and as scratch free as possible), the company will replace when necessary.
- c. The wearing of cloth face masks by employees is optional as an alternative to the visor, the company will not provide them, and paper / disposable face masks are not permitted. Government guidelines on the wearing and disposal must be followed, please avoid disposing of face masks at work
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-disposing-of-waste>
- d. This policy will be implemented Monday 19 October.
- e. Minimise the movement of persons between buildings, use telephone contact where possible
- f. Minimise the amount of face-to-face time with any other person
- g. When arriving and leaving work, we ask that you wear a visor or facemask or follow positive social distancing until you reach your workstation.

3. Visitors

- a. Visitors will be required to wear face masks or visors when on company premises.
- b. We have a QR code for each site and will ask visitors to use the app for this.
- c. We are installing an electronic visitor system which will improve the recording and control of non-Iracroft personnel on site.
- d. Delivery drivers should remain in the cab so far as possible. They should not enter the premises unless necessary and wearing a face mask or visor. Suppliers and customers are being contacted to inform them of this policy.

4. Symptoms

- a. Reproduced below is a useful article issued yesterday about colds, flu and Covid.
- b. If in doubt about symptoms, you should stay home and self-isolate as necessary

Cold, Flu, or Covid ?

The workplace during flu season

The annual season of colds, flu, coughs and sniffles has begun. Public health experts are currently facing concerns regarding a second peak of the Covid-19 virus at the same time and employers will need to support national efforts to tackle this problem, while ensuring the safety of their workers — and the health of their business.

Which workers are eligible for a free flu jab this year?

The Government has indicated that this flu season, many more people will be able to receive a free flu vaccine.

Employers should note that the NHS flu immunisation programme this year has been significantly expanded to offering the free vaccine to 50 to 64-year-olds.

This group, however, will be invited to have the vaccine later in the season with over 65s, pregnant women, health and social care staff and those in clinical risk groups among those prioritised.

Overall, the Department of Health and Social Care has said that it intends to double the number of people being immunised this year, with the aim of reducing the number of flu infections and therefore reducing the pressure on the NHS over the winter.

The major public health worry in the UK at the moment is that hospitals will struggle to cope with the usual annual rise in cases, deaths and hospitalisations associated with seasonal flu, at the same time as a possible surge in cases of Covid-19.

Recent (although limited) research indicates that suffering flu and Covid-19 together significantly increases your risk of death. The annual flu immunisation programme, which reduces the transmission of the flu virus, and decreases the number of cases, hospitalisations and influenza-related mortality will, therefore, be of even more importance this winter.

Colds, flu and the coronavirus at work

The NHS has recently shared the following tips on distinguishing between colds, the flu and the coronavirus, which may be of value for managers to share with their workers.

The NHS says flu symptoms come on very quickly and can include:

- a sudden fever — a temperature of 38°C or above
- an aching body
- feeling tired or exhausted
- a dry cough
- a sore throat
- a headache
- difficulty sleeping
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or tummy pain
- feeling sick and being sick.

Telling the difference between a cold and the flu can be tricky, but the NHS points out that the flu:

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- tends to appear quickly within a few hours
- affects more than just your nose and throat
- makes you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal.

In contrast, a cold:

- appears gradually
- affects mainly your nose and throat
- makes you feel unwell, but generally sufferers feel well enough to carry on as normal (eg to do their work).

Coronavirus — the three key symptoms workers need to be aware of

This winter, the concern for workers, employers and public health experts alike will be whether symptoms could indicate the coronavirus, since clearly many symptoms for colds, flu and Covid-19 are common.

According to the NHS, three key symptoms to be aware of in the case of the coronavirus are:

- a high temperature — this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not necessarily need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough — this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste — you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Most people with coronavirus, the NHS notes, have at least one of these symptoms.

The NHS says, “If you have a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, it could be Covid-19”.

The NHS advises that if workers have any of the main symptoms of Covid-19, they should get a test as soon as possible and stay at home until they get the result.

Anyone the worker lives with, and anyone in their support bubble, must also stay at home until the result is received.

It goes without saying that it is not for managers or employers to attempt to diagnose the coronavirus (or any other illness) but for the worker’s GP or other healthcare professional. However, sharing [information](#) from the NHS may prove reassuring to worried staff members and their families.

This time last year, a worker may have happily gone into work sneezing and blowing their runny nose because they felt well enough to do their job. This same situation, this year, is likely to be extremely anxiety-provoking for fellow workers and customers, who probably won’t be reassured that the three key symptoms of Covid-19 are absent.

Employers will therefore need to put clear policies and advice for employees in place to deal with this year’s unusual situation, eg by emphasising to staff they should work from home at the first sign of a cold, waiting on professional diagnosis and health advice, while establishing relevant pay and HR policies.

The following points should be noted and communicated.

- Workers can book a Covid test [online](#) or call 119 to get a test if there are problems using the internet.
- Concerned workers should not go to places like a GP surgery, hospital or pharmacy but should use the NHS 111 [online coronavirus service](#) or call 111.
- If workers think they or their child seems very seriously unwell, or there is something seriously wrong, they should call 999.

What to do if someone at work might have coronavirus?

Acas, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, offers the following advice if someone at work might have coronavirus.

For a start, an individual should not go to the workplace if they:

- have coronavirus symptoms or have tested positive for coronavirus
- are told to self-isolate (stay at home) by the NHS Test and Trace service because they've been in close contact with someone who's tested positive
- need to self-isolate because someone in their household has symptoms or has tested positive
- need to self-isolate because they've returned to the UK after a holiday or business travel.

If they are already at work when they begin to feel ill, they should:

- tell their employer immediately and go home
- put on a mask if possible, avoid touching anything and wash their hands regularly
- cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- use a separate bathroom from others, if possible
- avoid using public transport to travel home, if possible.

Acas says that if someone with coronavirus comes to work, the workplace does not necessarily have to close, but the organisation should follow the Government's [cleaning guidance](#).

If someone needs to self-isolate, it's good practice for employers to:

- send them home immediately, if they're at work
- support them staying at home while they self-isolate
- arrange for them to work from home, if they're well enough to work
- pay them any sick pay they're entitled to while self-isolating
- support their wellbeing and mental health — see [further information](#) about supporting mental health during the pandemic.

Acas says, "Depending on someone's circumstances, they might have to self-isolate more than once during the coronavirus pandemic. Employers should support them in the same way each time".

Article from Croner

https://app.croneri.co.uk/feature-articles/managing-colds-and-flu-work-during-pandemic?utm_source=linklist&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cihs-alert#PO-DOCUMENT-ID_70732