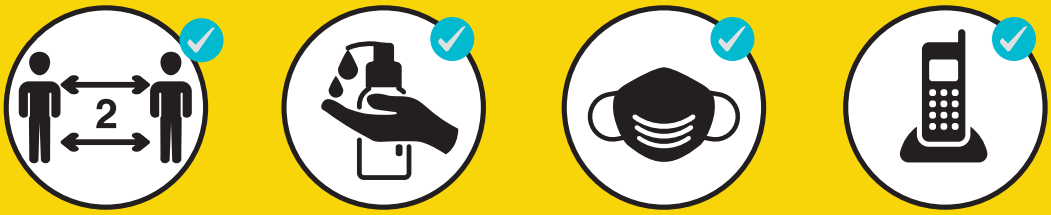
Your Business and COVID-19

NHS
North East Lincolnshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk



COVID-19 has hit businesses hard across the UK. We understand that, and we also know how hard businesses are working to try to make sure the work place is a safe place to be.

North East Lincolnshire has, so far, been fortunate to have low numbers of confirmed cases of COVID-19, and like you, we want to keep it this way.

In order to help, our Public Health team has produced this document to explain the procedures business and other employment settings should follow in order to prevent outbreaks of coronavirus (COVID-19) and to advise the process to be followed if staff develop symptoms of COVID-19, confirmed cases emerge amongst staff in the setting or workers are identified as potential contacts of cases elsewhere.

It outlines the informing systems to be utilised by business and employment settings. Early notification of potential and confirmed cases to the local Public Health team will support outbreak prevention and management and reduce the impact of COVID-19 in North East Lincolnshire.

This protocol applies to business and employment settings including but not limited to:

- **Offices and retailers**
- **Factories and manufacturing**
- **Logistics and warehousing**
- **Tourism related businesses**
- **Health and wellbeing related services i.e. leisure centres, chiropractors etc.**

We hope you find this useful.

Cllr Philip Jackson
Leader, North East
Lincolnshire Council

Stephen Pintus
Director of Public Health
North East Lincolnshire

Dr Peter Melton
Clinical Chief Officer
North East Lincolnshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

Preventing COVID-19 in your workplace

Social distancing and lockdown measures have been enormously effective in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 throughout the country. In North East Lincolnshire we have had amongst the lowest rates of confirmed cases of COVID-19 anywhere in England and our ambition is to keep it that way. In order to do so we have published the North East Lincolnshire COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan which aims to prevent future outbreaks of COVID-19 and to respond quickly and effectively if cases occur in order to prevent significant outbreaks from developing. This requires cooperation between public health authorities and many sectors of the economy who will be expected to play their part in keeping COVID-19 at bay.

The limited reopening of employment, leisure, retail and other community settings proposed by the UK Government is now felt to be manageable but we must ensure that some of the features of lockdown that made it so successful are preserved going forwards. Information at the back of this document provides more detail on the sort of measures that are recommended but the three main approaches to preventing the transmission of the virus are as follows:

- Social distancing - we strongly advise that wherever possible people should maintain a 2 metre social distance from other people outside their usual household. Within the workplace these principles are important both within the active work environment such as the factory floor but also within areas of relaxation such as kitchens, canteens, smoking shelters and staff rooms. If this is not possible then 1 metre social distancing plus some other form of protection such as a face mask or screen is advised. Ensuring that your staff maintain social distancing will also make it less likely that staff members have to self isolate due to being a 'contact' of someone who develops COVID-19.

- Hand Washing - regular hand washing for 20 seconds with soap and water will reduce transmission of the virus.

- Cleaning - ensuring work surfaces, including communal spaces are regularly cleaner will help to ensure that the virus does not linger.

The Coronavirus Act (2020) provides the local authority with powers to contain and prevent the spread of COVID-19. The ability to undertake these roles at the time when needed is most critical. As a local authority we continue to respond to the changing situation rapidly and robustly to support our local population.

If you have any queries regarding who this guidance applies to or how it should be interpreted or applied you should contact North East Lincolnshire Council Public Health Team.

publichealthoncall@nelincs.gov.uk

Potential scenarios in employment settings

Information at the back of this document illustrates four different scenarios in which employers may be made aware of possible COVID-19 cases amongst a staff member or when a staff member is required to self-isolate due to being a confirmed contact of a COVID-19 case elsewhere. The flow charts illustrate the process that we are asking North East Lincolnshire employers to follow in relation to these scenarios.

Informing and reporting process

Anyone with responsibility for managing a site or group of staff should report any instance where a member of staff reports their absence as due to the COVID 19 virus. Managers, owners, site supervisors should contact the North East Lincolnshire public health team as soon as they suspect cases of COVID-19 in their workplace(s) to discuss the situation and agree if any actions are needed. If there is more than one case suspected they should call Public Health England.

It is useful to have the information below available before this discussion as it will help to inform the size and nature of the outbreak however as a minimum the following details should be available:

- Details of the workplace: number of employees, social distancing arrangements, public facing etc
- Details of case(s), date(s) of onset, date last in setting etc.
- Numbers tested and confirmed
- Numbers suspected i.e. showing symptoms
- Number and details of contacts requiring follow up
- Information on any other suspected/ confirmed cases in setting, severity, control measures, anxiety or media interest
- Do the affected staff regularly have contact with customers including other sites?

Contact details

North East Lincolnshire Public Health Team
publichealthoncall@nelincs.gov.uk

Public Health England
Tel: 0113 386 0300

Scenario 1:

What if one member of staff confirms a positive test?

One member of staff confirms that they have tested positive for COVID-19

Confirmed case should be advised to **self-isolate at home for 10 days** from the onset of symptoms *(or from the date of their test if they do not develop any symptoms)*

Contact North East Lincolnshire Council Public Health for advice: **publichealthoncall@nelincs.gov.uk**

Close contacts of cases should self-isolate at home for 14 days

If symptoms develop, should arrange a test through **nhs.uk/coronavirus or Call 119**

Clean the setting in accordance with UK Government guidelines (Non-healthcare settings) **www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings**

Scenario 2:
What if more than one member of staff confirms a positive test?

More than one member of staff confirms that they have tested positive for COVID-19

Confirmed cases should be advised to **self-isolate at home for 10 days** from the onset of symptoms *(or from the date of their test if they do not develop any symptoms)*

STEP 1: Call Public Health England Yorkshire & Humber
Tel. 0113 386 0300

STEP 2: **Immediately after** your call to Public Health England, Contact the North East Lincolnshire Council Public Health:
publichealthoncall@nelincs.gov.uk

AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTION BEFORE PROCEEDING

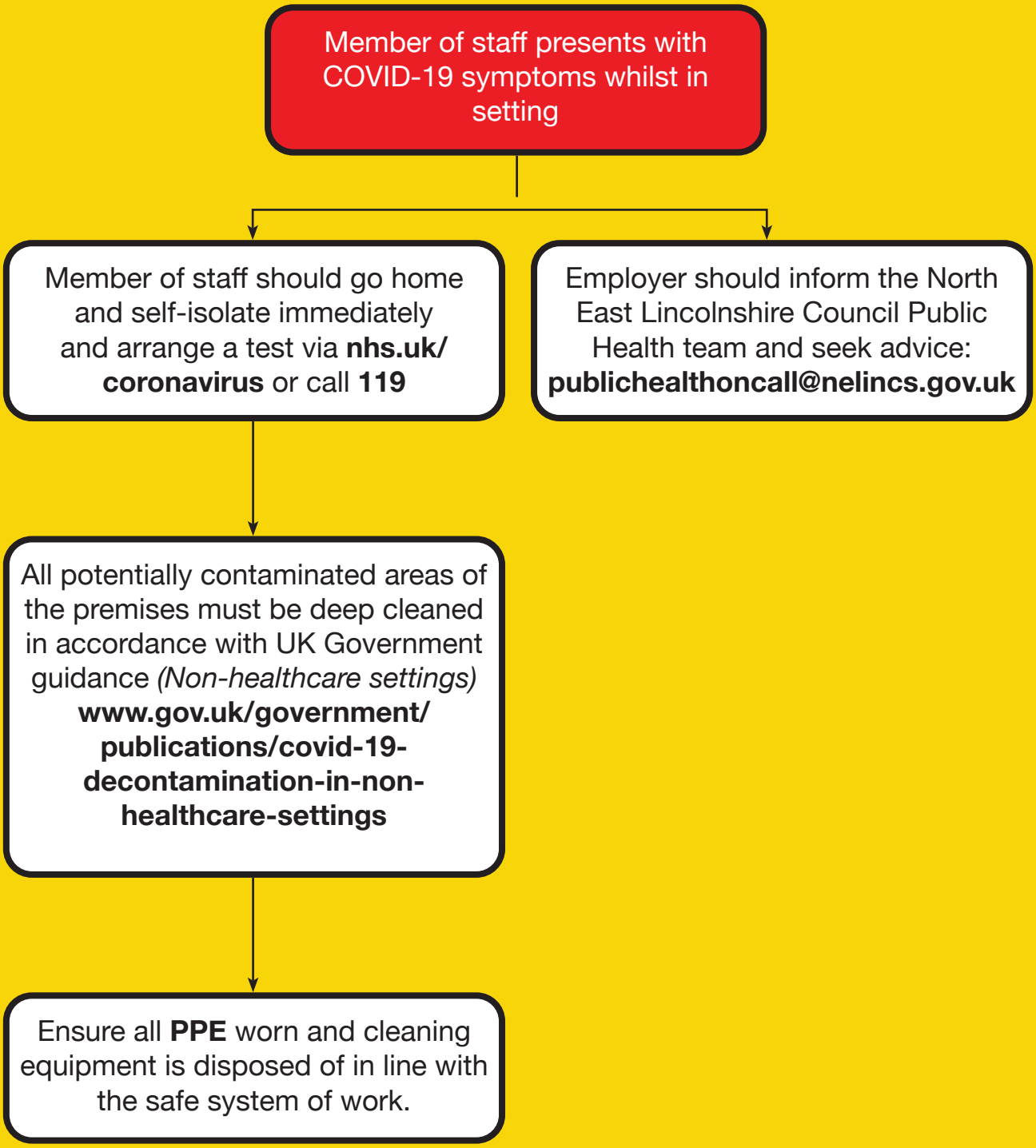
Close contacts of cases should self-isolate at home for 14 days

If symptoms develop, should arrange a test through **nhs.uk/coronavirus or Call 119**

Clean the setting in accordance with UK Government guidelines (Non-healthcare settings)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

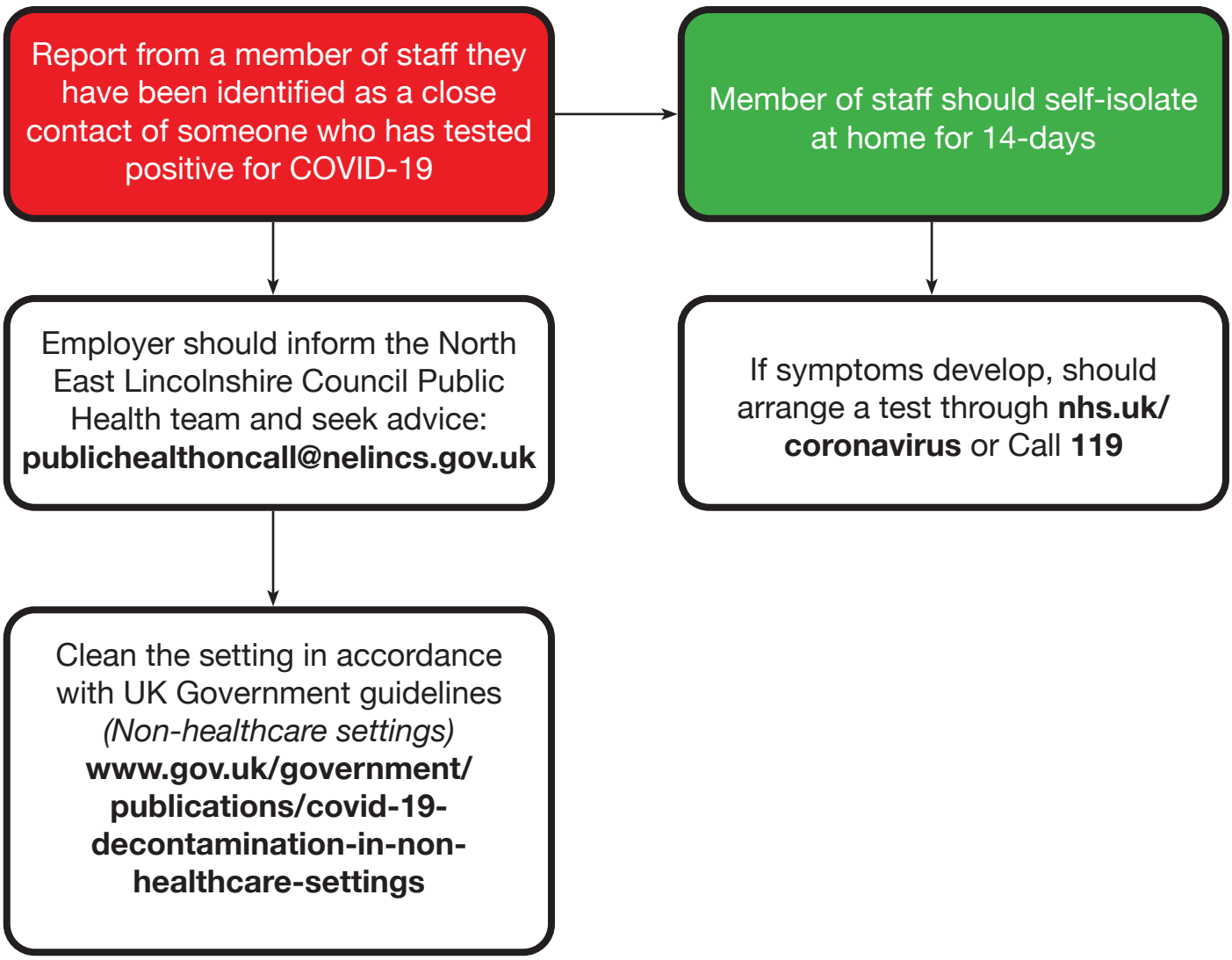
Scenario 3:

What if a member of staff has COVID-19 symptoms whilst at work?



Scenario 4:

What if a member of staff says they have been identified as a “close contact”?



Scenario 5:

A customer becomes ill on your premises with COVID-19 symptoms

Customer to go home and self-isolate immediately and arrange a test via **nhs.uk/coronavirus** or call **119**.

If the customer is too unwell to go home alone they will need to be collected by another household member.

They should avoid public transport.

Ask your customer to move to a separate room where possible or another area. Open any windows nearby. Staff and other customers should keep 2 metres away.

Ask the customer to avoid touching anything, and catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue or in the crook of their arm, cleaning hands afterwards and safely disposing of tissues.

If they need the bathroom, use separate facilities from others.

If the customer needs some help and support meaning your staff can't keep 2 metres away, or there's risk of contact with body fluids, then your staff member will need PPE*

If you think the customer needs urgent medical attention, call **999**. Tell them about your customer's Covid-related symptoms

Inform North East Lincolnshire Council Public Health team and seek advice: **publichealthoncall@nelincs.gov.uk**

All potentially contaminated areas of the premises must be deep cleaned in accordance with UK Government guidance (Non-healthcare settings) **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings**

Ensure all PPE worn and cleaning equipment is disposed of in line with the safe system of work.

*__PPE required:__

Fluid-resistant surgical face mask If have direct contact and there is risk of contact with body fluids, also need:

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable plastic apron
- Fluid-resistant surgical face mask
- Eye protection (goggles, visor) should be worn ONLY if a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of fluids entering the eye from, for example, coughing, spitting or vomiting

Staff will need to know where to locate this on your premises and how to put it on and take it off, and dispose of it safely.

You should check latest government guidance on PPE here: **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control**

COVID-19 KEY MESSAGES

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- **new continuous cough and/or**
- **fever (temperature of 37.8°C or higher)**
- **loss of or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)**

How does COVID-19 get transmitted?

COVID-19 is passed from person to person mainly by large respiratory droplets and direct contact (close unprotected contact, usually less than one metre). These droplets can be directly inhaled by the person, or can land on surfaces which another person may touch which can lead to infection if they then touch their nose, mouth or eyes.

What is the incubation period?

The incubation period (i.e. time between exposure to the virus and developing symptoms) is between 1 and 14 days (median 5 days).

When is a person infectious?

A person is thought to be infectious 48 hours before symptoms appear, and up to seven days after they start displaying symptoms. If someone without symptoms tests positive then it is from 48 hours before the positive test till 7 days after the test result.

What is a “contact”?

A ‘contact’ is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic (or 2 days before a test if no symptoms) up to 7 days from onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:

- People who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Sexual partners.
- A person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:
    - being coughed on
    - having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
    - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
    - contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
    - A person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes.
    - A person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

GETTING TESTED

Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can get a free test to check if they have the virus.

You can get a test:

- For yourself, if you have coronavirus symptoms now (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste).
- For someone you live with if they have coronavirus symptoms.
- For yourself, if you have been told to have a test before you go into hospital, for example, for surgery.

The test usually involves taking a swab of the inside of your nose and the back of your throat, using a long cotton bud. You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms. If you do not have symptoms, you can only get a test if your hospital has told you to.

Staff members can call for free **119** or apply for a free test online via **https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus.**

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

All of the following measures will prevent the spread of infection and therefore protect staff:

- Clean your hands often and wash hands for 20 seconds as a minimum
- Minimise contact and mixing
- Avoid unnecessary mixing in work
- Reduce sharing of equipment in work
- Remove the unnecessary equipment / items in work
- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell
- Catch it, bin it, kill it for respiratory hygiene
- Clean surfaces that are touched frequently

No additional personal protective equipment (PPE) is required because of coronavirus (COVID-19) for first aid.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Cases and Contacts

What is a household?

A household is taken to mean anyone who a person lives with. Some people may have multiple households. It also includes anyone in their 'support bubble' (currently one other person who lives alone can join a support bubble and not maintain social distancing) see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july.

Should a staff member come to work if a member of their household is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms?

No. If a member of the employee's household is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms then the staff member should isolate at home for 14 days starting from the day the household member(s) became ill and follow the Stay-at-home-guidance. If the person subsequently develops symptoms, they should isolate for 10 days from the date they developed symptoms.
See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance for details.

If I am notified by an employee that they are ill do I need to advise other workers who they have been in close contact with to self-isolate?

Employees can attend work as normal. The person who is ill should stay at home (Stay-at-home-guidance) and be advised to get tested. If the person tests positive for COVID-19, you should call the Health Protection Team for support with identifying contacts for further advice. Contacts should self-isolate at home for 14 days.

If I am notified by a staff member or the staff member's family that he/she has had a positive test, do I need to advise other workers who they have been in close contact with to self-isolate?

You should call your local public health team or PHE Health Protection Team to notify them of this confirmed case. The Health Protection Team will support you to identify their contacts and provide further advice. Direct and close contacts will be advised to self-isolate at home for 14 days.

A household member of an employee is a contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19, what should we do?

If a household member is known to be a contact of a confirmed case they will be advised to self-isolate at home and follow the guidance for contacts . Their contacts do not need to self-isolate as long as no one in the household has symptoms or has tested positive. If someone in the household develops symptoms or tests positive, the household should follow the guidance to stay at home and self-isolate. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person.

Who is a contact in a work setting?

- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), including:
    - being coughed on, or
    - having a face-to-face conversation, or
    - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
    - any contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or in a large vehicle near someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Which contacts need to self-isolate?

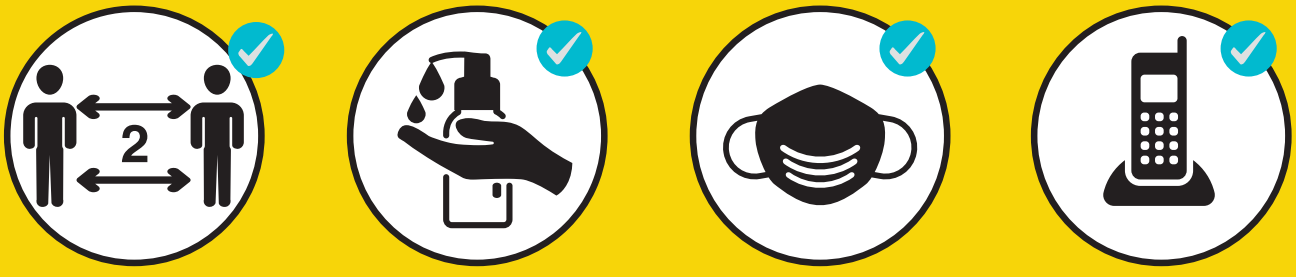
Where the staff member tests positive and they had attended their workplace in the 48 hours prior to developing symptoms, direct and close contacts will be identified and advised regarding self-isolation by a contact tracer. Please note: The other household members of the people identified as direct contacts do not need to self-isolate unless the staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

If a staff member has COVID-19 symptoms, gets tested and tests negative, can they return to work even if they still have symptoms?

If the employee is NOT a known contact of a confirmed case he/she can return to work if the result is negative, provided they feel well and they have not had a fever for 48 hours. If the employee is a contact of a confirmed case they must stay off work and self-isolate at home for the 14 day isolation period, even if they test negative. This is because they can develop the infection at any point up to day 14 (the incubation period for COVID-19), so if an employee tests negative on day 3 they may still go on to develop the infection.

If an employee who was a contact of a confirmed case tests negative, can they return to work?

No, the employee should complete 14 days of isolation.



If I get confirmed cases does the workplace need to close?

Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary. It is expected that only the contacts of a confirmed case will need to be advised not to attend work and self-isolate at home.

Testing

How can an employee arrange testing?

An employee can arrange to be tested via nhs.uk or by contacting NHS 119 via telephone.

Can people be tested if they do not have symptoms?

No. People should only be tested if they have symptoms.

High risk groups

Can our pregnant members of staff work? What if staff have pregnant household members?

Pregnant women are currently advised to work from home where possible. If they cannot work from home, they should be offered the safest available on-site roles, staying 2 metres away from others wherever possible, although the individual may choose to take on a role that does not allow for this distance if they prefer to do so. If they have to spend time within 2 metres of other people, settings must carefully assess and discuss with them whether this involves an acceptable level of risk.

If a staff member lives with someone who is pregnant, they can work.

Should employees who are shielding (classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-exisiting medical conditions) attend work?

You should consult the latest guidance on gov.uk.

Staff who fall into this group should not be attending work. From 1 August the government is currently advising that shielding will be paused. From this date, the government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble. In practice this means that from 1st August people who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be able return to their work setting.

As guidance can change, the most up to date guidance should always be checked and is available online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

Should employees who have family in the shielding group be coming to work?

They should only attend a workplace setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to work at home.

Staff

We have staff who are asymptomatic but wish to be tested is this possible?

Currently, only people who are symptomatic are advised to access a test via nhs.uk or calling 119.

Can staff, for example cleaners and caterers, work for two or more workplaces?

Yes they can in most instances. If a case is identified in one of their workplaces and the staff member is identified as a contact and advised to stay home and self-isolate then they must not attend any of their workplaces. If a case occurs and the staff member has not been identified as a close contact in any of their workplaces they can continue to work as normal but should do so following the relevant guidance for the setting to minimise contact and ensure social distancing is in place.

Cleaning

What additional cleaning is necessary following a symptomatic or confirmed case?

It is important to concentrate on regular cleaning of frequently touched items / surfaces. This is likely to be highly effective as high contact surfaces will present the main risk in terms of indirect transmission. Regular cleaning should be thorough and maintained at all times.

The infection risk from Covid-19 following contamination of the environment decreases over time and is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours.

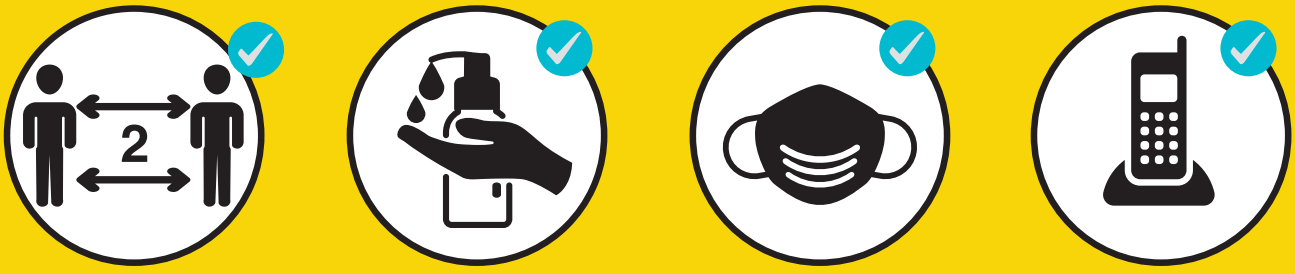
- The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed Covid-19 is disposable gloves and an apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.
- Cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after someone with suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- Wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished.

- Using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells and door handles.
- If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (COVID-19), use protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron.
- Wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning.

Please refer to government guidance for updates on cleaning non-healthcare settings. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings.

Do toilets need to be cleaned after every use?

Toilets are frequently touched surfaces, so they need to be cleaned frequently throughout the day, but not after every use (except if used by a symptomatic person whilst waiting to go home). Apart from gloves and apron, there is no need for additional PPE.



Additional guidance and information

Sources for Businesses and employment settings

Additional guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19):

COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do

Staying alert and safe (social distancing): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing

Additional guidance and information for business settings: Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable

from COVID-19: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

NHS Test and Trace: Workplace guidance: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19): https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19): 5 steps to working safely: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely

Health and Safety Executive: Working safely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm

Claim back Statutory Sick Pay paid to your employees due to coronavirus (COVID-19): https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-to-your-employees-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19

Check if you can claim a grant through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme

Statutory Sick Pay information: https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay

Work and financial support: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-and-support-for-employees-during-coronaviruscovid-19

Find financial support for your business: https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder

Face coverings: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own

Decontamination in non-healthcare settings: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

Notes

Notes

THE MAIN SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 ARE:

- new continuous cough and/or
- fever (temperature of 37.8°C or higher)
- loss of or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

NHS
North East Lincolnshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk