



For internal use only and not to be sold

Employers are free to use this document and to adapt it so that it is appropriate for their business. It can be read in conjunction with our blog which can be read at <https://dohr.co.uk/coronavirus/>

The information provided in this letter is for guidance purposes only and you are advised to seek professional advice. The situation with the Coronavirus is constantly changing and you should be aware of this when managing staff within your business.

This front page and the footer should be removed before issuing this letter to your employees.

If you need any assistance with any of the issues raised in this document, or in the blog, please call us on 01923 504100.

Please be aware that a fee **may** be charged if you are not a DOHR retained client.

This is the second version of this letter, amended to take account of information as at 28th February 2020.

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[name]

[address]

[date]

Dear xxxx

Important Information:

The Coronavirus, Foreign Travel and it's impact on our workplace

As you may be aware, there are now multiple cases of Covid-19 in the UK and this number is set to rise. The UK's Chief medical officer has raised the alert in the UK from low to moderate. There are increasingly large scale outbreaks in countries outside of China and they are getting closer to home. We are closely monitoring the spread of the virus and government information related that spread. We have a duty of care towards all of our staff and as such will continue to update and communicate our company policy to you as the situation evolves.

Travel

In the first instance any work related travel must be discussed with your line manager and a risk assessment will be undertaken. We will only authorise essential travel and will comply with the advice given by our insurance company and the Foreign Office.

For personal travel, we strongly encourage you not to travel to infected, or potentially infected areas, but this is a personal decision which should be taken in line with Foreign Office advice.

Returning Travellers

The following will apply until such time as we communicate otherwise:

Returning travellers (and visitors) from Hubei Province in China, Iran, Northern Italy lock down areas and the special care zone in South Korea

If you or your family are visiting the above areas, you must not come into work on your return to the UK. You must:

1. Stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 14 days
2. Not leave home until cleared to do so by a medical clinician
3. Contact 111 to inform them of your recent travel
4. Contact us to inform us of your recent travel and receive instructions regarding your work duties.

This advice must be followed even if you and your family do not have any viral symptoms, such as a cough, high temperature or difficulties breathing. If you or your family do feel unwell at any time, you must contact 111 immediately and follow the above protocol.

Returning Travellers (and visitors) from elsewhere in China, South Korea or Northern Italy, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macao, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar or Vietnam

The current advice is that if you and your family do not have any viral symptoms and feel well, you should continue with your daily routines as normal. You must however inform us if you or family members, have visited these countries to enable us to take the necessary business decisions.

If you, members of your family, visitors from these regions or friends who have been to these countries have any viral symptoms including, but not limited to, cough, shortness of breath, high temperature, even if the symptoms are mild, you must not come to work. You must follow the steps identified above, contacting 111 and staying at home for 14 days – even if your symptoms clear up.

Sick Pay

If you have been told to self-isolate by the officials, where possible and practical to do so, we will ask you to work from home. Where you are not able to work from home, you will be entitled to statutory sick pay.

Employees will not be entitled to **Company Sick Pay** unless they are diagnosed with Coronavirus by a medical professional following tests.

Commented [D01]: If you do not have a company sick pay scheme, remove this sentence.

Leave to look after dependents

As a number of schools are being shut for varying periods of time as a result of the Coronavirus, some parents may need time off to care for their children.

Parents are entitled to unpaid emergency time off to care for dependents and this should be used on the immediate day of closure and potentially for the following day.

If you believe you are going to require additional time off to care for a child, you may request unpaid parental leave. Each parent with a child under the age of 18 is entitled to up to 12 weeks off per child. These can be taken in blocks of one week and no more than 4 weeks can be used per year. If your child's school is closed as a result of Coronavirus and you wish to apply for parental leave, please email your line manager as soon as possible.

Office Procedures

As little is known about this virus, the following hygiene protocols will apply in the office with immediate effect until informed otherwise:

1. Ensure that you wash your hands in hot water, using soap every time you go to the toilet and when arriving at the office each morning.
2. Use the hand sanitiser available in the office when sensible to do so.
3. Ensure that your working areas and desks are cleaned daily and use antiseptic, gloves and disposable clothes.
4. Ensure all door handles, light switches and work surfaces are cleaned.
5. Ensure that hot water and detergent are used in kitchen areas where a dishwasher is not available.
6. Where a dishwasher is available, use it on a daily basis, using a hot setting – do not leave dirty dishes overnight
7. Use the boxes of tissues supplied around the office.
8. All used tissues should be put straight into the bin, preferably one with a lid. The bins will be emptied daily.
9. Ensure that the hot desking areas are properly cleaned and disinfected between users. This may include keyboards and telephone handsets.
10. Ensure that the company care is properly cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis, especially if you are sharing it with others.

This list is not exhaustive, but is an indication of the steps we are taking to minimise the risks of infection to us, our customers and suppliers.

Self-care

As well as taking all reasonable precautions in the office, we are asking everyone to take sensible steps to protect themselves and reduce their chances of catching the virus, or becoming seriously ill as a result of it. It has been identified that most of the deaths have been amongst the elderly or patients with an underlying medical condition. Therefore, five simple self-care tips apply:

1. Eat a properly balanced, healthy diet and take supplements if required
2. Get proper sleep at night, between 7 and 9 hours is recommended
3. Take regular exercise
4. Lower your stress levels through mindfulness, exercise and hobbies
5. Wash your hands regularly using soap and water. If you are going to use a hand sanitiser, use one with a high alcohol content as this is a virus and will not respond to antibacterial wipes, washes etc.

More Information

More information is available on the following official sites and we encourage you to make sure you are aware of the official advice and follow it:

[Public Health England](#)

[Current Government Information, which is updated daily](#)

[The Foreign Office](#)

[The NHS](#)

Where an employee is found to be in breach of any of the procedures outlined in this document, they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your line manager

Yours sincerely