



SURREY

Leadership Office
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We all have our part to play in keeping Surrey safe and businesses in particular have a vital role to play to ensure workplaces are COVID-secure. We wanted to write to you to make sure you were aware of some of the new measures for businesses as announced by the Government to suppress the spread of the COVID virus in the workplace and amongst the workforce.

Contact Tracing

From 18 September, it will be mandatory for certain business to have a system in place to NHS Test and Trace data and keep this for 21 days. We would urge all businesses to ensure that they have robust mechanisms in place to support contract tracing. For example, hospitality businesses should be rigorous and thorough in collecting customer information, while in shift work settings clear records should be maintained of who worked which shifts and if these crossed over. This data is vitally important in helping us to manage and support you in the case of any workplace outbreak.

NHS COVID-19 App launch

The new [NHS COVID-19 app](#) will be launched on 24th September 2020. It will shortly be a legal requirement for certain businesses in England and Wales to download and display an NHS COVID19 App QR code poster visible on entry to their premises. This is so customers who have downloaded the app can use their smartphones to easily check-in. Businesses can visit the following website to create a downloadable display poster for their premises <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>. This will allow NHS Test and Trace to contact customers with public health advice should there be a COVID-19 outbreak. For further business information and resources head to <https://covid19.nhs.uk/information-and-resources.html>. In England, using QR codes will help businesses meet the new legal requirement to record the contact details of customers, visitors and staff on their premises. We've also attached a communications toolkit so you can show your customers and workforce that you are supporting the new NHS COVID-19 App.

Head to the following YouTube pages to watch an introduction to the QR code process for businesses <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oJtkzP8zio&> and for an introduction to the new app https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fp0kHcr_Pi4&feature=youtu.be.

COVID-Secure workplaces

The Government has also published updated and simplified Covid-19 Secure guidance available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>. Core Covid-19 Secure requirements will now be mandated for hospitality businesses.

We would encourage all businesses to review the relevant guidance and continue to take measures to ensure that workplaces are Covid-Secure. In particular in areas where the risk of transmission is higher such as:-

- Indoor areas and enclosed spaces so special attention should be given to ensuring such spaces are Covid-Secure.
- In noisy areas due to the need to speak louder or shout which increases the likelihood of infectious droplets spreading eg noisy areas in pubs and restaurants or factory floors or construction sites where workers are exposed to industrial noise.

Workplace outbreaks

Working with our partners across England, we have observed some concerning trends in workplace outbreaks, and we would like to share these details with you to support your efforts in continuing to prevent workplace and workforce transmission as far as possible. *There have been many cases where workplace outbreaks have required large numbers of staff to go home to self isolate for up to 14 days. This has had significant impacts on businesses being able to operate.*

- Shared social areas such as canteens and tea rooms – it is of the utmost importance that Covid-Secure measures are put in place in these areas as well.
- End of shift interaction - staff may interact socially in larger groups, for example, at the end of a shift, and we would again underline the core message that we all need to reduce our social contact as far as possible outside of our households and/or support bubble to help stop the spread.
- Travel to and from the workplace – this is another area where employers should be aware and give particular consideration to employees' individual needs and circumstances. For example, many employees may rely on car sharing to attend work. This can increase the risk of a workplace outbreak, particularly where employees are regularly car sharing with a number of different people. We would suggest that employers discourage car sharing as far as possible, and where this is absolutely unavoidable, ensure that the following guidance is adhered to:
 - share the transport with the same people each time
 - keep to small groups of people of up to 6 people at any one time (this limit of 6 people will apply and have legal force from 14 September)
 - open windows for ventilation
 - travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
 - face away from each other
 - consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
 - clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
 - make sure the driver and passengers wear a face covering

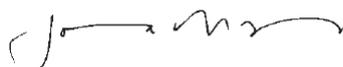
Self-isolation and sick pay

As ever, it remains of the utmost importance to ensure that staff can take paid time off work if they are required to self-isolate due to Covid-19. Smaller businesses may be able to claim back Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) using the Government's rebate scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-to-employees-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19>. Particular consideration should be given to agency workers or those in the "gig economy" who may be incentivised to break self-isolation if no suitable pay arrangements are in place. The SSP Rebate Scheme covers all types of employment contracts, including part-time employees as well as those on agency contracts, flexible or zero-hour contracts and fixed-term contracts. We would encourage all employers to offer full pay during sick leave where possible so that no one is disadvantaged by complying with the self-isolation rules.

Thank you and keep going

We have seen that most businesses have put Covid-Secure measures in place, and this has made a real difference in suppressing the virus. As cases continue to increase in the UK, we all need to work together to keep suppressing the virus and keep our businesses open. We would really like to thank you for all your cooperation and support in achieving this. As ever, please do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything we can do to support you further during this time.



Joanna Killian
Chief Executive, Surrey County Council