

My Ref:
Your Ref:
Please ask for:
Email:
Telephone:
Date:

Covid-19: Review of your control measures

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you because rates of infection with Covid-19 in Sandwell remain high compared to the national average and it is vitally important that all of us continue to do everything that we can to prevent the spread of infection and bring those rates down. This is particularly the case with the emergence of new variants of Covid, which it is thought may spread more easily.

In relation to the business that you own or manage, you must:

Allow and facilitate your employees to work from home wherever possible - the risk of spread can be substantially reduced by not bringing groups of people together.

Where employees must be in the workplace, review your risk assessment and controls, and ensure that you are following all the relevant guidance for your business type at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

In particular, make sure that:

- Your workplace is well ventilated.
- Your employees can maintain at least 2 metres distance from colleagues and customers wherever possible.
- Your employees wear face coverings wherever possible.
- Your employees observe good hand hygiene, and that you provide suitable hand sanitiser for people to use, particularly in areas where people may be using shared equipment.

Make sure that the following people isolate for 10 days:

- (i) Any employee with symptoms of Covid. These people should also book a PCR test (NOT a Lateral Flow Test - these can be useful in some workplaces to identify and isolate positive cases, but they are not a substitute for a PCR test if somebody has symptoms).
- (ii) Any employee that has been in close contact with someone else that has tested positive. This includes:
 - Anyone who lives in the same household as the positive case.
 - Anyone who has spent 15 minutes (or longer) at closer than 2 metres to the positive case, at work or elsewhere.

- Anyone who has spent 1 minute (or longer) at closer than 1 metre to the positive case, at work or elsewhere.
 - Anybody that has been coughed on or had face to face conversations or direct physical contact with a positive case for any length of time, or travelled in a small vehicle (e.g. a car or van) with them.
- (iii) Anyone that has been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and told to self-isolate.

Please see the Gov.uk and NHS websites for detailed information on the requirements to self-isolate, and check if you aren't sure:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

Please be aware that, if you know that an employee should be isolating at home, it is an offence for you to allow them to leave their home for any purpose related to their employment.

Rapid Workforce Testing

If your business employs more than 50 people, you can now sign up for the rapid testing programme. This involves regular testing of your workforce with lateral flow tests, which give a quick result. This can help reduce transmission because some people who have a Covid infection have no symptoms and may be unknowingly spreading the virus. This expansion of testing will find more positive cases, keeping workers who cannot work from home from unknowingly passing on the virus, and protecting vital public services.

More information on the scheme is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>

Tell us if you have 2 or more cases of Covid in your workforce.

It is important that you tell us so that we can monitor the situation and help support you to prevent any further spread if there is evidence of transmission in your workplace. If you delay telling us you may end up with a larger outbreak, which will have a bigger impact on your business. Let us know as soon as possible by emailing:

phcovid19_enquiries@sandwell.gov.uk

Remember that you may be able to get support:

Support is available for employees that need to self-isolate:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/help-and-financial-support-while-youre-self-isolating/>

and also for businesses:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>

It is in the interests of everyone that we control the spread of infection. Doing so will save lives as well as help protect your business. Please make every effort to reduce the risk in your business and remember that we're here to provide advice and guidance if you need it.

Yours faithfully,