

# COVID-19 Absence Reporting Procedure

We appreciate that during this time of pandemic we are likely to see an increase in absences, either due to illness or due to isolating as a result of someone else's illness. Whilst we understand that these absences are inevitable, we must also take into account the operating needs of the business and the effect these absences may have on efficiency, productivity and your colleagues.

## Symptoms of COVID-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A high temperature (i.e. you are hot to touch on your chest or back)
- A new continuous cough (i.e. coughing for more than 1 hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours)
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste (i.e. you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different)

## Statutory Sick Pay

Where you are self-isolating because you or someone you live with is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or you have been told to self-isolate by a medical professional or the Test & Trace service, provided you meet the eligibility criteria, you will receive Statutory Sick Pay from day one of your absence.

## Reporting Procedure

### If you have symptoms

- You must self-isolate immediately
- Visit NHS111 Get A COVID-19 Test at <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> and book a test, or request a home test kit, others in your household and support bubble should also get a test
- Visit NHS111 Self-Isolation Note at <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/screener-question>
- Notify your manager of your absence as soon as possible, explaining what your symptoms are and the date of your test (or if you have applied for a home test kit)
- Send your self-isolation note to your manager before close of play on the day of your absence (or if this will not be possible explain to your manager the reasons why and when you intend to provide your self-isolation note)
- Contact your manager again as soon as you receive your test results, providing them with a copy of your results
- If you do not contact your manager within 3 days of the date of your test (or within 3 days of sending your home test kit off), your manager will attempt to make contact with you
- If your test is negative, and provided no one in your household or support bubble is displaying symptoms, you must return to work immediately (provided you feel well enough to do so)
- If your test is positive, you must continue to isolate for 10 days from when your symptoms started
- You must contact your manager the day before you are due to return to work

### If someone you live with (or is in your support bubble) has symptoms

- You must self-isolate immediately
- Visit NHS111 Get A COVID-19 Test at <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> and book a test, or request a home test kit

- Visit NHS111 Self-Isolation Note at <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/screener-question>
- Notify your manager of your absence as soon as possible, explaining who has symptoms (i.e. their relationship to you), if you have any symptoms, and the date of your test (or if you have applied for a home test kit)
- Send your self-isolation note to your manager before close of play on the day of your absence (or if this will not be possible explain to your manager the reasons why and when you intend to provide your self-isolation note)
- Contact your manager again as soon as you receive your test results, providing them with a copy of your results
- If you do not contact your manager within 3 days of the date of your test (or within 3 days of sending your home test kit off), your manager will attempt to make contact with you
- If your test is negative, and those in your household and support bubble have also tested negative, you must return to work immediately (provided you feel well enough to do so)
- If your test is positive or if someone in your household or support bubble tests positive, you must continue to isolate for 14 days from when your symptoms started
- If your test is negative, but someone in your household or support bubble tests positive, you must continue to isolate for 14 days from when their symptoms started
- You must contact your manager the day before you are due to return to work

#### **If you are contacted by the Test & Trace Service**

- You must self-isolate immediately
- Visit NHS111 Get A COVID-19 Test at <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> and book a test, or request a home test kit
- Visit NHS111 Self-Isolation Note at <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/screener-question>
- Notify your manager of your absence as soon as possible, explaining if you have any symptoms and the date of your test (or if you have applied for a home test kit)
- Send your self-isolation note to your manager before close of play on the day of your absence (or if this will not be possible explain to your manager the reasons why and when you intend to provide your self-isolation note)
- You are also required to send your manager evidence of contact from the Test & Trace Service (this may be a text message or email that you can screen shot). If you are unable to do so, please explain why
- Contact your manager again as soon as you receive your test results, providing them with a copy of your results
- If you do not contact your manager within 3 days of the date of your test (or within 3 days of sending your home test kit off), your manager will attempt to make contact with you
- Even if your test is negative, you must continue to self-isolate for 14 days from the date you came into contact with the person who has tested positive
- You must contact your manager the day before you are due to return to work

#### **Contact from Management**

We appreciate that if you are self-isolating (for whatever reason), it may be a stressful time for you, and you may be experiencing discomfort due to symptoms. We have no desire to add to that stress and discomfort, which is why we have set in place rules for you to maintain contact with your manager.

However, there may be times during your self-isolation where we need to contact you. This could be to find out some essential information about work, to inform you of any updates, or to enquire as to your health and if we can do anything to support you.

If we do contact you and you are unable to answer our call, please make every effort to return our call as soon as you are able to do so. If you are unable to do so as your symptoms are too severe, please ask a member of your immediate family to make contact to let us know.

### **Failure to Follow the Above**

If you fail to follow the correct reporting procedure, or to make contact with us during your self-isolation where we have tried to contact you, your Statutory Sick Pay may be suspended until such time as we can clarify the nature of your absence or non-contact. We may also class you as absent without leave and invoke our disciplinary process.

### **Changes to our Absence Management Triggers**

We actively want to discourage anyone with COVID-19 symptoms from attending work and putting colleagues and other members of the public at risk. Therefore, any COVID-19 related absences will not count towards our absence triggers as outlined in our Absence Policy.

### **Return to Work Meetings**

Where possible we will conduct a return to work meeting with you on your first day back from absence due to COVID-19. This is to ensure you are well enough to attend work and so that we can ensure you have the necessary support in place.

### **Mental Health**

We know many people are suffering with poor mental health as a result of the pandemic, some people may even be dealing with grief. We want to support you during these times so if you feel you are struggling with poor mental health or grief, please reach out to your manager, another member of your team, or your HR representative, who will be able to signpost you to help that is available and will discuss ways to assist and support you.