



The Cornwall Innovation Centres Coronavirus Policy for all building users.

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Cornwall Innovation Centre's Infection Control Policy:

Infection control is the name given to a wide range of policies, procedures and techniques intended to prevent the spread of infectious diseases amongst staff, clients and all visitors to our Centers.

As the virus is evolving, we at the Cornwall Innovation Centre believe that strict guidelines on infection control is of paramount importance in ensuring the safety of both service users and staff.

We also believe that good, basic hygiene is the most powerful weapon against infection, particularly with respect to hand washing.

The aim of this document is to limit or prevent the spread of infection amongst staff, clients, visitors and all building users.

Due to the severity of this virus, all staff, building users and visitors are required to make infection control a key priority and to act at all times in a way that is compliant with safe, modern and effective infection control practice.

1. What we will do:

The Centre will endeavor to keep our high levels of hygiene at all times.

Due to the increased usage of soap, should you notice that a soap dispenser's need refilling please contact reception immediately.

Should we at the Centres have any suspected cases of Coronavirus, that person will be sent home for Self-isolation. Should we have any confirmed cases we will disclose that information to all clients and contractors immediately.

The Centres continue to operate on a 24/7 basis but should we find ourselves in a position where a Centre's staff have to self-isolate we will issue an update to clients on the out of hours protocol we will employ during this time. All companies should consider putting in place a similar continuity plan, in case their company needs to go into self-isolation.

2. Our policy for Clients, Contractors and Visitors:

We request that all building users follow the following procedures:

This policy applies to all building users: Centre Staff, Clients, Visitors and Contractors.

All building users should observe high standards of hygiene to protect themselves and other building users from the unnecessary spread of infection.

All building users should ensure that their hands are thoroughly washed using soap and dried fully after visiting the toilets, and using any communal areas.

3. If you become unwell at home:

If you or an employee display symptoms of Coronavirus, whilst at home. It is best that you stay at home for 7 days, if they live alone. If they live with other people the house hold should isolate for 14 days.

Do not visit your GP directly. The best way to contact them is online: [NHS 111 online](#) or phoning NHS 111.

- You do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. But if your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

It is also important to contact your line manager to update them, and that they notify julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk immediately.

Contractors, should a member of your staff become unwell, who has visited one of our centres within the previous two weeks. Please notify julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk

4. If you become unwell whilst in the workplace:

- Notify your Manager
- Check your symptoms [NHS 111 online](#) or Call NHS 111.

Whilst you wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive,

- You should remain at least 2 metres away from other people.
- You should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag or pocket (if you are unable to throw the tissue in the bin)
- If there are no tissues available, you should cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow.

It is important that you also notify the Centre of the situation, by contacting julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk

- If you need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, you should use a separate bathroom if available.

- Please notify Centre staff which bathroom was used, so that we can arrange for it to be sealed and cleaned.

5. If an employee (or any of your visitors) are confirmed to have Cononavirus:

You need to confirm to julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk that the case has progressed from a suspected case to a confirmed case.

- Julie Bell will be in contact with you to discuss the case.
- You will need to identify people who have been in contact with them, such as:
 - Any employee in close face-to-face or touching contact
 - Anyone who has cleaned up any bodily fluids
 - Any close friendship groups or workgroups
 - Any employee living in the same household as a confirmed case
 - We also need to know what facilities within the building have been used by that person.
 - If your staff member has contact with visitors, you will need to follow that line too.

Please note that anyone who has had close contact will be asked to self-isolate at home for up to 14 days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case.

Please follow the advice in the attached link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

You will need to carry out a risk assessment immediately and share that RA with julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk

- Advice on the cleaning of communal and private areas such as offices or toilets are outlined later in this document.
- At this point in time - closure of the workplace is not recommended.
- Julie Bell will follow up with you on a regular basis.
- If anyone else develops symptoms or their existing symptoms worsen within their 7 – 14 day observation period please contact julie.bell@plymouth.ac.uk immediately.

Reporting cases of the Coronavirus:

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) oblige your company and the Cornwall Innovation Centre to report the outbreak of notifiable diseases to the HSE.

Records of any such outbreak must be kept specifying dates and times and a completed disease report form must be sent to the HSE.

Information about the Virus:

1. What is Coronavirus?

The term Coronavirus covers a variety of viruses. As a group, Coronaviruses are common across the world.

But a new strain of Coronavirus has been identified and it is this strain of Coronavirus that was identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020. And is known as COVID-19

2. What is the incubation period of COVID-19:

The incubation period of COVID-19 is believed to be up to 7 days.

3. What are the Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19:

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has Coronavirus infection:

- Cough
- Difficulty in Breathing
- Fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

4. How COVID-19 is spread:

Our current understanding about how the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads is largely based on what is known about similar Coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a new disease and there is more to learn about how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread.

From what we know about other Coronaviruses, the spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

The ways it can be passed:

- Close contact with an infected person (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets (produced from coughs and sneezes).
- And by touching surfaces or objects that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).

5. Returning from travel overseas to affected areas:

If you display any symptoms of Coronavirus, or have been in contact with anyone who has become ill, you are advised to stay home for 7 days if you live alone, or if you live in a shared environment, you and your family for 14 days isolation.

6. How easily does the virus spread?

Some viruses are highly contagious (spread easily), like measles, while other viruses do not spread as easily. Another factor is whether the spread is sustained.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in some affected geographic areas. Community spread means people may have been infected with the virus in an area, but may not be sure how or where they became infected.

7. Preventing spread of infection:

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

It is now also recommended by the government that the best way to prevent the virus from spreading is through reduced social contact. The have recommended that:

- It is best to work from home, if you are able to.
- Don't make any unnecessary trips, and reduce your travelling
- Avoid gatherings
- Reduce all social contact.

If you show symptoms of the virus you are advised to stay home for 7 days if you live alone, or if you live in a shared environment, you and your family need to isolate for 14 days.

Public Health England (PHE) recommends that the following general cold and flu precautions are taken to help prevent people from catching and spreading Coronavirus:

- Stay at home if you are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Face masks for the general public are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

Further information is available on the [PHE blog](#) and [NHS.UK](#).

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8. Treatment for COVID-19:

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately, by phoning NHS -111

9. Managing COVID-19 in the workplace:

Current recommendations state that staff who have not had close contact with a confirmed case do not need to take any precautions and can continue to attend work.

10. Certifying absence from work:

By law, medical evidence is not required for the first 7 days of sickness. After 7 days, it is for the employer to determine what evidence they require, if any, from the employee.

If your employee is a carrier, or has been in contact with an infectious or contagious disease, such as Coronavirus they will be advised to isolate themselves and not to work in contact with other people by NHS 111 or PHE

We strongly suggest that employers use their discretion around the need for medical evidence for a period of absence where an employee is advised to self-isolate due to suspected Coronavirus, in accordance with the public health advice being issued by the government.

We are awaiting confirmation that the Government will support statutory sick pay from day one of the illness, and support sick pay for staff who are self-isolating.

11. Cleaning spaces with suspected or confirmed cases of Coronavirus:

COVID-19 symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the person has come into contact with must be cleaned including:

- all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with bodily fluids

- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with bodily fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.

If a person becomes ill in a shared space, these should be cleaned using disposable cloths and household detergents, according to current recommended workplace legislation and practice.

12. Rubbish disposal, including tissues:

All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, and masks if used, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied up securely. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. The bag should be put in a safe place and stored for 72 hours. It can then be put in the normal waste.

13. Handling post, packages or food from affected areas:

Employees should continue to follow existing risk assessments and safe systems of work. There is no perceived increase in risk for handling post or freight from specified areas.

14. Correct hand-washing technique:

Removing all dirt and contaminants from the skin is extremely important. Particular attention should be paid to the backs of the hands and fingertips as these are frequently missed.

It is usual to wet hands before dispensing a dose of soap into a cupped hand, however for heavily soiled hands it is advisable to apply the appropriate specialist hand cleanser directly to the skin before wetting. In all cases, it is important to follow the manufacturer's recommended instructions.

- Ordinary soap is considered effective for routine use in removing dirt and reducing levels of transient micro-organisms on the skin to acceptably safe levels
- The use of alcoholic products for hand decontamination is not intended to replace washing hands with soap and water but rather to supplement hand washing.

Other useful Links:

[Coronavirus: UK government latest advice and information](#)

[NHS FAQs advice on reducing possible spread of infection](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan>

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

Appendix 1. Updates to this Document

Date	Changes made	Reason	Updated by
13/03/2020	Changes to incubation period Changes to disposal of Waste Inclusion of online NHS form	To reflect Government updates.	J.Bell
17/03/2020	Changes to isolation requirements	To reflect Government updates.	J.Bell