

Shropshire Council
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Date: 15 June 2020
My ref:
Your ref:

Dear Business Owner,

A Message from Shropshire Council: how to report Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in businesses

Shropshire Council has welcomed the Government's phased approach to the reopening of businesses. As we draw nearer to the wider opening of businesses, I'm sure you are busy reviewing your working practices using the available guidance and supporting documents.

Shropshire Council's priority during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is to protect the public and save lives. We wanted to provide an update on the evolving situation regarding reporting and managing any suspected, or confirmed COVID-19 cases, including outbreaks within your setting and provide some general guidance.

1. Notifying PHE and HSE of COVID-19 situations

Colleagues in Public Health England and Shropshire Council are working very closely to ensure we can support all businesses during this pandemic. You must:

1. Report a suspected outbreak of COVID-19 in the workplace (where two or more persons linked to the workplace have symptoms of COVID-19) and confirmed cases (more than one person who has received a positive test result for COVID-19), to Public Health England (PHE) by telephone to 0344 225 3560 (option 0, then option 2)
2. At the same time you can also notify Shropshire Council via:
Email: shropshirepublichealth@shropshire.gov.uk
or by telephone 01743 251234. 9am-5pm 7 days a week
3. If you have a suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace, you do not need to report this to PHE, but please contact Shropshire Council on the details above, who will offer further advice and support to your organisation.
4. You may need to submit a [RIDDOR](#) report. COVID-19 is a notifiable disease and there is a statutory duty under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) that employers must notify the enforcing authority about cases of, or deaths from, COVID-19 which are associated only with occupational exposure, that is, as a result of a person's work. The reporting is in addition to notifying us and PHE, as detailed above.

2. Resources to support re-opening

All businesses need to do their part to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep your employees and members of the public safe. To help Shropshire businesses re-open and trade safely we have collated information on our website to assist you which can be accessed [here](#). It is important to remember not all businesses have been allowed to re-open, you can find a [full list here](#).

The Government has set out [5 principles to keep workplaces safe](#):

- **Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment**
- **Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures**
- **Help people to work from home, where possible**
- **Maintain 2 metre social distancing, where possible**
- **Where people cannot be 2 metres apart, manage transmission risk**

The [Health and Safety Executive](#) have produced some guidance to assist. More detailed Health and Safety information can be found [here](#) and an example risk assessment can be downloaded [here](#). You must assess the risk posed by COVID-19 by:

- identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus;
- think about who could be at risk;
- decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed;
- act to remove the activity or situation;
- or if this isn't possible, control the risk.

The Government has provided guidance for working safely in different sectors: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

For the latest HSE information for workplace safety visit: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>

3. Test and Trace

The NHS Test and Trace service is now up and running in England. A business will be notified through Public Health England if a case in the community has had direct close contact with those within the business setting. If there is more than one case in a business setting Public Health England, alongside Shropshire Council Public Health team, will work with the business to manage the outbreak. This will include arranging additional tests where there is risk of COVID-19 being transmitted. Testing capacity is sufficient to meet the needs of Shropshire.

More information on Test and Trace is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-nhs-test-and-trace-service><https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>.

Public Health England has published guidance that explains what you should do if the NHS Test and Trace service notifies you that you are a contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and you do not live with that person.

The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

There is separate advice [if you're told by NHS Test and Trace that you've been in contact with a person with coronavirus](#).

4. Case Support and Process

If a COVID-19 notification is received, the information will be risk assessed by the Local Public Health Team, either from Shropshire Council or Public Health England, who will contact your setting, usually within a few hours. The team will want to understand the details of the suspected or confirmed cases, the local setting and details such as family members, any vulnerable staff and staff who may need additional support. This will allow the team to offer support and guidance around testing, PPE, infection control measures, isolation requirements and any other relevant government guidance. Public Health England work collaboratively with the local Public Health team from Shropshire Council, and therefore both teams will be involved in supporting any outbreak as well as other partner agencies. This service is available 7 days a week, initially 9am-5pm.

5. Data sharing

A business will only be notified of cases in the community if there is a direct close contact with those in the workplace. The contact will be made via Public Health England or Shropshire Council. Confidentiality of cases and data sharing will be in line with Public Health England protocols.

6. Symptomatic staff

Finally, we would like to remind you that if any staff develop symptoms of COVID-19, they are eligible for testing via the national testing scheme, which can be a home test kit or drive-through test appointment. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal (Please note the cough and loss of sense of smell may persist for some weeks)

You must ensure that you or your staff self-isolate if:

- you have any [symptoms of COVID-19](#) (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste);
- you're waiting for a COVID-19 test result;
- you've tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have COVID-19;
- you live with someone who has symptoms, is waiting for a test result or has tested positive.

Anyone with symptoms should remain away from the workplace for at least 7 days from when symptoms started. After 7 days, if the individual is well and has not had a temperature for 48 hours they do not need to self-isolate any longer. You should self-isolate for 14 days if you live with someone who has symptoms, has tested positive or is waiting for a test result. The 14 days starts from when the first person in your home started having symptoms. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear.

You can stop self-isolating after 14 days if you do not get any symptoms.

We will continue to share more detailed information and guidance as it becomes available to support businesses. Please visit:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmental-health/covid-19-guidance/>

Specific business advice and support, including grants for particular types of businesses can also be found here:

<http://www.investinshropshire.co.uk/business-support-advice-covid-19/>

If you require more business related information please e- mail:

advicecompliance@shropshire.gov.uk or telephone 0345 6789067 and select option 3.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Robinson
Director of Public Health