



# PORTLAND BROWN

## COVID-19 RESPONSE – EMPLOYEE POLICY

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Portland Brown Limited

JANUARY 2021

# COVID-19 RESPONSE – EMPLOYEE POLICY

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## 1 OVERVIEW

In order to ensure the safety of all employees, Portland will apply the following guidance to employees. This is in line with current guidance from Public Health England (PHE), the UK Government, World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## 2 GENERAL PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY EMPLOYEES

The most recent advice (as per CDC and the government) suggests the following preventative measures be taken to avoid the spread of virus:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, or displaying symptoms including high temperature and / or new and continuous cough
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then put the tissue in the bin
- Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Regularly wash your clothes (see section 6.18 for further details)
- Keep areas where people from different households come into contact well ventilated

Employees are required to adhere to the social distancing guidelines set out by the government which are outlined in section 2.1.

### 2.1 Social Distancing

In line with government guidelines regarding the easing of lockdown, Portland requires that all employees follow Social Distancing Measures both at work and at home, to help reduce transmission of any infection.

They are:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
- Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible – we strongly advise walking, cycling, or using your own personal vehicle where possible
- Follow the rules for meeting others safely and gathering limits for the tier that they live in
- Keep your distance from people not in your household (2 metres apart where possible)
- Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential service

Everyone should be following these measures as much as is pragmatic. Employees who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 are advised to follow these measures strictly.

## 2.2 Handwashing

In line with the latest guidance from the UK government, employees are encouraged to wash their hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Employees are required to wash their hands immediately upon entering the building or before using the communal areas, i.e. kitchens etc. Anti-bacterial wipes are provided for employees to wipe down taps and soap dispenser pumps after use. Paper towels will be provided for hand drying purposes and these must be disposed of in the bins provided after use.

Signs have been put up in the toilets and communal areas to remind employees of these requirements. Please see section 6 for specific information around the rules in place for our offices, including the communal areas.

## 2.3 Face coverings

In line with guidance provided by the government, employees are required to wear a face covering when in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not possible and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet. Face coverings are now required when visiting shops and food outlets, as well as on public transport. Face coverings are encouraged in other enclosed public spaces where there are people you do not normally meet.

Face coverings are required to be worn when in the communal areas of Zetland House (London) and must also be put on, alongside gloves, before entering any of our complexes. They should be worn at all times when in the communal areas of our buildings as well as when in our apartments. In addition, employees attending apartments are required to wear a fresh set of gloves and shoe covers. Further information regarding this is outlined in section 10.

From 28 December, face coverings must be worn when moving around the office and whilst in any communal parts of the office. You may remove your face covering when sat at your allocated desk.

It is important that you thoroughly wash your hands before putting on and after taking off any face coverings. When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering. Your face covering should be changed at least daily but more frequently if it becomes damp or you have touched it. Reusable face coverings should be washed regularly. If wearing a disposable face covering, this should be disposed of in one of the dedicated bins in the office or placed in a sealable bag before disposing of in a public bin.

It is important to remember that wearing a face covering is not a replacement for the other ways of minimising the spread of the virus and therefore social distancing rules and other guidance should still be followed.

## 3 NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

With effect from **6 January 2021**, the UK government has introduced a national lockdown across England.

During this lockdown, everyone is required to stay at home and only leave their home for specific purposes permitted by law. These are as follows:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person

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- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible
- If you do leave home for a permitted reason, you should always stay local - unless it is necessary to go further, for example to go to work. Stay local means stay in the village, town, or part of the city where you live.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable you should only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential. You should not attend work.

Further details and full guidance are available on the government's website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

## **4 SYMPTOMS, MONITORING AND SELF-ISOLATION GUIDELINES**

### **4.1 Symptoms of the virus**

Symptoms of the virus are:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature
- Loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

### **4.2 Temperature monitoring**

Portland has provided thermometers in all of our office locations (including satellite locations) which are to be used by all employees and sub-contractors to record their temperature at the start of their shift. If a temperature of over 37.5 degrees is recorded, the employee or sub-contractor must immediately notify their line manager (or the HR Manager in their line manager's absence). If a temperature of 37.8 degrees or higher is recorded, the person must return home to self-isolate in line with the guidance outlined in section 4.4. Anyone recording a high temperature is encouraged to book a COVID-19 test (see section 4.3).

Visitors to the office will be required to have their temperature checked and recorded upon arrival. Employees, sub-contractors and visitors are required to follow the 'COVID-19 Temperature Monitoring Process' at all times.

### **4.3 Testing for COVID-19**

Testing is now available for anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If required, Portland can arrange a test on an employee's behalf however, employees are encouraged to book a test as soon as possible via the government's

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website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> or by phoning 119.

Further details regarding COVID-19 testing are outlined in our ‘COVID-19 – Testing for Employees’ document. Employees will not be permitted to return to work unless they have a negative test result or have completed the required self-isolation period.

## **4.3.1 Testing positive for COVID-19**

If you test positive for COVID-19 you must immediately notify the HR Manager. You will also be contacted by NHS Test and Trace to provide details of those you have been in close contact with. If you need contact details for colleagues, guests or contractors as part of this process, you should discuss this with the HR Manager or the Director and General Manager to ensure that any data provided is GDPR compliant.

## **4.4 Self-isolation requirements**

### **4.4.1 Self-isolating if you have symptoms**

The government has instructed that if you experience any symptoms of COVID-19 (as outlined in section 4) then you must immediately begin a period of self-isolation, starting with the day you first experience symptoms and for 10 full days after that day. For example, if your symptoms start on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, your isolation period will come to an end at 23:59 on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

You should arrange to have a COVID-19 test (see section 4.3 for further details). If your test result is positive you should continue with the isolation period. If your test result is negative (providing you have had a PCR test – see [here](#) for details) you can stop isolating and return to work providing you feel well enough to do so.

After 10 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, you should contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk or your GP.

### **4.4.2 Self-isolating if you live (or are in a support bubble) with someone with symptoms**

If you live in a household (or are in a support bubble) with someone who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (as outlined in section 4) you should self-isolate from the day the person’s symptoms start (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms but have tested positive) and for the next 10 full days. I.e. if the person’s symptoms started (or their test was taken) on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, your isolation period will come to an end at 23:59 on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

If you do not have symptoms of the virus, then you should not arrange a test (unless it is part of a wider testing scheme). If for any reason you have a negative test result during your 10 day isolation period, you must continue to self-isolate.

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If you develop symptoms whilst you are isolating, you should arrange to have a test and start a further full 10 day isolation period.

### **4.4.3 If you are notified by NHS Test and Trace that you need to isolate**

You may be contacted by NHS Test and Trace if you are identified as a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. You can be a contact anytime from 2 days before the person who tested positive developed their symptoms and up to 10 days after, as this is when they can pass the infection on to others.

If you have been informed that you are a contact of a person who has had a positive PCR test result for COVID-19, you must stay at home and complete 10 full days isolation. Your isolation period includes the date of your last contact with them and the next ten full days. This means that if, for example, your last contact with them was at any time on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, your isolation period ends at 23:59 hrs on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

If you develop any symptoms whilst you are self-isolating, you should arrange a test and follow the guidance set out in section 4.4.1. If your test result is negative, you must continue with the original isolation period as you could still develop COVID-19 during this period.

## **4.5 Reporting periods of self-isolation**

If you need to self-isolate you should ensure you follow all normal sickness absence reporting procedures as well as sending an email to the HR Manager. At the discretion of your line manager, you may be permitted to work from home during this isolation period providing you are well enough to do so. If you are able to work from home, you will remain on your usual pay.

### **4.5.1 Reporting a period of self-isolation as required by NHS Test and Trace**

If you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised that you are required to self-isolate, you must report this immediately to your line manager (or the HR Manager if your line manager is unavailable). The HR Manager will contact you to understand the reason you have been asked to isolate and whether you are experiencing any symptoms to allow us to put any additional measures such as deep cleaning in place as required.

## **4.6 Self-Isolating and Working from Home**

If you need to self-isolate, yet feel well enough to work from home, you must speak to your line manager who, along with the HR Manager, will determine if this is suitable to your role. Please refer to section 5 for further details.

If you are able to work from home, you will remain on your usual pay.

## **4.7 Self-Isolating and Not Working from Home**

If you are not well enough to work from home or it is not possible to do so after discussion with your line manager, the isolation period will be treated as sickness absence. Normal company sick pay rules will apply and in line with new Government regulations, you will be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from day 1 of the isolation period providing you meet the normal requirements for SSP.

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## **4.8 If you become ill whilst at work**

If you start to experience COVID-19 symptoms whilst at work you must immediately notify your line manager, as well as either the Director and General Manager and the HR Manager. If you require urgent medical attention this will be arranged for you.

In the Bristol office, you will be asked to isolate in the basement meeting room and in the London office you will be asked to isolate in Meeting Room 1. If you are working in the field you will need to immediately return home. If you need assistance with getting home, this will also be arranged for you.

Either the Director and General Manager or the HR Manager will, review the visitor book and liaise with you to establish who you have been in close contact with during the day so that we can risk assess those who may need to self-isolate/take a COVID-19 test.

## **4.9 Action to be taken in the event that someone becomes ill whilst at work**

If an employee becomes symptomatic whilst at work, we will arrange for everyone present in the office to work from home until a deep clean of the office can be arranged. Those who can be classed as ‘being in close contact’ in line with government guidelines will be advised on a case by case basis and will be advised to comply with the self-isolation guidelines and to get tested. In line with section 4.3 employees who are required to be tested will not be permitted to return unless they have a negative test result or have completed the required isolation period.

## **4.10 If you have symptoms within 14 days of ceasing to work with Portland**

Any employees leaving Portland are required to contact the Director and General Manager or the HR Manager if they experience coronavirus symptoms within 14 days of their departure date. This is to enable us to ensure that we can identify and notify (where relevant) any close contacts and to carry out deep cleaning procedures if required.

## **4.11 Reporting those who are not complying with self-isolation rules**

All employees are required to comply with the self-isolation rules set out by the UK government. If you become aware that an employee is not complying with these rules, you should immediately report it to the Director and General Manager and the HR Manager. Any reports will be treated in confidence and will be referred to the authorities as appropriate.

## **4.12 Receiving a call from NHS Test and Trace**

If you take a call on one of our company telephone numbers from NHS Test and Trace, please direct this to the Director and General Manager or the HR Manager. If unavailable, please ensure that you obtain all the required information from the caller (following our usual processes) and email this information to the Director and General Manager and HR Manager immediately. Any calls received from NHS Test and Trace to company telephone numbers should be treated as strictly confidential and should not be discussed with colleagues.

## 5 WORKING FROM HOME

In order to follow guidance set out by the UK government, in some cases it may be more appropriate for employees to work from home. For the period from 21 December 2020 to 18 January 2021, all Bristol based employees will be required to work from home. Until further notice, London will be operating on an 'emergency only' basis with skeleton staff in the office. Some operational employees will be based in our apartments and will be permitted to attend the office only when absolutely essential (see section 6 for further details). Only those who cannot carry out their work from home will be permitted to work from the office. This will be continually reviewed in line with government guidelines.

If you are permitted to work from home the following conditions must be met/adhered to:

- You must have internet and telephone access
- You must be logged in and working throughout your normal working hours/the time of your shift, notifying your team and line manager when you take your lunch and any breaks
- You must remain in communication with your line manager regularly throughout the day

If needed to enable you to carry out your daily tasks, you will be given remote log in instructions from the Utilities Manager.

If you need to work from home in order to manage childcare responsibilities then you must discuss this with your line manager. Any changes to working hours due to childcare responsibilities must be notified in advance and agreed by your line manager.

Equipment requirements to facilitate working from home, where permitted, should be discussed with your line manager.

## 6 RETURNING TO OUR OFFICES

Where employees are required to return to our offices, the following measures are in place:

- Employees are spread out across the office on separate desk spaces in line with social distancing recommendations to avoid unnecessary contact. Employees will be seated at least 2 metres apart or if not possible will be sat back-to-back or side-by-side at least 1 metre apart. All desks will be allocated to specific individuals.
- Employees should also avoid close contact when speaking to each other and maintain at least 2 metres distance from each other at all times
- All employees will be subject to temperature monitoring when attending our premises (see section 4.2)
- A box of tissues and pack of anti-bacterial wipes will be in place at each desk. Employees are required to clean their desk and computer equipment at regular intervals during the working day (and will be alerted to this by an alarm).
- All windows are to be opened and ventilation systems switched on whilst employees are working in the office

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With effect from 28 December 2020, all employees will be required to wear a face covering whilst moving around the office or when they are in communal parts of the office. Face coverings may be removed when employees are sat at their allocated desks. Further information about wearing face coverings can be found in section 2.3.

In London, where employees working from our apartments are required to attend our offices, they must adhere to the following:

- Attendance must be staggered
- Only one person is to be in the office at any time. If this is absolutely unavoidable, it must be signed off by the Head of Guest Relations or the Director and General Manager and you may not be in the office with another person for more than 10 minutes

## **6.1 Travelling to and from work and whilst at work**

Where possible, employees are encouraged to seek alternatives to using public transport to travel to and from work. We recognise that in some circumstances this is not practical and where it is necessary to use public transport, all employees are required to wear a face covering in line with guidelines set out by the UK government.

## **6.2 Use of communal areas**

In line with guidance provided by the UK government, social distancing measures must be followed whilst in communal areas. To assist with this, the following rules have been put in place:

- Employees are not permitted to sit next to each other at lunch time and will be required to eat at their desks or outside
- Employees are encouraged to bring food for lunch that is ‘ready to eat’ that requires no preparation in the kitchen areas
- Food should be brought in a suitable container and employees are required to bring their own cutlery if required.
- Tea/coffee etc. should be brought in by employees. Bottled water will be provided for employees
- The kitchens and all kitchen facilities are currently not accessible

## **6.3 Use of locker rooms and shower facilities**

Personal belongings should be kept to a minimum and stored underneath your desk during the day or in a locker. Coats should be hung on the back of your desk chair or stored in your locker. No personal items are to be left in the locker room space (Bristol office only).

Until further notice, shower facilities will be restricted for hygiene reasons. Showers will be restricted to two people each day in Bristol (one person per shower room). Please advise the PA to the Board of Directors and Office Support if you need to use the shower in the Bristol Office. In the London office, please advise the Office Manager if you need to use the shower.

Hairdryers etc. will need to be brought in by employees if required.

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## 6.4 Use of company vehicles

If you need to use the company van in Bristol, you should seek authorisation to do so from the PA to the Board and Office Support and all touch points of the vehicle (including any exterior handles) must be thoroughly cleaned using the antibacterial wipes provided after use.

In London, the vans will be dedicated to specific drivers as follows:

- Van 1 – Dedicated to Dominik Szatowski and Michael Estelle
- Van 2 – Dedicated to Daniel Rabaioli

All touch points in vehicles must be thoroughly cleaned down (including exterior door handles) at the end of the shift.

Only one person is permitted in the van at a time. If it is necessary to have more than one person in the van, authorisation must be sought from the Head of Operations.

## 6.5 Meetings

### 6.5.1 Internal meetings

All internal meetings are to be held on Microsoft Teams, where possible. Employees are encouraged to bring their own headphones to facilitate this. If required, a set of headphones will be purchased on your behalf. If a 'face-to-face' meeting is required, the various meeting rooms have limits on the number of attendees as follows:

Bristol office

- Upstairs boardroom – 6 attendees
- Ground floor boardroom – 6 attendees
- Basement meeting room – 2 attendees
- Kitchen area – 4 attendees
- Meeting booths – 2 attendees – one to be sat by the wall and one to be sat at the entrance to the booth (diagonally across from each other)

London office

- Meeting room 1 – 4 attendees
- Meeting room 2 – 3 attendees

### 6.5.2 External meetings

Until further notice, only essential meetings with external attendees are permitted to take place. These must be booked in to the upstairs boardroom only in the Bristol office and Meeting Room 1 in the London office.

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All external attendees will be required to pre-register their contact details with the PA to the Board and Office Support and comply with our sanitisation and temperature monitoring processes. Please refer to section 6.8 for further details.

## **6.5.3 Ventilation, hygiene and cleaning requirements**

Where windows or ventilation systems are in place in a meeting room, these must be opened/switched on in order to ventilate the room whilst the meeting is taking place. This is in line with guidance provided by the government.

All attendees are required to sanitise their hands upon entering the meeting room using the sanitiser provided.

All meeting rooms must be thoroughly cleaned down after the meeting has finished using the antibacterial wipes provided.

## **6.6 Entering, exiting and moving around the building**

### **6.6.1 Bristol office**

In Bristol, there are multiple entrances and exits to the office building. Until further notice, entrance to the building will be through the door from Stokes Croft in to the gallery area. This is to aid social distancing and floor markers are in place to ensure that distance is maintained at all times. All employees are required to sanitise their hands on arrival and then record their temperature (please see section 4.2).

All employees are required to exit the building through the door on to Moon Street to the rear of the building.

### **6.6.2 London office**

Face coverings are required to be worn in all communal areas of the building. This is a request of the building management. All employees are required to enter Zetland House via the main reception area where you will be required to sanitise your hands and have your temperature checked. Social distancing measures are to be adhered to at all times.

Distance markers are in place to aid social distancing at the entrance/exit to the office.

Where appropriate, directional markers are in place to facilitate a one-way system around the offices. Employees are encouraged to limit their movement around the office as much as possible and use phones/Microsoft Teams to contact colleagues if required.

## **6.7 Guidelines on working together**

Where more than one member of the team might be required for a task, a maximum of two people ONLY can work together. This is the case for all Field Team and Housekeeping employees. Social distancing and sanitisation procedures must be adhered to and employees are required to wear face coverings when working together in close proximity.

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## 6.8 Visitors

Until further notice, only essential visitors will be permitted in the offices. In order to comply with the requirements for Test and Trace, all visitor contact details will need to be recorded and details kept for 21 days after the visit.

Proposed visitors will need to pre-register their contact details with the PA to the Board and Head Office Support.

Upon arrival, all visitors will be required to sanitise their hands and will also be subject to temperature monitoring in line with section 4.2. They will also need to reconfirm that we have the correct contact details.

The PA to the Board & Office Support or the London Office Manager will be required to record the time of arrival and time of departure for each visitor.

## 6.9 Deliveries

Until further notice, employees are not permitted to arrange for personal items to be delivered to the office.

Any large stock deliveries to the Bristol office need to be directed to the entrance on Moon Street and a sign is in place on the Stokes Croft entrance to advise this. Any delivery drivers who are assisting with bringing stock to the store room will be required to wash their hands upon entering the building.

Vans are not currently permitted to enter Zetland House however large parcels can be accepted with prior notice. Small parcels can still be accepted as per normal processes.

## 6.10 Lift (London office only)

Employees should refrain from using the lift into the office unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to use the lift, only one person is permitted to be in the lift at a time (in line with guidance provided by Zetland House).

## 6.11 Stock areas

Before entering any stock areas, employees are required to thoroughly sanitise/wash their hands and put fresh gloves on. All stock must be picked with gloves on and gloves securely disposed of after use. Hands must be washed/sanitised after removing gloves.

## 6.12 TRAKA cabinets

Before using the TRAKA cabinets all employees are required to thoroughly sanitise their hands using the hand sanitiser provided. All keys should be sanitised using the anti-bacterial wipes provided when removing from or before replacing in the system. All touch points including the door, fingerprint reader and keypad must be thoroughly cleaned after use with the anti-bacterial wipes provided.

## 6.13 Comms Room (London office only)

Access to the Comms Room is restricted to one person per day (usually the Office Manager or the Duty Manager) and only one person is permitted to be in the room at the time. After accessing the room, door handles and the keypad must be thoroughly cleaned with the anti-bacterial wipes provided.

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## 6.14 Printers

If you need to use the printer/scanner, any touch points should be thoroughly wiped down with an anti-bacterial wipe (provided) after use.

## 6.15 Stationery and filing cupboards

Access to the stationery cupboards is restricted to the PA to the Board and Head Office Support (in Bristol) and the Office Manager (in London) only. If you require stationery items you will need to request them rather than taking them from the cupboard.

In the Bristol office, if you require files from the store wall, you must wipe down the file before returning it to the cupboard and the door handles using an anti-bacterial wipe.

## 6.16 Padlocks

Padlocks are in place in the Bristol car park and on the London office door (mainly for use overnight). Before touching a padlock, employees are required to thoroughly wash or sanitise their hands. Hands should also be washed or sanitised after touching the padlock.

## 6.17 Office Hygiene Measures

All employees and visitors to our offices are instructed to wash their hands on entering the building. Hand sanitiser has also been made available for use by employees/visitors and is stationed at the reception desks.

Twice per day, employees will be provided with anti-bacterial wipes to clean down their desks and computer/phone equipment. In addition, the office Admin Team will be completing additional cleaning tasks, including the disinfection of surfaces and door handles etc. twice per day. Our office cleaning contractors have also been given enhanced cleaning checklists in order to ensure that a healthy working environment is maintained.

Anti-bacterial wipes have also been provided in the toilet area for employees to sanitise all 'touch points' including the flush, taps and the inside and outside handles after use.

## 6.18 Washing clothes/uniform

In line with guidance set out by the UK government, clothing and uniform items should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other people's items. To minimise the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, do not shake dirty laundry prior to washing.

## 7 THOSE AT HIGHER RISK FROM COVID-19

### 7.1 Employees who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19

According to the latest advice from the CDC, the following are high risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

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- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People with underlying medical conditions including:
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised:
  - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
  - People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
  - People with diabetes
  - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - People with liver disease

Others at potentially higher risk include

- Certain disability groups
- Pregnant women
- Racial and ethnic minority groups

If you believe you are more vulnerable to COVID-19 you should discuss your specific circumstances with the HR Manager, Head of Operations and the Director and General Manager.

## **7.2 Employees who are clinically extremely vulnerable in line with government advice**

In addition to the above, the UK government has identified those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and have issued letters instructing them to shield themselves until the end of July 2020. With restrictions easing, these people are no longer required to shield however they are advised to limit contact with others and adhere to social distancing measures strictly. Employees who this is applicable for are advised to discuss with the HR Manager.

## **7.3 Employees who live with those at higher risk of COVID-19**

If you live with someone who is higher risk of serious illness or is more exposed to COVID-19 for example a key worker, you should discuss your specific circumstances with the HR Manager so that appropriate measures can be put in place.

## **8 EMPLOYEES TRAVELLING TO AND RETURNING FROM ABROAD**

### **8.1 Booking a holiday**

Until further notice, we would strongly advise against booking a holiday abroad due to the uncertainty around travel at this time. We understand however that this is at the employee's discretion. If you live in a tier 4 area, you can only travel internationally where you have a legally permitted reason to leave home (see section 0 for further details).

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Should you book abroad you must choose a country that is deemed as a ‘travel corridor’ at the time of booking and likely to remain so when due to travel.

Before booking a holiday abroad, all employees are required to notify the HR Manager and your line manager, noting the destination/s they are travelling to. Employees are required to inform the HR Manager and their line manager once again, three days prior to travel by completing the ‘Annual Leave Travel Arrangements Interactive Ripple’ on the PeopleHR system.

Please note that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office currently advises against ‘all but essential’ travel to international territories and countries. There are some exemptions and these can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-countries-and-territories-exempt-from-advice-against-all-but-essential-international-travel>

## 8.2 Returning from abroad

From **18 January 2021**, you must now provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result taken up to 3 days before departure. If you do not comply (and you do not have a valid exemption) your airline or carrier may refuse you boarding and/or you may be fined on arrival.

Full details, including guidance around test providers and what proof will need to be shown, as well as exemptions to this regulation, are outlined on the Government’s website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england>

Current regulations require that you must self-isolate for 10 full days since you were last in a non-exempt country when returning to the UK from abroad (in addition to providing proof of a negative COVID-19 test). There are certain countries that this does not apply to and a list of travel corridors, where self-isolation is not required on return to the UK can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>

As travel corridors are subject to change (dependent on latest information regarding the pandemic and the government’s response) employees are required to update the HR Manager as soon as they become aware that they may need to isolate on their return. Please note that if by the time you depart, the travel corridor for your destination has been removed or is very likely to be removed by the time you return and you still decide to travel, failure to communicate this will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

If the travel corridor is removed whilst you are away and you are required to self-isolate when you return, this must be discussed with the HR Manager as soon as you are aware. Where possible and if appropriate, employees will be permitted to work from home (see sections 4.6 and 5) whilst self-isolating by agreement with a member of the Senior Management Team. If it is not possible for you to work from home then this will be treated as unpaid leave.

Should you become detained abroad longer than your planned trip, this will be treated as unpaid leave.

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Employees will be permitted to return to work after the isolation period providing that they are not experiencing any symptoms of the COVID-19 virus. Employees will be permitted to return to work sooner if they opt in to the Test to Release Scheme (outlined in section 8.3) and provide evidence of a negative test result.

## 8.3 Test to Release Scheme

With effect from **15 December 2020** travellers who need to self-isolate on arrival to England will have the option to pay for a private COVID-19 test. The earliest you can take the test is at least 5 full days after you left a destination which is not included in the travel corridor list. The scheme is completely voluntary and if you choose not to opt for a private test, you will still be required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation if you have arrived from a destination that is not on the travel corridor list.

To take part in the scheme, you must book your test before you return to England and you will be asked to provide details of this when completing your passenger locator form. If you decide to opt in to the scheme once you have arrived in England, you will need to complete another passenger locator form.

If your test result is negative, you can stop self-isolating immediately. You will be permitted to return to work once you have provided proof of your test result to your Line Manager and the HR Manager. If your test result is positive, you must continue to self-isolate for a further 10 days from the day you took the test. Anyone in your household must also then self-isolate for 10 days from the date of your positive test.

If the test result is inconclusive, you must continue to self-isolate, although you may choose to take another private test if you wish.

Tests provided by NHS Test & Trace will not allow you to shorten your isolation period.

Full details about the Test to Release scheme are available on the UK government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel>

## 8.4 Travelling within the UK

If you are staying in the UK during your annual leave you will still be required to complete the 'Annual Leave Travel Arrangements Interactive Ripple' on the PeopleHR system.

We strongly recommend that employees do not travel to areas classed as a High or Very High local COVID alert level (see section 0 for further details), however, we understand that this is at the employee's discretion. If you choose to travel to an area deemed High or Very High, you must abide by the rules outlined by the UK government for the relevant Alert Level. Under government rules, you are not permitted to travel to a tier 4 area unless for a specific legally permitted reason.

## 9 OTHER PRECAUTIONS TAKEN

Other precautions have been taken with the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees in mind. These will remain in place until further notice.

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- No travel between the Bristol and London office unless absolutely essential and signed off by a member of the Senior Management Team
- Client meetings suspended
- New starters to be inducted in their base office
- Contractors to limit time in the London office and adhere to office hygiene procedures (e.g. handwashing etc.)
- Field Team have either been provided with bikes or vehicles where applicable or are walking in the city, limiting all use of public transport
- Field Team and external housekeeping team where/when required to attend an apartment are provided with gloves, shoe protectors, face coverings as well as carrying hand sanitiser at all times

## **10 PROCESS FOR MITIGATING RISK FROM GUESTS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO EMPLOYEES**

All employees are advised to follow the general precautions outlined above, as should be the case ordinarily, but particularly in flu season.

The measures in place regarding our guests are outlined in detail in our 'COVID-19 Response – Keeping our Guests Safe' and all employees are required to read this document.

### **10.1 Risk assessments and check ins for incoming guests**

As part of our Reservations process, as standard, all guests are required to complete a risk assessment prior to arriving at our apartments (see [Appendix 1](#)). This is designed to establish if the guest is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or has been in contact with someone who has the virus/symptoms. If either of these are applicable the guest is required to self-isolate and all regular maintenance and housekeeping visits are suspended until the isolation period has been completed. A self-check in is also arranged for the guest.

We are operating on a self-check in basis for all guests. At the request of the guest, it may be possible to arrange a 'face-to-face' check in. Face-to-face check ins will be conducted in line with social distancing guidelines currently in force.

Please note that in addition any guests arriving from abroad will also be subject to border controls and monitoring when arriving into the UK. This may include a mandatory 'quarantine' period when arriving to the UK by air.

Guests have been advised that no assistance can be provided with their luggage if they are required to self-isolate on arrival. For guests not required to self-isolate, assistance can be provided on request. If assistance is required, this must be done adhering to social distancing guidelines. Full PPE (face covering and gloves) must be worn whilst handling guest luggage.

### **10.2 Attending our apartments**

For the period from 21 December 2020 to 4 January 2021, we are operating on an emergency only basis.

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PPE and hand sanitiser is provided for use by field team members when visiting apartments. All employees are required to wear gloves and face coverings when in communal areas of the building and a fresh pair of gloves, face covering and shoe protectors when entering the apartment. These are to be safely disposed of after leaving the apartment.

Employees in the field are provided with a sealable bag to dispose of items while out and there is a dedicated bin in the office where these items are placed and disposed of from here.

Employees are required to adhere to any social distancing signage and limits to numbers of people (particularly in lifts) that are in place at our complexes.

## **10.3 If a guest becomes symptomatic**

All guests are required to advise us if they become symptomatic whilst staying with us. Any employees who are deemed to have been 'in close contact' according to the government guidelines will be notified and will be advised to self-isolate and get a test. Employees will also be advised if we are contacted by the Test and Trace service as appropriate.

If a guest becomes symptomatic within 14 days of their departure date, a 72 hour block will be put in place after the booking ends and then the apartment thoroughly deep cleaned in line with our housekeeping processes prior to another guest being able to check in.

## **10.4 If you become aware that a guest is not complying with self-isolation rules**

All guests will be advised that they are required to adhere to self-isolation rules. If you become aware that a guest is not complying then you must immediately raise this with the Head of Operations and Director and General Manager so that it can be followed up and reported to the authorities as appropriate.

## **10.5 Apartment viewings**

Until further notice, all apartment viewings will be held virtually unless a physical viewing is absolutely essential.

In the event that a physical viewing is required, an employee from Portland Brown will be required to attend the apartment to open the door for the person viewing. In line with section 10.2, all employees will be required to wear a face covering and gloves when attending the apartment. The employee must adhere to social distancing guidelines whilst the viewing takes place. The guest will be required to vacate the apartment for the viewing to take place or, if this is not possible the guest must remain in one room which will not be able to be viewed.

The person viewing the apartment will be required to wear a face covering and gloves at all times whilst in the apartment and will not be permitted to touch anything in the apartment.

Landlord viewings will take place in pre-booked slots only and will be limited as much as possible. All landlords will be required to wear face coverings and gloves at all times whilst in the apartment.

## **11 BREACH OF THIS POLICY**

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a potential disciplinary issue and dealt with through our disciplinary measures, further details of which can be found in our Disciplinary Policy.

## APPENDIX 1

### Risk Assessment

1. Are you currently suffering from any of the following?

- High fever (>37.5 degrees Celsius)
- Weakness and fatigue
- Dry cough
- Breathing difficulty
- Loss of taste or smell

If you have any of the above symptoms:

- If you live alone, stay at home for **10 full days** from the day after your symptoms started.
- If you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms, then **all household members** must stay at home and not leave the house for **10 full days**. The 10-day period starts from the day after the first person in the house became ill. For anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 10 full days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 10-day isolation period

After the isolation period, if the person feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can return to their normal routine. If they have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, they should contact NHS 111 or online at [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk)

2. Have you come into close contact with anyone who have been suspected of having COVID-19 Virus or presented with the same conditions above?

- No
- Yes (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you travelling / Have you arrived, from a country that is included in the 'travel corridor' list provided by the UK government?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown (Please specify destination arrived from) \_\_\_\_\_

**If you have answered no to the above, you are required to self-isolate for a period of 10 full days from your date of entry to the UK unless you have opted in to the Test to Release Scheme (for arrivals from 15 December 2020).**

Declared by (Name) \_\_\_\_\_ of Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_

of address

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\_\_\_\_\_

Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Reservation No \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_