

Coronavirus COVID-19 Policy

Brief of policy – if required

This document relates to

Central Support Services XX

Operational Services XX

Community Engagement XX

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1. General principles

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

This policy will outline Livability's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Livability's policy will be directed by the UK Government guidance at all times.

1.2 Information about the virus

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments.

The UK Government has provided guidance about COVID-19 directly and via many other UK Public Bodies. This guidance directs members of the public and UK based organisations on how to operate as safely as possible during the pandemic.

1.3 Signs & Symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- New, continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss or change to a person's sense of smell or taste.

1.4 How COVID-19 is spread

From what is known about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Respiratory secretions containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission, these are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, in the same way a cold spreads.

There are 2 main ways in which people can spread COVID-19

1. Infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 meters) or possibly could be inhaled into the lungs.
2. It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face). The current understanding is that the virus does not survive on surfaces for longer than 72 hours.

2. Infection Prevention

2.1 Preventing the 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.

There are some precautions that can be taken to prevent the spread of infection.

- Washing hands often using the correct handwashing techniques, these can be found at
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>
- Employees should wash their hands:
 - Before leaving home
 - On arrival at work
 - After using the toilet
 - Before and after breaks
 - Before food preparation
 - Before eating any food
 - Before and after putting on gloves
 - Before and after physical contact with another person
 - Before leaving work
 - On arrival at home
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue then disposing of it correctly, guidance can be found at

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016>

2.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Livability has developed a Personal Protective Equipment Standard Operating Procedure (PPE SOP) which outlines the PPE which needs to be used in Livability's workplaces/ care services. The PPE SOP is based on guidance from the UK Government and Public Health England, Public Health Wales and the HSC Public Agency (Northern Ireland).

2.3 Best practice for Infection Prevention checklist:

- Staff have infection control training
- Staff have guidance available for handwashing techniques
- There is correct disposal of waste – including clinical
- There is a cleaning schedule in place monitored by the manager
- Appropriate PPE is available for all staff in relevant areas.
- Staff have been informed of the coronavirus COVID-19 Policy, Livability's Standard Operating Procedure and Livability's PPE Standard Operating Procedure

3. COVID-19 Livability Lead

3.1 Livability will appoint a COVID-19 organisational lead. The COVID-19 Livability Lead will be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining a register of the National UK Government COVID-19 guidance
- Maintaining a register of the Welsh Government COVID-19 guidance
- Maintaining a register of the Northern Ireland Assembly COVID-19 guidance
- Communicating to Livability Senior Managers how UK government guidance must impact Livability practice
- Being a point of contact for Livability Senior Managers with reference to COVID-19
- Reviewing and updating the Livability COVID-19 Risk Assessment on an at least bi-weekly basis, and more frequently as guidance/ risks change
- Requesting actions are completed by people identified in the COVID Risk Assessment and updating databases accordingly.

4. Business Continuity Plans

- 4.1 All Livability services and departments must ensure their business continuity plans are always up to date to ensure sufficient measures are in place to enable business continuity in respect of potential issues associated with COVID-19. These include:
- Outbreak within a Livability service
 - Staff shortage
 - Disruption to supply chains
 - Reduced access to medical and social care professionals
- 4.2 The business continuity plan must be reviewed by the manager of the service/ department as UK government guidance is updated
- 4.3 Quality Improvement Partners will provide support to Care Operations managers to ensure the sufficiency of measures included in the Business Continuity Plans for Livability services

5. Staff Awareness

- 5.1 All Livability staff meetings and supervisions will include the topic of Infection Control until Livability communicate this may return to usual levels of awareness raising
- 5.2 Livability managers will ensure their staff are aware of the Livability COVID-19 policy
- 5.3 Staff are required to alert their manager if they have travelled to a known COVID-19 hotspot area. These areas will be determined by UK government guidance. Where a staff member has travelled to a known COVID-19 hotspot area, Livability will take action with the member of staff in line with UK Government guidance.
- 5.4 Staff are required to alert their manager if they have come into contact with any person diagnosed with COVID-19 or who is known to be subject to COVID-19 assessment/ screening. In such circumstances, Livability will take action with the member of staff in line with UK Government guidance.
- 5.5 Managers will ensure that all staff have up-to-date Infection Control training .

6. Local Government/Local Authority Guidance

- 6.1 Livability's Care Operations Managers are required to ensure they are signed up to receive any local government/ local authority guidance.
- 6.2 All local government/ local authority guidance must be followed and shared with the COVID-19 Livability Lead

7. Outbreak/Suspected Outbreak of COVID-19

- 7.1 All outbreaks/ suspected outbreaks of COVID-19 must be alerted to Livability's senior management immediately, via established line management structures.
- 7.2 Outbreaks will be managed using Livability's Standard Operating Procedure which will be maintained to track UK Government guidance.

8. An Employee with Coronavirus

- 8.1 In this circumstance, the employee is responsible for informing their manager and will be expected to follow Livability's Sickness Absence procedure.
- 8.2 Livability's sick leave and pay entitlement will apply.
- 8.3 The manager in addition to following the sickness policy, will conduct a risk assessment on the employee's work pattern over the last 14 days and will seek advice from NHS 111, Livability's Quality Improvement Team and the relevant ELT member on other actions outside of the absence process which must be taken.

An employee who has to be self-isolated:

An employee should consider **self-isolation in the following cases:**

1. If they have been to the category 1 affected areas (as defined by the Government – as of 4 March 2020 this is Wuhan city and Hubei Province in

- China, Iran, Daegu or Cheongdo in the Republic of Korea and any Italian town under containment measures); even if they don't have symptoms.
2. If they have been to the category 2 affected areas (as defined by the Government – as of 4 March 2020 these are Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Northern Italy, Japan, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) and have symptoms of coronavirus.

If either of the above scenarios do apply then any affected individuals should first call NHS 111, explain their circumstances and follow their advice on any requirement to self-isolate.

3. In addition to the above, an individual may be clinically advised by the NHS to self-isolate if they have been in direct contact with an individual in the UK with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19). Any individuals who believe themselves to be in this situation should call NHS 111, explain their circumstances and follow their advice on any requirement to self-isolate.
4. Should an employee feel that they are more vulnerable to coronavirus and as a result, feel unable to travel to work or wish to self-isolate themselves, the individual should in the first instance obtain clinical advice and call NHS 111 to discuss this. All employees should attend work unless they are clinically advised to self-isolate by the NHS.
5. Should an individual have specific circumstances that raise personal concerns regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) and consequently their ability to attend work, (e.g. the closing down of a school his or her child attends) they should discuss these issues with their direct line manager who should then seek advice from their senior management and the People Business Partner before taking any action.

For points 1,2, 3, Livability's sickness leave and entitlement will apply; however where employees have travelled to an area that has been advised by the government as a high risk area, we will reserve the right to only pay Statutory Sick Pay, from day 1.

For points 4 and 5, the use of dependency leave, annual leave (paid or unpaid) or an arrangement to work at home where possible will be explored with the employee. The relevant ELT manager is responsible for making a decision.

You can keep up to date with which areas are affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) by looking at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>

Notification of absence (and self-isolation)

Employees should follow the normal Sickness Absence notification and reporting procedures for any illness, including coronavirus (COVID-19) and any clinically specified requirement to self-isolate.

In cases where individuals have been clinically advised to self-isolate by NHS 111 they will receive our company Sick Pay, in line with normal entitlements and our policies & procedures.

In cases where the isolation is due to overseas travel (as set out above), we will ask employees to provide proof of travel to the specified region. In circumstances where employees have travelled to an area that has been advised by the government as a high-risk area, we will reserve the right to only pay Statutory Sick Pay, from day 1.

A Notification form should be completed and sent to Nicola Cartner via email at ncartner@livability.org.uk.

Notification of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Should there be any suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your teams, please advise your line manager, local People Business Partner and the relevant ELT member.

A Notification form should be completed and sent to Nicola Cartner via email at ncartner@livability.org.uk

Some Practical Guidance

Personal protective equipment

If neither the care worker nor the individual receiving care and support is symptomatic, then no personal protective equipment is required above and beyond normal good hygiene practices.

The risk of transmission should be minimised through safe working procedures. Staff should use personal protective equipment for activities that bring them into close personal contact, such as washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids.

Aprons, gloves and fluid repellent surgical masks should be used in these situations.

In particular cases, if there is a risk of splashing then eye protection will minimise risk.

New personal protective equipment must be used for each episode of care. It is essential that personal protective equipment is stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.

These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin for disposal.

Livability believes that there will be a shortage of PPE and as such is developing an additional set of guidelines for people to follow.

Cleaning

If care workers undertake cleaning duties, they should use usual household products, for example detergents and bleach, as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces.

Clean frequently touched surfaces. Personal waste (for example used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.

These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin which can be disposed of as normal.

Cleaning routines should be increased and all cleaning rota's will be checked by one of the Quality Improvement Partners weekly.

Laundry

Do not shake dirty laundry, either when doing laundry in a service or supporting someone to do their own laundry. This minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air

Wash items as appropriate, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. If the individual does not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after the 7-day isolation period has ended. The laundry can then be taken to a public laundromat.

Items heavily soiled with body fluids, for example vomit or diarrhoea, or items that cannot be washed, should be disposed of, with the owner's consent.

More information

The following link is for the up to date Government guidance on the gov.uk website:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

If you are a Head of School, please read and follow this guidance on managing coronavirus (COVID-19) in educational settings:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

If you run social care services, please read and follow this guidance on managing coronavirus (COVID-19) in care settings:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19>

Information: helpline launched to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education

The Department for Education has launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

If you run events such as training, conferences, fundraising or campaigning events, please note that as of 4 March 2020 the Government are not advising any cessation of group events or activities and as such any Livability events that are planned will still go ahead based on current advice. In addition, employees should continue to attend internal and external events as usual. Should you or any member of your team have any specific concerns relating to this, please raise this with your line manager.

Policy Ownership

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Executive Director of Operations	<i>Jane Percy</i>	June 2020
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