

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

General Guidance Notes
updated March 2020
Metro Safety Group

COVID-19 (Coronavirus): latest information and advice

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

Generally, coronavirus 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.

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. Information including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and its symptoms. Can be found here;

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Virus spread

Viruses can be spread by:

An infected person coughing or sneezing within a short distance (less than 1 metre) of a susceptible person. Face to face contact for an hour or more is usually needed for the virus to spread from one person to another.

Touching or shaking the hands of an infected person and then touching one's mouth, eyes or nose without first washing ones hands.

Touching surfaces that have become contaminated with the flu or COVID19 virus and then touching one's mouth, eyes or nose without first washing ones hands.

COVID19 Symptoms

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness.

The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

Metro Policy

Metro Safety follows Government and other expert guidance in order to minimize the risk of infection and the spread of COVID-19. This Metro Safety guidance is designed to give an overall framework.

A virus pandemic will place great demands on our customers, employees and contractors. We will plan our response in order to minimize the impact of these demands. We will take all reasonable steps to protect people's health, we will provide clear communication and we will provide the support that we can to those in need. We will consider the actions that can be taken to reduce the spread and impact of COVID19. In general, Metro Safety will seek to operate within its existing good practice employment principles during any pandemic.

Service Provision

Metro's leadership team including the Managing Director leads on our response to COVID-19. This includes defined teams and functions such as our Core Operations Team and our Emergency and Disaster Recovery Plan. Key person dependencies have been defined so that we can maintain management and service continuity for the worst case forecasts. We believe that we will be able to continue providing our legally required services ensuring as far as possible the safety of people in the buildings where we work. At worst, we envisage a potential need to reschedule services and possibly 'double-test' for certain services, maintaining compliance with the relevant British Standard while at the same time working within anticipated capacity constraints.

Communication with Customers, Employees and Contractors

There is likely to be a great deal of concern among staff about the potential risks of a virus pandemic. To this effect, Metro will communicate to employees via email and by making this guidance document available on the G: drive (H&S_Risk folder). Metro will separately communicate with contractors who are field based.

A range of issues could emerge during a pandemic and Metro Safety will do what it can to maintain morale and motivation over the sustained period. It is essential that close contact is maintained and that all staff are kept fully informed at all times.

Should further alerts by the Government be made, Metro Safety will communicate the information to employees and contractors.

Communication with other Organisations

Metro is a service delivery organisation whose employees and contractors conduct routine and non routine visits to client's premises on a frequent basis. Metro will encourage the minimisation of risk through the use of proper hand hygiene before entering premises and the practice of high standards of respiratory etiquette (covering the mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing and disposing of the tissue). Where possible, a distance of 1 metre should be kept between employees/contractors and customers.

Good Practice

Metro will promote best practice behaviour designed to minimise the spread of a virus in the following ways in line with Government guidance here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Remote workers or field staff who work away from the office premises are provided with additional guidance on how they can protect themselves and others whilst at work and/or visiting client's premises, especially those where vulnerable persons may be present such as Care Homes etc.

We will build our capacity for staff to work flexibly including home working and will adapt our working practices to support social distancing.

APPENDIX

Other sources of advice

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/>

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>