

Houlton and Coronavirus: Guidance and Procedures in the Workplace

Coronavirus remains a serious health risk, and as such the Company has modified its guidelines for the office and sites as we move into the autumn and winter period. These guidelines are in-line with government advice as of 24th September 2021, but will be superseded should any new national restrictions be introduced. Please read the following Company guidelines carefully, and if you have any questions or concerns please get in touch with one of the directors.

Continuing Risk from COVID-19

Whilst the infection, hospitalisation and death rates have been significantly reduced from their 2021 peaks, there is still a great risk from COVID-19 as we move into the autumn and winter months, where we will also see a rise in respiratory illnesses such as 'flu, coughs and colds. We strongly encourage everybody to make sure they are taking regular lateral flow tests, and monitoring any cold or 'flu-like symptoms they may develop over the coming months, in order to keep everybody safe and well.

The UK Government has lifted most restrictions on movement, social distancing and mask-wearing, however many businesses are implementing their own COVID-19 guidelines to maintain clarity for their staff as we move into autumn and winter. We have developed this document to act as a guide for everybody who works or visits onsite and in the office, so that we all know what is expected of us over the coming months.

It is still possible to catch and spread COVID-19 even if you are fully vaccinated, and our aim is to limit the transmission and spread on sites and in the office as much as possible, for the wellbeing, health and safety of all our workforce and visitors. The Company strongly encourages all employees to take up the free government vaccination against Coronavirus. Vaccination significantly reduces the symptoms and seriousness of COVID-19 and its associated health risks, and is the best line of defence against the virus.

COVID-19 is required to be treated as part of the health and safety risk assessment, both onsite and in the office. If you are working in a space that you do not think is COVID-19 safe please raise it with your manager.

1. Ventilation

The easiest way to catch COVID-19 is in crowded or poorly-ventilated indoor spaces. For most spaces in the office and onsite windows and doors should be kept open (unless a fire door) to maintain good ventilation throughout the space. If improved ventilation is not possible – for example an enclosed site – then masks should be worn. Even with colder weather approaching we are aiming to keep good ventilation and fresh air flow throughout the building, as a priority. We are encouraging staggered breaks whenever possible, so that kitchen

areas and site cabins do not become overcrowded. If you feel more comfortable wearing a mask in meetings or other working situations, please feel free to do so.

2. Cleanliness

All hard surfaces such as desks, tables, counters, sinks and basins should be consistently wiped down after use. Please make sure when you use bathrooms or kitchens that you thoroughly clean the surfaces with the products provided, and wash your hands for longer and more often. We are installing more permanent hand sanitiser stations at key points in the offices, and encourage everyone to sanitise their hands regularly.

3. Testing

We encourage all employees without COVID-19 symptoms to regularly self-test with free government lateral flow kits, which can be picked up from most pharmacies or ordered here: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>. Lateral flow tests are a good indication as to whether you might have symptomless COVID-19, and should be done regularly. If you develop cold or 'flu-like symptoms, lateral flow tests can also give you a quick indication as to whether or not the symptoms indicate COVID-19.

If you think you have COVID-19 symptoms, or receive more than 4 positive results on successive lateral flow tests, then you must book a PCR test immediately, and self-isolate until you receive your result:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

4. Self-isolating

If anybody develops COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive, then they must self-isolate for 10 days and if possible work from home during that period. COVID-19 symptoms typically include (but are not limited to):

- A high temperature
- A new and continuous cough
- A loss or change to your sense of smell and/or taste

If a member of your household receives a positive test result for COVID-19, or is pinged on the NHS Test and Trace app, then everybody in the household needs to take a PCR test. If you are double vaccinated or under 18 then there is no requirement to self-isolate, unless you also test positive for COVID-19. However, we understand that some people may wish to self-isolate as a precautionary measure, or need to self-isolate in order to care for another person who has developed Coronavirus symptoms in the household. If you have chosen not to be vaccinated and have been pinged on the NHS app, or live with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, then you must self-isolate for 10 days, even if your PCR test results come back negative.

It is an offence to come to work or be allowed to come to work if you have tested positive for COVID-19, have COVID-19 symptoms, live in a household with somebody who has symptoms/has tested positive, or have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace. For full government guidelines see

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>

5. Visitors

We encourage all visitors to the office and sites to sign in, in order to support NHS Test and Trace. This is so they may be contacted in case it turns out they may have been exposed to COVID-19 on their visit. We do not think it necessary to have an NHS QR code, however if people feel there are enough external visitors to the office or sites to warrant this we will put one in place <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>

For the government guidelines on COVID-19 safety in construction see

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/construction-and-other-outdoor-work>

Many thanks for your continuing cooperation in this challenging period, and do not hesitate to get in touch with any further questions.

The Directors

28 September 2021