

COVID-19 Update for UK Employees | 1/12/2021

New variant demonstrates continued need for caution

We will all have seen over the last few days the news about the latest Coronavirus variant, Omicron, being confirmed in the UK. As a result, **a series of new temporary and precautionary measures have been put in place by the Government.**

- It is now mandatory to wear a face mask in shops, galleries and on public transport in England from this week.
- All contacts of suspected Omicron cases must self-isolate, regardless of their vaccination status. They will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

Additionally, this new variant has impacted overseas travel:

- All travellers arriving into the UK from any country abroad must take a mandatory PCR test on or before day two, and they must isolate until they get a negative result.
- South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe and Namibi, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and Angola have been added to the Government's red list, which means all arrivals must isolate at home for 10 days.
- Switzerland has imposed a 10-day quarantine on all visitors from Britain, while Austria announced that all visitors are banned from entering the country until at least December 13
- From 1 December all British arrivals in Spain must show proof of vaccination, while all arrivals in Portugal must have a negative Covid test before arrival – either a PCR, taken no more than 72 hours before travelling, or an antigen, taken no more than 48 hours before travelling.

It is likely that restrictions will continue to change over the coming weeks so **please ensure you are aware of and understand all requirements, particularly if you are planning any overseas travel.**

The combination of the successful vaccination programme in the UK, the availability of the flu jab, and now the Covid booster jab have meant that while numbers of Covid cases are rising, hospitalisations and deaths are decreasing and we have been able to enjoy a time with relaxed restrictions. For this to continue we must ensure we are all vaccinated at the earliest opportunity if we can be, including having the booster when eligible.

Sajid Javid, the UK's Health Secretary, announced on Monday 29th November that **the booster will now be available to all those aged over 18, rolled out according to age and risk group, as long as it has been three months since your second dose.** Further details about this are expected to be released later this week but as with other Covid vaccines, you will be contacted by the NHS to book your jab. You can also find out more [here](#).

Please do not underestimate the impact that the vaccine can have on your susceptibility to the virus and how severe the symptoms are. This powerful article by a respiratory doctor working for the NHS clearly demonstrates how those who are unvaccinated are struggling to recover from Covid, and the impact it is having on the NHS. Read [here](#).

Employee Assistance Programme

Free, confidential support and counselling available for all employees

If you're worried about a work, family or personal issue then the Employee Assistance Programme can help, 24/7.

Support with everything from consumer rights to bereavement, depression & anxiety to childcare.

Visit www.lifestyle-support.co.uk (username: cemex / password: cemex) or call 0808 1682143

In light of the current developments, everyone is encouraged to review whether the level of compliance with the CEMEX Protocols and Behaviours that Save Lives is sufficient to keep themselves, their colleagues and their families safe, or if there is more that can be done to minimise the risk of infection. In addition to ensuring take up the vaccine at the earliest opportunity, please ensure you:

- Stay at home and inform your line manager if you have any COVID symptoms, or test positive
- Maintain workplace cleaning protocols and use hand sanitizer as necessary
- Avoid being a close contact by maintaining physical distancing
- Enforce and follow the “Mask and Move” policy.

Finally, a reminder about on-site meetings

Over the last week, four people who attended face to face meetings / training sessions at one of our locations have tested positive for Coronavirus. This is a cause for concern and so we would like to remind all employees about the requirements for any meetings they hold or attend.

In particular, remember to:

- Ensure the meeting / training is essential and cannot be done remotely
- Provide a well-ventilated area, with a CO2 monitor in meeting rooms
- Follow the Mask & Move policy at all times
- Ensure all attendees have undertaken a lateral flow test ahead of the meeting and received a negative result
- If anyone is feeling unwell but does not have Covid (e.g. with a cold) please do not attend in person
- Maintain cleaning and sanitising regimes
- Comply with the Key Behaviours that save lives

We understand that face-to-face meetings are sometimes needed but please ensure that you are following the Behaviours that Save Lives to keep yourself, your colleagues and your communities safe.



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