

COVID-19 Update for UK Employees | 21/01/2022

Update to operations following Government announcement

Earlier this week, the Prime Minister announced to Parliament his intention for a return to Plan A in England, with Plan B regulations allowed to expire.

This means that from next Thursday (27th January), face masks will no longer be mandated, although the Government will continue to suggest the use of face coverings in enclosed or crowded places, particularly where you come into contact with people you don't normally meet. Additionally, the Government is no longer asking people to work from home wherever possible. It is likely that further easing of restrictions / Covid requirements will be announced in the coming weeks.

These changes to regulations were reviewed with employee representatives during the Health & Safety Committee meeting on Thursday morning and it has been decided to maintain our current controls (including mask wearing) while infection rates are high. We understand that this may be challenging for some but believe this is the best course of action for now because of the potential for people to be ill, the impact easing may have on those who are at increased risk, and the potential for business interruption. This decision will be under constant review in line with national infection rates.

The HSE has also confirmed that businesses are still required to control the risks from Covid and review and update their risk assessments, with the requirements for adequate ventilation, sufficient cleaning and good hand hygiene remaining unchanged. HSE is continuing to carry out spot checks to ensure workplaces are working safely and following the latest government COVID-19 guidance.

In terms of reopening our office locations that are currently closed, we will now look at a partial return for certain business areas. As we previously initiated last summer, the intention is that those working in shipping, planning or customer service roles will be the first to return on a phased basis. All other support office staff should continue to work remotely as they are currently doing so.

Please do not return to the office until you are advised to do so by the RRT and please request permission from Carl Platt or Steph Horn for any visits you may need to make. This approach will ensure that those who return to offices due to business or personal need can do so without any concerns around occupancy levels and while maintaining physical distancing. If you have any concerns or queries please speak to your line manager or the HR team.



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.

