

Coronavirus - Guidance to Employees and Line Managers

It has been a while since our last update and during that time there have been changes in the business and continuing updates from the various UK Governments and overseas.

The company had to make some difficult decisions resulting in a redundancy process, carried out during July and August. This was regrettable but unfortunately necessary to position the various business units affected to reflect the local market needs moving forward.

We are obviously still in a period of uncertainty and it is difficult to foresee how the economy will progress as COVID-19 impacts continuously throughout the globe. The decisions taken to date have been largely driven by the local business units and their perception of their local customer needs. As we have previously advised some units have been more affected than others and we continually monitor the local business opportunities.

The company financial year end was 30th September and at time of writing, the final result is yet to be confirmed however the company will be in profit and cash positive, but somewhat reduced from the original budget.

The budget for each business for this new financial year has been presented in the last month and it is encouraging that whilst reduced from previous years there is a positivity around the expectations of each B.U. Manager.

Despite the uncertainty around it is also pleasing to confirm that we have recruited new apprentices this year and seen people within the business being given the opportunity to develop their careers with new business unit and profit centre managers recruited from within.

In terms of some specific changes we can advise:-

- Keith Evans has the new role of Operations Director for the R&M business where he will primarily be responsible for promoting a more collaborative approach through the units and seek opportunities to engage with the contracting business.
- Simon O'Leary has been promoted to the position of Business Unit Manager for Swansea having previously been Business Development Manager for that business.

We also said farewell to some long serving employees who have taken the decision to retire and we wish them all the very best in the next chapter of their lives.

Since our last update there have been several step changes announced by the government to get the economy back on track, investment in infrastructure, support for business, schools/universities returning and encouraging people to return to work. Shielding was removed from 1st August and the general feel was that of some level of return to 'normality'.

Unfortunately, we have seen in recent weeks an increase of positive cases, issues with testing and various local lockdowns imposed. As a company we will of course adhere to relevant government requirements and we continue to monitor the situation in each location we operate.

We are keen to ensure we have a sustainable business, so we have to learn to 'live with the virus'. All units have been certified 'Covid-19 Secure' and the management and SHEQ team are monitoring the working environment on an ongoing basis. We are recommending training and development programmes and will continue to put our people first. Workload opportunities continue and most units are seeing an upturn in fortune however we still have a number of people on Flexi Furlough.

It won't be 'business as usual' for some time to come but we have to endeavour to adapt that mindset as best we can to ensure we continue to operate effectively and maintain our business to secure employment and opportunity for everyone who works with us. We need everyone to work together with the common goal of the long-term success of the business.

We thank you for your efforts to date and ongoing commitment.

Q&A

With the varying changes ongoing we highlight some recent queries:-

Will I get sick pay if I'm off sick with Covid-19?

If an employee is sick, we follow the contract of employment regarding sick pay rules. Either contractual sick pay or SSP will be paid.

Will I receive sick pay if I have to self-isolate?

If an employee is not sick but self-isolating then for those employees who can work from home they should, but if that is not possible then they will be entitled to sick pay in accordance with their employment terms of contract.

If an employee is entitled to SSP only then subject to management approval employees may:-

- Book holiday
- Bank hours up to a maximum of 4 weeks' time

What do I do if my child is sent home from school?

Household members of those children who are sent home currently do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child that is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

If employees require time off to look after children who are sent home, they should contact their line manager and apply for dependent leave.

What do I do if a work colleague is tested positive for C19?

Current advice is you do not need to do anything until NHS Track and Trace contact you, but you should take extra care to follow social distancing advice. Common sense however must prevail. If you believe you have been in close contact with the affected individual, you must inform your line manager and agree next course of action.

If a member of my household is contacted by track and trace do I also need to self-isolate?

The member of your household who is contacted by track and trace will need to self-isolate, but you do not unless that member or another member of your household has symptoms.

If you need medical advice about your symptoms:

- England: NHS 111 online coronavirus service
- Scotland: NHS inform
- Wales: NHS Direct Wales
- Northern Ireland: get advice from a GP or GP out-of-hours service
- Overseas – contact your local health care provider

Government advice is constantly updating, the examples above are based on our interpretation of current advice. If in doubt, please review the latest government information in your area and discuss with your line manager and/or the HR Department.

Stay safe everyone

Please note this is subject to ongoing review and the business may change its position dependent on severity of circumstance and Government advice provided at the time.