

## Coronavirus - Guidance to Employees and Line Managers

---

Since our last update at the beginning of June, there have been several step changes announced by the government to get the economy back on track. The Prime Minister announced “Our plan to rebuild” COVID-19 recovery strategy and we have all seen over the last few weeks a release of the lockdown measures.

We are now officially in Phase 2 of the recovery plan where the government are slowly letting business open, we saw non-essential shops open in June and the next set of changes are planned for 4<sup>th</sup> July with more restrictions being lifted.

In our last update we set out the measures the company is taking to ensure we comply with the government guide for a safe return to work, the SHEQ team and Business Unit Managers have now implemented those measures, and as we see an increasing number of employees return to work, our sites, workshops and offices have been adjusted to provide a ‘COVID-19 Secure’ working environment.

We still have circa 30% of employees on furlough and workload remains reduced at varying levels across the business. This has improved from the position of almost half of our employees being furloughed.

### Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - Flexible Furlough

From the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will change to a new system of flexible furlough. The changes include:-

- Eligibility no longer subject to a minimum 3-week period of furlough
- Options of working patterns e.g. reduced hours per day and/or reduced days per week
- A mix of furlough and working time
- Employer contributions to the government scheme increasing
- The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will close on 31 October 2020

This change will allow business units to bring employees back subject to workload demands with no minimum time during which they must be on furlough and employees can also enter into a flexible furlough agreement more than once.

### Pay during flexible furlough

Hours worked and any holidays will continue to be paid at normal rate of pay and furlough pay will be covered by the furlough scheme which remains 80% of normal pay, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for days or usual hours not worked (i.e. on a pro-rata basis).

From the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, the level of grant will be reduced each month putting more onus on business to cover the cost.

Each business unit will assess available workload and endeavour to share opportunity to be in work providing reasonable notice of date of return. Affected employees will receive a letter to explain the changes and to confirm acceptance.

## Protecting yourselves and others

As more people start to return to work, it is important that everyone understands their responsibility to minimise risk of infection to others.

### **The number one rule is - If you do not feel well do not come into work**

Should you take ill during the day you should:-

- Inform your line manager immediately and go home
- If you are on site, inform the customers contact and go home
- Avoid touching anything, and wash your hands regularly
- If you are coughing or sneezing, use a tissue and put it in a bin, or if you do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow
- Avoid using public transport to travel home, if possible

The NHS website provides information on when to self-isolate. Self-isolation is when you stay at home because you have or might have coronavirus.

Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can apply for a free test to check if they have the virus. This is called an antigen test and the website provides more information on how to get a test. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

We appreciate this remains a period of uncertainty, the future economy is still unclear however it is evident that workload and customer opportunity remains subdued at varying levels across the business. The Business Unit Managers remain focussed on promoting the business and using all efforts to remain sustainable in their area. As we reach the final quarter of our financial year, we hope to have a clearer understanding of the forward prospects of each business. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

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

### **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 advise provided at the time.