

ALL EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR - COVID-19, NO 32, 16 OCTOBER 2020

I hope that this latest briefing finds you and your family well. This briefing is in response to the First Minister's statements on 7 and 15 October 2020 in relation to the change in guidance from the Scottish Government around the wearing of face coverings within the workplace.

The First Minister announced the following changes to the legislation:

- With effect from Friday 16 October 2020, it is mandatory to wear a face covering in a canteen facility unless you are sitting at a table.
- With effect from Monday 19 October 2020, it will be mandatory to wear a face mask in all communal areas of the workplace such as corridors and toilets.

For the vast majority of us, face coverings have become a new norm, so it comes as no surprise that the requirement to wear a face covering has extended further into the workplace. The measures we have put in place to enable as many employees as possible to work from home means that the numbers of employees working within and around our offices and depots is minimal and in turn contributing to reducing the risk of spreading the virus amongst ourselves. I am pleased to note that all Tayside Contracts employees continue to play their part in helping to fight the spread of COVID-19 by following the stringent measures we have already put in place as an organisation.

However, I am acutely aware of the growing rate of infection being reported in the media and the potential risks to our employees and strongly believe that by adhering to the additional guidance issued by the Scottish Government, will only increase our contribution, as an organisation, in further in reducing the spread of this virus.

This updated guidance does not replace any of the existing communications and guidance we already have in place around face coverings. Likewise, it does not replace any of the existing control measures we have in place centred around Physical Distancing/ Handwashing and Hygiene/ Cleaning/ Monitoring symptoms. Employees must continue to follow the guidance laid out in Tayside Contracts' COVID-19 Safe Working Arrangements, and Generic Risk Assessments and ensure that we do not become complacent whilst at work, and indeed outwith work. These documents will be updated to reflect the new guidance.

Employees who are already required to wear face coverings in specific settings, should continue to follow the current guidance and extend this to include the updated guidance as detailed below:

Tayside Contracts' Kitchens, Canteens, Welfare Units and Areas used for the preparation of refreshments

With effect from Friday 16 October 2020, all Tayside Contracts employees and visitors to Tayside Contracts' premises are required to wear a face covering when using any of the above facilities, unless they are seated at a table. This includes when entering or exiting the area.

These rules also apply to employees who work in non-Tayside Contracts premises e.g. Schools and offices etc.

Tayside Contracts Communal Areas

With effect from Monday 19 October 2020, all Tayside Contract employees and visitors to Tayside Contracts' premises are required to wear a face covering when using communal areas. This includes when entering or exiting buildings, reception areas, when moving around buildings via corridors or walkways, using photocopiers and printers in communal areas, changing areas, locker rooms and toilets.

For office-based employees, this means that face coverings are always required to be worn, other than when positioned at your desk. Whilst the legislation does not specify that you should wear a face covering while seated at your desk, you are encouraged to do so, especially when liaising directly with visitors or colleagues from outwith your office environment.

Provision and Use of Face Coverings

The guidance issued by the Scottish Government states that the responsibility for compliance with these new measures rests with the employee and it is reasonable to expect that most individuals will now have access to re-usable face coverings due to their increasing use in wider society and therefore will be in a position to provide their own face covering for use.

However, Tayside Contracts will provide face coverings to employees who have not already been issued with them. We are currently in the process of gathering and distributing stock of re-useable face coverings. Each employee will be provided with a bag containing 3 re-useable face coverings and will be responsible for their laundering and safe keeping.

Understandably, it will take time to distribute these to everyone and, in the meantime, employees should bring their personal face coverings to work. In the interim, until the re-useable face coverings are provided, a number of disposable face coverings will also be made available in each location to ensure that no one can inadvertently break the rules. It is anticipated that the re-useable face coverings will be made available early next week.

Additional signage will be installed in and around Tayside Contracts' premises in the coming days reminding employees and visitors of the requirement to wear a face covering.

The following measures should be followed in relation to the use of face coverings:

How should a face covering be worn?

- ✓ Wash a new face covering before you wear it, and after each use or at least once a day
- ✓ Wash your hands before and after putting on and taking off or adjusting your face covering
- ✓ Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when putting on, taking off or adjusting your face covering

- ✓ Discard used disposable face coverings responsibly or launder after each use if using a reusable covering
- ✓ Place used reusable face coverings in a bag until they can be washed and laundered
- ✓ Do not share face coverings with others, even people you live with
- ✓ Discard face coverings that have stretched out or no longer stays over your nose and mouth, has damaged ties or straps, or holes or tears in the fabric

Face coverings used should:

- ✓ Cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- ✓ Be secured to the head with ties, straps, or ear loops, or wrapped around the lower face
- ✓ Include multiple layers while allowing for breathing without restriction
- ✓ Be able to be cleaned regularly without damage or change to shape

Face coverings used should NOT:

- X Be football scarfs
- X Be offensive, concerning to the public or compromise the professional image of organisation
- X Interfere with or compromise existing control measures

Exemptions

It is important to recognise that not everyone can wear a face covering. Individuals are exempt if:

- They have a disability or health condition that means they cannot put a covering on
- A covering will cause them severe distress or anxiety
- They need to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading
- They have a reasonable need to eat, drink or take medicine

There is no requirement to obtain evidence that you are exempt for example in the form of a letter from a doctor. If you have a condition which means you cannot wear a face covering please inform your line manager.

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank each of you for your continued support and dedication throughout these difficult times.

The Scottish Government's current guidance on the use of face coverings can be found by visiting the link below, please note that this guidance has not yet been updated to reflect the recent changes:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/>

Should you have any questions about this briefing or are seeking support please do not hesitate to contact your line manager. Please continue to refer to Tayside Contracts' website www.tayside-contracts.co.uk on a regular basis to check for further updates.

If you have not already done so and wish to provide your email address to us in order to benefit from electronic access to communications such as these, please forward your email address to Communications@tayside-contracts.co.uk We will not forward your email address onto any third parties or use it for any other purpose other than to communicate with you.

Iain C Waddell, Managing Director, 16 October 2020