

**ALL EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR - COVID-19,  
NO 38, 6 JANUARY 2021**

**This message contains important information, following the First Minister's recent stay at home announcement on Monday 4 January 2021.**

On behalf of the Corporate Management Team, I'd like to wish everyone in Tayside Contracts a Happy New Year, and I hope that you were able to enjoy the festive break as far as the restrictions allowed. I would also once again like to deeply thank everyone who had to give up time during the holidays to provide essential services to the people and communities in Tayside – especially during the recent period of wintry weather, and despite the latest COVID restrictions.

You will be aware that on Monday 4 January 2021, the First Minister announced (that with effect from midnight that night, and for the duration of January), a legal requirement to stay at home except for essential purposes was being introduced for the whole of mainland Scotland. This effectively put the country into a lockdown scenario, similar to the one we had in March 2020.

The First Minister also announced that remote learning would be extended, and all schools and nurseries would remain closed until at least 1 February 2021 to all pupils, except vulnerable children and children of key workers.

These decisions were in response to evidence that a new variant of COVID-19 was up to 70% more transmissible and was spreading quickly in Scotland and deemed necessary in order to slow the spread of the virus, save lives and protect our NHS Service.

This, as I am sure you will agree, was not the start to 2021 that we had hoped for.

Once again, as an organisation we are having to review all the services we provide and liaise with our various Clients within the constituent Councils to establish what services they require us to continue providing, in what form and where.

Frank Reilly, Head of FM and Human Resources has already written to all our Facilities Services Division employees to clarify the arrangements for them and will continue to provide updates to these employees as matters progress.

For our Construction Division employees, as the current Scottish Government guidance allows for Construction work to continue, we are asking these employees to attend work as normal if they are fit to do so and assuming they are not required to shield (please refer to the specific paragraph below for advice and guidance on shielding).

For our Support Services employees, please continue to work from home and only attend your work location if that element of work cannot be done from home.

**Keeping Each Other Safe**

The health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce remains our primary concern and we will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to protect our employees at work. I urge you to redouble your

efforts to adhere to the rules and guidance both in and outside of your workplace that are in place to for your protection.

I fully understand how we are all feeling wearied by the various restrictions and rules that we have been living and working under for the past 9 months, and people are anxious about the latest developments. Once again, I cannot stress enough the importance of sticking with these precautions, for both your own health and safety and that of others including members of our families, our work teams, vulnerable people, and our communities.

So please remember:

### **FACTS**

- F** Face coverings
- A** Avoid crowded places
- C** Clean your hands regularly
- T** Two metre distance
- S** Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

Please comply with the above, our Safe Working Arrangements, Risk Assessments and the control measures arising out of these. All of our COVID-19 Health and Safety information has been reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect changes to the Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland Guidance and is available on our website [here](#). I would encourage every employee to continue to refer to this and follow what it says. These protections are in place to safeguard us from all strains of the virus.

If you have any queries or concerns related to health and safety, please discuss these with your line manager or if necessary, you can contact a member of our Safety and Training Team for advice by phoning 01382 834111 or emailing [training@tayside-contracts.co.uk](mailto:training@tayside-contracts.co.uk)

### **Previously Shielding Employees**

Employees who were previously shielding and have been issued with, or expect to be issued with, a letter from the Chief Medical Officer, should **NOT** attend work. If you have the ability to carry out your work from home, you are expected to do so but otherwise there is no requirement for you to attend work. You should forward a copy of your letter from the Chief Medical Officer to your line manager, this will act as a Fit Note to cover the period of your absence.

If you were previously self-isolating on advice from your GP but did not receive a letter from the Chief Medical Officer, you are permitted to attend work as normal with the necessary control measures in place. If you fall into this category and are concerned about attending work, please contact your line manager to discuss the matter further.

### **Parents/Guardians of Shielding Children**

If you are the parent or guardian of a child who was previously shielding and has been issued with, or expects to be issued with, a letter from the Chief Medical Officer and cannot attend work because

you are required to care for your child, please contact your line manager to discuss your specific circumstances further.

### **Childcare**

If the extension of remote learning for all children (except vulnerable children or children of key workers), presents you with a childcare issue, and you have explored all reasonable alternatives for childcare, please contact your line manager to discuss your specific circumstances further. It may be that you can request to take annual leave or opt to change your working pattern temporarily to allow you to attend work. A decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that certain Tayside Contracts' employees are classed as key workers and can continue to send their children to school when alternative childcare arrangements cannot be made. You are required to apply for this provision through your school or Local Authority.

### **Summary**

Should you have any questions about this briefing please speak to your line manager. Your wellbeing is extremely important, so if you are seeking support for a wellbeing issue this can be accessed through your line manager, our HR Team or via the wellbeing resources published on our website [here](#).

Please continue to refer to Tayside Contracts' website [www.tayside-contracts.co.uk](http://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](mailto: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.

**Can I thank everyone once again for your selflessness and professionalism during these most difficult circumstances. Your commitment to supporting our communities and helping each other is hugely inspiring, and deeply appreciated. Please keep up your fantastic response - hopefully with the rollout of vaccines, the end to these challenging times is in sight.**

**Keith McNamara, Managing Director, 6 January 2021**