

Employee Communication from The Managing Director - Covid-19, No 60, 1 February 2022

I hope that this latest briefing finds you and your family well. Like you, I am heartened to see that we now appear to have passed the peak of the Omicron wave and that some restrictions are starting to be lifted in Scotland once again. It is also positive to note that the Omicron variant does appear to be milder and is resulting in less serious illness and hospitalisations.

Despite this, it is important that we all continue to be vigilant against this virus and continue with all the control measures that we are all so familiar with. This briefing provides an important health and safety message and information on the recently launched Distance Aware Scheme.

Thank you once again for everything you are doing to allow us to continue to provide essential services to the communities of Tayside.

Risk Assessments and Control Measures

Whilst the Scottish Government has eased some restrictions recently in light of a reduction in positive case numbers, Tayside Contracts has not changed our risk assessments or control measures, including physical distancing as we believe that it is important to keep these extra measures in place for the time being. Please therefore continue to adhere to the risk assessments and control measures relevant to you which can be found on the Tayside Contracts' website [here](#).

If you have any difficulties or questions regarding any of the risk assessments or control measures in place relevant to your job, please speak to your line manager in the first instance.

Safety is Paramount

I have recently been made aware of a couple of accidents at work where a concern has been raised afterwards by the operational manager that the speed employees are doing things may have been a factor in the cause of the accident, perhaps because employees feel under pressure due to being short staffed. We are, of course, investigating these accidents to identify all the facts and will take all the necessary actions as appropriate thereafter. However, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind employees and managers that **no matter what operational pressures we are facing, health and safety is paramount cannot be compromised.**

I absolutely appreciate that we are all going the extra mile right now as a result of both COVID and recruitment difficulties and that significant asks are being made of employees because of staff shortages but we must never compromise our health and safety at work.

If you believe that your health and safety is being compromised at work, please discuss this with your line manager or a member of our Health and Safety Team if you feel you cannot discuss it with your line manager.

Distance Aware Scheme

Distance Aware is a new scheme that the Scottish Government has launched to prompt people to take extra care around those who would appreciate it, including keeping their distance. If you decide this is something that might help you feel more confident and comfortable in public spaces or at work, you can wear a badge or lanyard with the Distance Aware logo to show others you would like them to give you extra space and take extra care around you. The Scottish Government has introduced this scheme after three-quarters (73%) of people on the Highest Risk List who responded to a survey question on this said they would like something small to wear to help them feel more confident and comfortable when they are out and about.



The Distance Aware symbol looks like this

You can now get a Distance Aware badge or lanyard in 3 ways:

- ✓ collect a free badge or lanyard from all community and mobile libraries across Scotland
- ✓ collect a free badge from most Asda stores
- ✓ order a badge or lanyard from some charities free or for a small charge via www.gov.scot/distanceaware

Distance Aware badges and lanyards are for anyone who would like others to take extra care around them, for any reason. They are not specifically for any group such as those on the Highest Risk List or those with a disability – anyone can opt to wear one. The scheme is completely voluntary – it is up to you whether you would like to wear the Distance Aware symbol. The Distance Aware scheme compliments the published Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance.

Should you have any questions about any of the topics covered in this briefing please speak to your line manager.

Please continue to refer to Tayside Contracts' website www.tayside-contracts.co.uk on a regular basis.

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.

Thank you so much for all you are doing to protect and support yourself, your families and your communities during these difficult times.

Keith McNamara, Managing Director, 1 February 2022