

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR - COVID-19, NO 63, 5 MAY 2022

I hope that this latest briefing finds you and your family well.

This briefing contains important information regarding changes to the rules relating to the wearing of face coverings in the workplace and to the Scottish Government guidance on testing, contact tracing and self-isolation which changed from Sunday 1 May 2022.

After what has been without doubt the most exceptional and demanding 2-year period which has had countless twists and turns, I am delighted to see COVID-19 case numbers reducing both in terms of the case numbers in the communities we operate in but also in terms of our employee case numbers.

Whilst COVID-19 has not gone away and still presents a risk, it is clear that the vaccination programme is doing what it was designed to do and is reducing the risk of severe illness following a COVID-19 infection. This in turn has allowed the Scottish Government to remove all the previously imposed legal restrictions and most recently, from 1 May 2022, to change the rules on testing, contact tracing and self-isolation.

Use of Face Coverings

The legal requirement to wear face coverings in most indoor public places and on public transport was replaced by the Scottish Government on 18 April 2022, with a strong recommendation to continue to wear these where appropriate, including in indoor crowded spaces and on public transport.

Up until now, as an organisation, we had decided to continue to require our employees, other than those who were exempt, to wear a face covering within the workplace, in shared vehicles or where 1m physical distancing could not be maintained.

We have now conducted a review of our COVID-19 risk assessments and control measures taking account of both the change in approach by the Scottish Government and also notification from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) that it no longer requires every business to consider COVID-19 in their risk assessment or to have specific measures in place.

Therefore, rather than require our employees to wear face coverings in the workplace, **we now strongly recommend** the wearing of face coverings in our office/depots when moving around any buildings/communal areas or when unable to maintain a safe distance or 1 metre from others.

Tayside Contracts' COVID-19 risk assessments have been revised to take account of this change and are available on our website [here](#).

There is **no change at this moment in time in relation to our rules on the sharing of vehicles** a reminder of which can be found on our website [here](#). These arrangements are however under continual review and any amendments to these will be shared in due course.

Testing, Contact Tracing and Self-Isolation Guidance Changes

From 1 May 2022, Scottish public health advice changed to a “stay at home” message for people who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature, or you do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities.

Individuals are no longer advised to take a PCR test and contact tracing will no longer be carried out.

Testing for the general population has also ended, although testing will remain available to certain groups (for example those who work in the NHS health or social care settings, those visiting a hospital or care home, unpaid carers etc) in order to protect high risk settings, support clinical care and for surveillance purposes.

Symptoms of coronavirus, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea
- feeling sick or being sick

Adults who have symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses and have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities are advised to stay at home until their fever has gone or they feel well enough.

More information on the new COVID-19 public health advice can be found [here](#).

Summary of Tayside Contracts’ Position Effective from 1 May 2022:

- All employees encouraged to ensure regular hand washing/sanitisation.
- All employees encouraged to maximise ventilation in the workplace.
- All employees to maintain 1 metre physical distancing in all of our buildings/work activities.
- All employees, other than those who are exempt, strongly advised to wear a face covering within the workplace when moving around any buildings/communal areas, in shared vehicles or where 1 metre physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- All employees are advised to stay at home and to report as sick if they are not fit to attend work.

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.

Keith McNamara, Managing Director, 5 May 2022