
SAFE HANDS POLICY - IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS

Basis for policy decision

The Company has a responsibility to protect its staff and customers. The Coronavirus outbreak has the possibility of affecting the health of all staff and our customers. The actions that we take to protect ourselves will benefit us individually and collectively and we must do all that we can to protect our vulnerable customers.

Taking necessary precautions

There is currently no vaccine for coronavirus but there are things you can do to help stop coronavirus spreading.

Public Health England (PHE) recommends that the following general cold and flu precautions are taken to help prevent people from catching and spreading COVID-19:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away
- wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

Hand hygiene standards to follow

You have been provided with the BHTA 'Get Wise to Hand Hygiene' guide. This is a comprehensive guide to hand washing that is provided our trade body.

How long can the virus survive?

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors, for example:

- what surface the virus is on
- whether it is exposed to sunlight
- differences in temperature and humidity
- exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

Facemasks

Staff are not recommended to wear respiratory masks. They do not provide protection from respiratory viruses. Respiratory masks are only recommended to be worn by staff to reduce the risk of transmitting the infection to other people. Therefore, it may be necessary to wear a mask to protect the customer if the customer is vulnerable due to age and/or an underlying health condition(s). Please ensure you have a visibly clean mask available for this purpose and wear it at the request of the customer (see Customer Contact note below).

Further guidance on the use of face masks may be issued in the future.

For your own safety it is recommended that the best way to reduce any risk of infection is good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than 2 metres) with any potentially infected person.

Hand Shaking

Do not shake hands with anyone.

Internal Hand washing and cleaning policy

In addition to the general advice and precautions it is now required that you take these steps:

- Wash your hands when arriving at work.
- Wash your hands when arriving at the office following site visits
- Sanitise or wash your hands when entering and leaving a customer's house
- Engineers are to use the customer's facilities, or the hand cleaning stations provide in their van to clean their hands prior to sanitising. The use of moisturising cream is also recommended.
- Clean your desk, computer keyboard and telephone at the start of each day
- Clean the steering wheel and door handles of your company vehicle at the end of each day.

Customer Contact

We have highlighted the potential for our staff to pass infections between customers. We also understand that many of our customers are considered to be vulnerable. To manage this risk, we are aiming to contact all our customers the day before we are due to visit.

You will be told:

- **All our staff will sanitise their hands before entering your house**

You will be asked:

- **Do you have any existing conditions that make you concerned that our staff will be visiting?..... and if so, would you like them to wear a mask?**
- **Have you got any flu or cold like symptoms?..... and if so, can you stay in another room whilst the work is being carried out?**

Increased levels of Sick Pay

All staff have had an increase to the amount of Sick Pay they receive. This will encourage staff to stay off work if they are feeling unwell. We understand that this may cause last minute changes to planned work but believe our customers will understand that this in their own interest. We will work as quickly as possible to reschedule any work as necessary.