

Working safely during coronavirus

Guidance on how to stay safe during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is updated regularly. For the latest government guidance:

- in England, see [coronavirus advice on GOV.UK](#)
- in Scotland, see [Scottish Government advice](#)
- in Wales, see [Welsh Government advice](#)

Everyone should:

- work from home if they can
- follow guidance on making the workplace safe
- avoid busy commuting times on public transport where travel is essential, and wear a face covering
- wash their hands regularly

You must not go to work if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

1. Social distancing at work

In Scotland and Wales, everyone should stay 2 metres (6 feet) apart ('social distancing' or 'physical distancing').

In England, everyone should stay 2 metres apart where possible. If it's not possible, people should be at least 1 metre apart and the employer should make extra changes to keep people safe. This might include things like wearing face coverings, working side by side instead of face to face, or using screens or barriers to separate people.

If the workplace is open

Employers have a 'duty of care' for staff, customers and anyone else who visits the workplace. This means they must do all they reasonably can to support their health, safety and wellbeing.

To make the workplace safe, employers must:

- encourage staff to work from home, wherever possible
- have completed a 'risk assessment', and taken reasonable steps to prevent harm in the workplace
- follow the [government guidelines on safer working on GOV.UK](#)

To get advice on working safely during coronavirus from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) you can:

- [find coronavirus advice on the HSE website](#)
- [find information on risk assessments on the HSE website](#)

- [use HSE's online enquiry form](#)
- call 0300 790 6787, Monday to Friday 8:30am to 10pm

Which workplaces can be open

The rules on which workplaces can open are different for England, Scotland and Wales. For the latest government guidance:

- in England, see [businesses and premises that must stay closed on GOV.UK](#)
- in Scotland, see [Scottish Government advice on business closures](#)
- in Wales, see [Welsh Government advice on business closures](#)

If the workplace is closed

While the workplace is closed, employers should talk to staff about whether or not they can work from home.

If working from home is not possible, staff might:

- stay on '[furlough](#)' (temporary leave)
- return from furlough on a part-time basis ('flexible furlough')
- use paid holiday
- use other paid or unpaid leave

Keeping in touch

This can be a difficult time for both employers and staff.

Employers should talk to staff regularly to:

- check on their health and wellbeing
- update staff on any actions they've taken
- talk to anyone working from home about [plans to return to the workplace](#)

Employers should tell staff about any health and wellbeing support available. For example:

- support your workplace provides, for example through your employee assistance programme (EAP) if there's one available
- support that's available outside your workplace, for example [mental health support from Mind](#)

Find out more about [supporting mental health](#).

Working from home

For any employee working from home, the employer should:

- pay the employee as usual
- keep in regular contact
- check on the employee's health and wellbeing

Find out more about:

- [working from home](#)
- [health and safety for homeworking from the Health and Safety Executive](#)