

COVID safe depots guide

Introduction

The Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in significant changes to how we work as a council, with our home and working lives changed significantly and almost overnight.

It's been a real team effort and a great example of teams and individuals from across the council coming together to provide a vital service to the community.

Whether you have continued to work throughout the pandemic in your current role or whether you volunteered to be at the forefront of our response during the crisis, everyone has played their part.

Many of you will already be used to the changes and the new health and safety measures in place across our depots and other buildings, however for those that are returning it will be very different and you will need to adjust to your new working environment.

As all our buildings are different the new measures in place will vary slightly depending on your workplace, and your manager will advise you of the local arrangements in place before your return. There will also be posters and signage (see page 2) displayed throughout the building acting as a constant reminder.

In response to the pandemic, we closed most of our buildings, apart from Underwood Road depot and some of our schools, as this was key to ensuring we were able to continue to deliver essential services to individuals and communities across Renfrewshire.

In making plans to reopen our buildings, priority is being given to services that require access to specific equipment or facilities, and to services where there is a demand from customers that need direct contact or support.

Your health and safety is our number one priority. Since the beginning of the pandemic we have been working closely with the Trade Unions, and all our decisions have and will continue to be informed by the latest Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and government guidance and made in consultation with Trade Unions.

If you do have any concerns about your return, please speak to your line manager, a member of the Health and Safety Team or your union representative and ask about the safety measures that will be in place for your workplace.



Keeping you safe at work

To help keep you safe at work the following measures are in place at Underwood Road and our other depots.

This guidance is likely to change over time, please follow the updated posters and signage advising the measures in place at your depot.



Enhanced cleaning regime



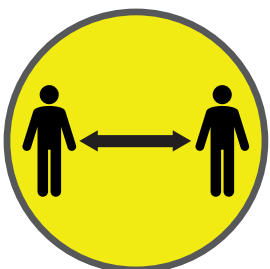
There will be fewer shared facilities and more rules in place about how you use these



Restrictions on the numbers permitted in all Council vehicles



Hand sanitising and other hygiene measures will be very important



Physical distancing measures will be in place, fewer desks will be in operation and meeting rooms will have less capacity



All staff must clean all surfaces, equipment, chairs and tables with the product provided in cleaning caddies before leaving



One-way systems will be in place, with one entrance and a separate exit

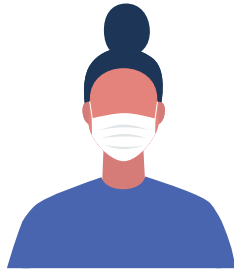


No on-site café facilities. Use vending machines, shop local and/or bring own food and utensils.

FACTS key messaging

To prevent the spread of the virus we should all follow the **FACTS**. It is the sum of our individual actions, our collective endeavour, that is helping to suppress the virus.

Wear a face covering on transport and in shops and crowded spaces



Avoid crowded spaces

Clean hands and surfaces regularly



Two metre distance



Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms



If you start to feel unwell at work

If you have a continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change in taste or smell, self-isolate, let your line manager know. They will take a note of your symptoms and make arrangements to help you to get home safely. If you need to use public transport, please keep away from other people and wear a face covering.

Once you are home, make sure you arrange a test as soon as possible at www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect or, if you can't get online, you can call **0800 028 2816**. If you test positive for the virus, inform your manager immediately and self-isolate for a **minimum of 10 days**, and all members of your household should **isolate for 14 days** from the first day you had symptoms. You can obtain an isolation note at <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note>

Managers must in turn inform HR via the COVID helpline—**0141 618 7323, 0141 618 4031** or **0141 618 6676**, or by emailing HR Systems when all phonelines are busy.

NHS Scotland's **Test & Protect** service is the next step in tackling coronavirus. It works by identifying who has the virus and who they have had close, recent contact with to break chains of infection and stop the spread.

There's lots more information about Test and Protect and what to do if you develop symptoms in our [Working safely during coronavirus guide](#).

Travel to work

If you live nearby, and are able, you should walk or cycle to work wherever possible.

If you are driving to work, free parking is available at our depot car parks although spaces are limited.

If you must use public transport, don't board if you think it's not safe, please try and avoid busier times, maintain physical distancing, and remember that face masks are compulsory on all forms of transport including buses, trains and taxis.

If you have any concerns about travelling to or from work, please speak with your line manager in the first instance.

For the latest guidance on travelling within Scotland, visit the Transport Scotland Travel Guidance during Covid-19 webpage—www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/



Shielding

With the decision by Scottish Government to pause shielding from 1 August, the guidance for people who were asked to stay at home and isolate because they were at a higher risk from Coronavirus is now the same as the rest of the country.

The same applies for staff who were previously identified as being 'At Risk', and your manager will have already been in touch to discuss a safe return to work.

We understand that returning to work may present some concerns and you may have questions about how you will be supported. Please discuss this fully with your manager and be assured that we are following the latest national guidance and that the health and wellbeing of our staff is our main priority.

What next and changes to guidance

The infection rate in Scotland may rise as well as fall in the coming months. Small changes will not affect this advice and Scottish Government will keep their advice under constant review.

If the infection rate in Scotland changes and causes concern, you may be asked to take extra steps to stay safe once again. We will alert you immediately to this if the situation changes and you will receive notification from Scottish Government and the SMS Shielding Service.

If you have not already, you should send your Community Health Index (CHI) number to the SMS Shielding Service—both your CHI number and the mobile number for the SMS Shielding Service are in the letters you've received from Scottish Government.

Annual Leave/Special Leave

Although holiday plans may be restricted due to the coronavirus outbreak and quarantine arrangements, it is still important to take your annual leave. Scheduling time off away from work to relax and recharge is essential for your wellbeing.

You should try to take your annual leave before the end of December 2020, but given the exceptional circumstances, you will be able to carry over unused leave into 2021 and 2022 leave years.

Staff who have purchased additional annual leave under the Buying Additional Annual Leave Scheme 2020 should use this leave first, before their normal annual leave entitlement.

To provide additional flexibility, regardless of workplace, staff can also access a range of Special Leave and other leave provisions that can be agreed with their service/line manager and HR & OD to better balance work and personal commitments where appropriate.

If you have booked any trips abroad, please follow [UK Government foreign travel](#) advice to find out if you need to quarantine on your return and advise your line manager as soon as possible.

You can read more about our [advice and guidance on annual leave and foreign travel](#) on the council website.



Health and Wellbeing

Everyone is adjusting to a new and changing situation and we want to do everything possible to safeguard your health and wellbeing. It's okay not to be okay and to need some support or someone to talk to, especially about balancing your home and work life.

Your line manager should be the first port of call, so if you can share how you are feeling with them, please ask for help and support. Alternatively, you can email Douglas Blair in the Health and Safety team, or contact him on **0141 618 7630** or **07770398143**.

Our priority has been keeping staff safe and well and making sure that everyone who is still at work is following Government guidelines on social distancing and good hand hygiene in the workplace.

Any frontline member of staff who is undertaking home visits such as care at home, child protection, community meals, community alarm response or emergency repairs, and doesn't feel they have the appropriate PPE, should contact their line manager immediately.

We are continually reviewing the latest guidance to ensure we have the right practices in place and that all staff have access to the appropriate PPE kit and guidance.

Our new **Health, Safety and Wellbeing at Work** page on the council website is also updated regularly, this includes:

- Advice and guidance on the use of hand gels, hand washing and drying. While good hand hygiene helps prevent the spread of Coronavirus, one downside to the increased use is the potential to remove natural oils from the skin, which can lead to dermatitis or the risk of infection. Please see our **Hand Care Guidance** for tips on how to look after your hands. Details on when hand sanitiser should be used, and the precautions to take while using it, are available in a separate **Hand Hygiene Guidance** document.
- Information about the council's employee assistance programme. Managers must ensure that, where appropriate, referrals and signposting are still made to Occupational Health and **Time for Talking** Employee Counselling. These services are currently being provided via telephone and video conferencing
- For ideas on exercising, healthy diet, maintaining a social life and staying emotionally centred, visit Scottish Government **Clear Your Head campaign page**. Further information on the package and DSE virtual support is available from the Health and Safety Team, HR & OD.

Useful information and support

Scot Gov guidance

www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/

NHS inform

www.nhsinform.scot/

Health, Safety and Wellbeing at Work:

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/health-safety-wellbeing

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/staff