

COVID-19 Policy March 2022



loudmouth
education & training through theatre

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT - ENGLAND

Introduction

After the imposition of historic restrictions during 2020 and 2021, since 24 February 2022 all COVID-19 restrictions have ended in England – including the legal requirement to self-isolate if testing positive – and the English government has now moved to a policy based on personal responsibility rather than government intervention.

However, as a company we are keen to ensure that we do all we can to limit the spread of COVID-19 and we take our health and safety duties very seriously. We do still have in place some company requirements to reduce the risks posed by COVID-19 in our workplace.

This policy outlines the steps to be taken to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe workplace and the required actions to be taken by employees with symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19.

Ensuring A Safe Workplace

We aim to provide a safe working environment by doing the following:

- We will ensure we follow any appropriate Government guidance on COVID-19.
- We will take COVID-19 into account where appropriate in risk assessments and share the results with the people who work here (and others where necessary).
- We will review these risk assessments at regular intervals and will notify the people who work here of any updates.
- We will continue to monitor rates of COVID-19 in the community.
- We have cleaning, handwashing, ventilation, and hygiene procedures in line with guidance.
- We will ensure good ventilation in the workplace with the opening of windows (if safe) and the opening of all doors (not fire doors – unless they are on automatic closure mechanisms linked to the fire alarm).
- Where job roles can be done effectively from home and home working is identified as a necessary control, for example where an employee has COVID-19, then we will take all reasonable steps to accommodate this.
- We have considered the use of and retained social distancing in certain areas of the workplace and between teams. We retain restrictions on room occupancy identified by signage on entrance doors.
- Encouraging all staff members to have the COVID-19 vaccination and boosters.
- We will request that all staff continue lateral flow testing. We are retaining some regular testing until 1st June 2022 (at which point we will review the policy again). The company will provide tests where required for Actor/Facilitators to test twice weekly on a Sunday and Tuesday evening. Operations staff/Directors are to test once weekly on a Tuesday evening unless they are required in the office for the week where it will be Sunday and Tuesday evening. Please consult Louise Green if you are running low on lateral flow tests.

At venues

Staff will:

- Conduct a venue risk assessment.
- Ensure that they are briefed on the individual venue's COVID-19 restrictions on arrival.
- Ensure that they adhere to any social distancing policy.
- Ensure that they wear masks if required.
- Wash/hand sanitise regularly.
- Ensure rooms are ventilated.

RIDDOR Reporting

We will follow legal requirements to report to the HSE under the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- An accident or incident at work has, or could have, led to the release or escape of COVID-19(SARS-CoV-2). This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- A person at work (a worker) has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 attributed to an occupational exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a case of disease.
- A worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a work-related death due to exposure to a biological agent.

If required, we will complete the relevant RIDDOR report once advice has been sought from Citation and the relevant HSE guidance <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/riddor/index.htm>

Sickness Procedure/Self-Isolation: Symptoms of COVID or a Positive Test

From 1 April 2022 the government still advises people to self-isolate if they have COVID-19, even though this is not a legal requirement.

Should a colleague or a visitor present in the premises with suspected or diagnosed COVID-19, we will ensure they are isolated as quickly as possible, and arrangements are made for them to go home by the safest means possible. Cleaning will then be undertaken in any areas where the individual may have been.

The symptoms of Coronavirus are:

- A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- Anosmia – a loss of, or a change in, the sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- feeling tired or exhausted
- an aching body
- a headache
- a sore throat
- a blocked or runny nose
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- feeling sick or being sick

The symptoms are very similar to symptoms of other illnesses, such as colds and flu.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should take a Lateral Flow Device Test, which will be provided by the Company after 1 April 2022, when the government will end free asymptomatic and symptomatic testing for the general public.

If a staff member exhibits symptoms/tests positive, they must:

Telephone and consult their line manager to explain and follow the company's sickness notification policy.

If an employee has had a positive LFD test, they should self-isolate for at least 5 days and until they have a negative Lateral Flow Device test. After 10 days they can return to the workplace, regardless of whether their tests are still showing a positive LFD test. Working from home may be possible if work is available.

Employees who display symptoms should take advice from the [NHS 111 Online \(or NHS 111 phonenumber\)](#) if required. The site will advise on the precautions to be taken and whether medical advice should be sought.

Employees should not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital without instruction from NHS 111 Online (or NHS 111 phonenumber).

If you are concerned about your symptoms, seek medical advice.

If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.

These requirements are regardless of whether you have had a COVID-19 vaccine.

Notification of a household case

We require employees to confirm to their line manager as soon as possible any positive cases within their household.

We will then assess the situation and decide what steps to take.

Is important that all employees follow the guidance set out in this document and seek advice from their manager and NHS 111 Online where necessary. Following the correct procedures is important to ensure the safety of all persons in our workplace by preventing the spread of COVID-19. Failure to comply may put others in the workplace at risk (and may, following an investigation, result in disciplinary action).

Clinically Vulnerable Employees & Workers In Higher Risk Groups

We have a duty to ensure that all employees are safe in work and will take particular care to ensure the safety of those who may have been previously classed as 'Clinically Vulnerable.' To ensure we can protect them we request that all employees inform us if they believe they may be clinically vulnerable [or if they live with someone who is classed as clinically vulnerable].

We will consult with any such employee to ensure that they are aware of the controls in place to protect them and will complete an individual risk assessment where required in agreement with the employee.

Pregnant workers

During the outbreak, pregnant workers have previously had to abide by controls similar to the vulnerable category above. We will ensure an expectant mother's risk assessment has been completed for all pregnant employees.