

# Advice for Employers

## Introduction

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an infectious disease that can affect your lungs and airways. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the COVID-19 virus and how it spreads.

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) understands that local business owners are working to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their staff, customers and all stakeholders who come into their premises are not exposed to the virus and that controls are in place to control the spread of it.

To assist local businesses, LCCC have developed this guidance to further help businesses prevent the spread and also support those businesses with confirmed Covid-19 cases involving staff and/or customers.

Below you will find further information including handy links with information specific to your sector and Council contact information if you require further guidance and assistance.

## Keeping up to date and informed

### Government and public health advice

The situation remains fast-moving and all businesses must keep on top of the latest government guidance and any official announcements. Please see below for relevant contacts and further links.

### Continue to use the basic and effective hygiene protection measure

- Importance of hand washing and hand sanitising.
- Remind staff to avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze and put used tissues into a sealed bin before washing your hands.
- Ensure staff are using face covers if they cannot maintain a 2m distance between other staff or customers.

### Track and trace app

The track and trace app is available on both Android and iOS phones and is entirely voluntary. Encourage all staff to have the StopCOVID NI track & trace app installed.

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/stopcovid-ni-contact-tracing-app](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/stopcovid-ni-contact-tracing-app)

**StopCOVID NI**  
USE THE APP. SAVE LIVES.



## **An employee and/or customer has symptoms, what should I do now?**

When someone first develops symptoms they must get tested. If the test is positive, they will be encouraged by the Public Health Agency to alert the people that they have had close contact within the 48 hours before symptom onset. If any of those contacts are co-workers, the person who has developed symptoms will be advised to contact their employer to alert those co-workers.

Close contacts at this stage do not need to self-isolate unless requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace. If you have been informed that you are a contact, the medical advice is clear: you must immediately self-isolate at home for 14 days from the date of your last contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

If a cluster (2 or more) of cases have been identified with a link to your business,

### **Communication**

- You should contact Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Environmental Health Service at [EHealth@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:EHealth@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk) for advice.
- All staff must be notified by you that there has been a positive case identified who has been present on the premise.
- Consider sending out a text message alert or email to staff.
- If you wish to communicate directly to staff, ensure that the meeting area can accommodate staff to ensure social distancing requirements.
- Staff must be reminded that if they have symptoms of COVID-19 however mild, they must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when their symptoms started. Staff members should arrange to have a COVID test to see if they have COVID-19.
- To pre-empt negative publicity you should consider how you will manage your businesses PR in the event of a confirmed case/cases.

### **Cleaning & Disinfection**

- Public areas where a symptomatic person has passed through and spent minimal time but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids, such as corridors, can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.
- All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with should be cleaned and disinfected, including all potentially contaminated and frequently touched areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab rails in corridors and stairwells.
- Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings – think one site, one wipe, in one direction.

you will be contacted by the Public Health Agency to inform you of this and provide advice. The Public Health Agency will also liaise with the Environmental Health Service as the Council is an Enforcing Body of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 and will provide the necessary advice.

If a single or multiple cases of coronavirus have been notified to you there is NO legal obligation for your business to close, however you need to consider the following actions. Where multiple cases are identified the Environmental Health Service in conjunction with the PHA will offer more detailed advice. However, your business may be asked to voluntarily close for a period of time.

- Use one of the options below:
  - o A combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine (ppm av.cl.) application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants
  - o A household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

Avoid mixing cleaning products together as this can create toxic fumes. Avoid creating splashes, spray when cleaning and ensure the appropriate PPE is worn.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be double bagged and left for at least 72 hours before being placed in the normal waste.

When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.

### **Maintaining Customer Details**

By maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors, and sharing these, if requested, with the Contact Tracing Service, you can help identify people who may have been exposed to the virus. Containing outbreaks early is crucial to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

## **Is your business prepared?**

### **Managing staff health, pay, leave and absence**

Find answers to common employer questions on topics including, protecting the health and safety of staff, as well as what to do if an employee has to self-isolate and obligations around leave and sick pay. [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/covid-19-managing-staff-health-pay-leave-and-absence](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/covid-19-managing-staff-health-pay-leave-and-absence)

### **How business continuity plans can help?**

If you do not have a business continuity plan in place or have not reviewed it in a while, now is the time to do so. By preparing a business continuity plan, you will be able to confidently assess the level of risk and vulnerability of your business and put into place an effective risk and contingency system for the business. This will help you maintain - or quickly resume - critical business functions following an incident (such as a local outbreak or further tightening of Covid-19 restrictions).

A business continuity plan will, in the event of a crisis:

- identify all business processes and functions
- prioritise those that are critical to your business operations
- evaluate financial impact - help to stabilise cash flow
- select recovery solutions
- determine if any interdependencies exist - with IT systems
- evaluate operational impacts of disruption - people and process

## **How can we help?**

LCCC Economic Development can help you to craft your business continuity plan. By joining the free Mentor Growth Programme, we can assign a mentor to take you through each step, and ensure you are on the best possible footing when dealing with an outbreak of the covid-19 which would impact the service or product you provide.



**Mentor Growth Programme**

The Mentor Growth Programme can also help tackle the effects of COVID-19 by providing a mentor focusing on the following areas:

- Finance support
- HR support
- Diversification
- Strategic business
- Crisis PR

To take part in this programme please email:  
[joanne.king@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.king@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk)

## **Government Support**

The Government has announced a package of measures to support businesses during the pandemic. Please see this up to date guide which outlines all current government schemes, grants and support funds.

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Coronavirus\\_Business\\_Support\\_Schemes\\_21\\_August\\_2020.pdf](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Coronavirus_Business_Support_Schemes_21_August_2020.pdf)

## **Business Support Helplines**

### **Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Business Support Helpline**

Tel: 07715 269688 - lines open Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm

Information also available on: [www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/business](http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/business)

### **Tourism NI COVID-19 Helpline**

Tel: 02895925313 - lines open Mon-Fri: 9am-5pm

Information also available: [covid19.tourismni.com](http://covid19.tourismni.com)

### **HMRC COVID-19 Helpline**

Tel: 0800 024 1222 - lines open Mon-Fri: 8am-4pm

Information also available: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Useful Links

### **GOV.UK's business continuity guidance -**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-continuity-planning](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-continuity-planning)

### **Download business continuity management toolkit -**

[assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/137994/Business\\_Continuity\\_Management\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137994/Business_Continuity_Management_Toolkit.pdf)

## Further Reading

### **Principles of cleaning after an individual with symptoms of, or confirmed COVID-19, the case has left the setting or area -**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings#left-area](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings#left-area)

### **Maintaining records to help support Test, Trace and Protect -**

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Guidance\\_for\\_the\\_NI\\_hospitality\\_industry\\_on\\_maintaining\\_records\\_of\\_staff\\_customers\\_and\\_visitors.pdf](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Guidance_for_the_NI_hospitality_industry_on_maintaining_records_of_staff_customers_and_visitors.pdf)

### **Industry Specific Guidance -**

[nifda.co.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2020/03/NIFDA-GoodManufacturing-Practice-Covid-19.pdf](http://nifda.co.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2020/03/NIFDA-GoodManufacturing-Practice-Covid-19.pdf)

[www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sectorguidance](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sectorguidance)

[brc.org.uk/media/674414/brc-warehouseand-distribution-implementation-practices-v3.pdf](http://brc.org.uk/media/674414/brc-warehouseand-distribution-implementation-practices-v3.pdf)

### **Up to date Information from NI Government -**

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-work-and-business](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-work-and-business)

### **A practical guide to making workplaces safer -**

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Covid-19-Working-Through-This-Together.pdf](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/Covid-19-Working-Through-This-Together.pdf)

### **NI Business Information**

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk)

### **Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council**

[www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/business/business-and-employee-advice-during-covid-19](http://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/business/business-and-employee-advice-during-covid-19)