

Guidance for Offices and Contact Centres

This Prevention Card has been developed by the Public Health team at Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to help people who work in or run offices or contact centres during COVID-19.

It is designed to supplement Government Guidance to help you to operate your business safely and to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

Gov.uk Guidance (Click below)

- [Working safely during coronavirus](#)
- [Offices and contact centres](#)
- [Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting](#)
- [General guidance for employees during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [NHS test and trace: workplace guidance](#)
- [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person](#)

General guidelines to prevent spread of COVID-19

There are important actions that everyone should always take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is important that you follow the guidance to minimise the risk to you, your staff, your community and your business.

There are a range of guides to support you to operate safely. Refer to [Working safely during coronavirus guidance](#) or search the title on GOV.UK. [Please also see the five steps to working safely](#). You must carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment for your organisation.

The key messages on this card are specifically in relation to preventing an outbreak and should not replace health and safety and infection steps you already take or have implemented as a result of following the working safely guidance.

Key Messages

Follow the gov.uk guidance:

This will reduce transmission, protect your business and customers and help avoid a local lockdown.

Communicate these key messages to staff and visitors at every opportunity:

Hand washing: Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, and when you can't, use alcohol gel in line with government guidance.

Good respiratory hygiene: Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.

Social distance: Always aim for 2 metres, however where this is not possible 1 metre plus additional precautions. Examples of additional precautions include 'where you can't mitigate – ventilate' e.g. windows open (do not recirculate air), avoid talking face-to-face, avoid talking loudly or singing, wear a face covering if you can.

Recognising symptoms (any one of the below)

- 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).
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

If staff/visitors have any of these **symptoms: stay at home, isolate and test.**

If staff/visitors **live with someone with symptoms of COVID-19: stay at home, isolate and follow government guidance,** which can be found [here](#).

If staff/visitors **are contacts of someone with symptoms of COVID-19: stay at home, isolate and follow government guidance,** which can be found [here](#).

Testing is most effective within 3 days of developing symptoms. **Only those with symptoms should be tested.**

Adapt: Consider the use of rotas to minimise the number of people in the office at any one time.

Support contact tracing: Maintain a record of staff/visitors.

Reporting Cases

Advice on how to respond to an outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) to individuals that own, manage or are responsible for a specific business or organisation within the community can be found [here](#).

If you are notified of a positive case related to your place of work contact Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council via Covidoutbreak@stockton.gov.uk, who will provide further advice and guidance.

Useful Resources

Public Health England have produced a range of resources to help you communicate these important messages. You will still need specific communications for your own business, but you may find these helpful. You are responsible for communicating these messages with your staff and customers.

[Symptoms and how to get tested](#)

[Feeling unwell get tested](#)

[Social media resources for employers](#)

[Public Health England Best Practice Handwash poster](#)

[Public Health England Best Practice Hand Rub poster](#)

[COVID-19 risk assessment poster](#)

[Every Mind Matters posters \(sign up required\)](#)

Local Support

If you need any further advice or assistance, please email:

- Covidoutbreak@stockton.gov.uk (01642 528474)

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