

## I'm worried about coronavirus. Where can I read more?

Start with [Public Health England](#) or the [government Coronavirus site](#). Their websites give excellent, up-to-date information and advice. They state you must:

Stay at home:

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or essential work
- Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- You can exercise outdoors once per day as long as you don't mix with anyone other than your immediate household
- The government are also:
- Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
- Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public outside of your immediate household

Everyone must comply with these new measures.

The Government will therefore be ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings where people do not comply.

They will initially last for the three weeks from 23 March, at which point the Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Public Health England also provide additional information and advice which includes the following:

- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Cough and sneeze into tissues or the crook of your elbow.
- Put tissues in the bin immediately after use.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use hand sanitiser.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Disinfect the surfaces and objects people use the most.

And there's more information and advice on our [intranet page](#). It describes how we're adapting the way we work. (It can even tell you what to say to customers.)

## Is my job essential work?

### **National travel**

With effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the government has advised all residents of the UK that they should stay inside and only go outside for food, health reasons or essential work.

If you are able to work from home, you must do so. Hold meetings virtually or over skype/MS teams where possible.

If you can't work from home your manager will confirm to you if your job is essential work and therefore if you would still need to come into work (where the work can absolutely not

be done from home). Where that's the case further advice will be provided on the steps that would need to be taken to keep you safe.

Otherwise, please don't travel anywhere that isn't in line with the government advice.

Got a question about this advice? Talk to your line manager.

### **International travel**

We aren't allowing international travel until further notice. This restriction will definitely be in place until the end of April. And we'll review the situation again then.

If your journey's essential, you should get the approval of our Chief Medical Officer and your CFU CEO.

You should also pay attention to travel restrictions between countries. Up-to-date guidance can be found [here](#).

### **Outside the UK**

- There will be extra restrictions in place for some of our people working outside of the UK. Please check local government and business advice.

### **People who work for a third party**

- If you're working in one of our sites, but are employed by a third-party business, please follow the advice issued by your company.

## **How can I update my emergency contact details?**

It's good practice to update your emergency contact details when things change. Here's how to do it:

- If you're a part of BT, follow the instructions on this [intranet page](#).
- If you're a part of EE, do it through [SAP Employee Self Service](#). You'll find the relevant page under **Personal Information** and then **Addresses**. (Can't access the system? Email [this form](mailto:hr.administration@ee.co.uk) to [hr.administration@ee.co.uk](mailto:hr.administration@ee.co.uk) or call [0797 310 292](tel:0797310292).)
- If you're a part of Plusnet, go to the CIPHR system to make the change.

## **How should I report an absence due to coronavirus?**

If you're reporting an absence case, you should record it in the usual way (under the category of 'cold/flu/respiratory'). Additionally,

We also need all managers to complete [this Formwise](#) for any direct reports who have been off work or are currently absent with:

- Covid-19 diagnosed
- Covid-19 symptoms
- social distancing or self-isolating
- or unable to work due to school closure and child care.

Please do this for anyone who has already taken absence since 1 March. From today, you can stop using the CARM system to report coronavirus related absence.

If you're self-isolating, tell your manager as soon as possible. Say whether you plan on isolating yourself for 7 or 14 days (depending on whether you live on your own or with

others as per government guidelines). BT owes you a legal duty of care for your health and safety and given you'll be self-isolating, your manager will want to be aware to enable him/her to take the best possible care of you. The information you share may be captured and used to allow BT to operate our business to maintain services and to forward plan availability of resource and it will be kept for no longer than is necessary. NHS 111 can provide you with a self-isolation note by going [here](#). You'll need to provide a copy to your manager.



How to record  
COVID 19 absences

## What's our advice to agency workers?

We expect agency workers to follow the general guidance surrounding coronavirus. They should report any sickness absence to the agency they work for. And if they encounter issues with absence or sick pay, they should take it up with their employer.

## What should vulnerable people do, including people with underlying medical conditions or a compromised immune system? This is not the extremely vulnerable groups of people who are being advised to shield for 12 weeks.

As the government says, people must not leave the house now unless its for food, health reasons or essential work. Vulnerable people should take particular care and take measures to distance themselves from others.

If you can, you must work from home, and for example those in the below groups should take particular care:

have a compromised immune system  
are 70 years old or older  
get flu jabs on medical grounds  
are pregnant.

You can learn about other groups who may be at risk [here](#).

If you fall into one of these categories, speak to your manager as soon as possible. They will discuss with you and look to agree appropriate adjustments that can be put in place to support you.

These may include:

- working quieter shifts (where your role is essential and you have not been advised to shield)
- temporarily working from home
- taking annual leave or special paid leave
- working in an unused training room that's been deep cleaned (where your role is essential and you have not been advised to shield).

If you're not able to work from home, in exceptional circumstances, paid special leave may be approved, but this shouldn't be the norm.

## I care for someone who's vulnerable. What should I do?

While the rest of the household are not required to adopt the protective shielding measures for themselves, we would expect them to do what they can to support you in shielding and to stringently follow the latest measures and [guidance on social distancing](#).

In addition to following the government guidance you might look at:

- working quieter shifts (where your role is essential and you have not been advised to shield)
- temporarily working from home
- taking annual leave or special paid leave
- working in an unused training room that's been deep cleaned (where your role is essential and you have not been advised to shield).

## Can I apply for flexible working? (UK only)

If you're thinking about changing your work pattern, speak to your manager. They'll help you explore your options. Read about applying for flexible working on our [policy page](#). If you're applying because of a school closure, please see the relevant FAQ.

## Someone I manage is returning to work. What do I need to do?

If they've been on sick leave, you should follow our 'return to work process'. This means talking about their health to make sure they are in a position to return to work, any support or adjustments for consideration and they're ready to re-enter the workplace.

You should have a similar discussion with people who had symptoms of coronavirus recently and are about to end a period of self-isolation. (The sections of the 'return to work process' dealing with symptoms and fitness still apply.)

If they're emerging from self-isolation, but didn't have symptoms, you don't have to go through a formal process. However, as a caring manager, you should still have a conversation with them to check how they are. You can find more information about the 'return to work process' on our [attendance pages](#).

## Am I a key worker?

In these extraordinary times, the country's relying on key workers. Many of the people who work in this company are included in this group.

You're considered a key worker if you're involved in retail, IT, data infrastructure, network operations, field engineering, handling calls in our contact centres or supporting the 999 and 111 critical services.

If you qualify, the head of your team or your director will brief you.

If you haven't been labelled a key worker, but think you should qualify, speak to your manager.

### I've been identified as a key worker. What does this mean for me?

Your manager will brief you and your colleagues about what this means for you, specifically. But generally, it means you can keep sending your children to school or nursery. To find out which local school or nurseries are staying open for the children of key workers, visit the government's website or speak to your usual school or nursery.

### I'm a key worker. Will I get proof?

Yes, we'll provide you with proof. Your manager will explain how this works as part of your brief.

### I've been identified as a key worker. Do I have to send my child to school or nursery?

We're following government guidance. This includes advising people to, where possible, keep their children at home while schools and nurseries are closed.

Now, we know this might not be practical if you're a key worker (someone the country is relying on).

Thankfully, as a key worker, you can keep sending your children to school or nursery. If you're hesitant to do this, we understand. But the facts are reassuring:

- Coronavirus appears to affect children less severely than older people. It's even less likely to be transmitted from a child to an adult than between two adults.
- Schools are taking substantial action to control hygiene. And they are only going to become safer as the majority of students are sent home.
- Society at large is adopting behaviours that reduce the risk of transmission. The vast majority of people understand the need for self-isolation and social distancing.

Taken together, these facts suggest you shouldn't worry unduly about sending your children to school or nursery.

You could still choose not to, of course. If that's your choice, we'll let you request time off work, so you can stay at home with your children. But this would count as unpaid leave.

### Can my child still attend school or nursery if only one parent is a key worker?

Yes. Only one parent needs to have been identified as a key worker.

If a school or nursery says otherwise, refer them to the government website. It will set them straight.

### Someone I manage thinks they're a key worker, but they haven't been identified as such. What should I do?

Share their rationale with your manager or director. These leaders can advise you on the matter.

### I'm leaving the company and need to return my equipment, but the office is closed. What should I do?

Your manager can arrange for your equipment to be collected by raising a disposal order (this site will give them the option of picking it up from a home address).

### Should I still be recruiting?

Yes. Where possible, interview candidates using video calls, rather than meeting in person. And comply with travel restrictions. Otherwise, carry on with the recruitment process.

### Someone new is joining my team. How can I give them their equipment, if they can't come into an office?

You can arrange for your new starter's kit to be delivered to their home address. Just follow the instructions on the front page of Order Gateway.

### Someone new is joining my team, but we aren't in an office right now. What should I do?

You shouldn't suggest postponing their start date, as this could be seen as acting against their right to work. (You are allowed to accommodate them, if they ask to push the date back, however.)

It might feel strange, but stick with their original start date. Do everything you can to welcome them into the team; and stay in regular contact as they find their feet.

### I live with someone who has been contacted by the NHS and is considered extremely vulnerable. What should I do?

While the rest of the household are not required to adopt these protective shielding measures for themselves, we would expect them to do what they can to support people who are shielding and to stringently follow [guidance on social distancing](#). Where possible, you should work from home but if not, you should make sure that you continue to follow the [government advice](#).

- wash your hands more often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser. Do this after you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, and after you eat or handle food
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who have symptoms
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

## The government has announced that they will be going in to lockdown for the whole of the UK. I work in a retail store, what do I need to do?

With effect from 24th March 2020, our retail stores will close for a minimum of 3 weeks, on the advice on the UK government. Your manager will be in contact to explain what this means specifically for you.

## The government has announced that they will be going into lockdown for the whole of the UK. I work in a contact centre, what do I need to do?

There is no change to key worker status for contact centre colleagues. Keeping our customers connected has never been more important, so you should continue to attend work as normal, while following all other restrictions outside of work as outlined by the government.

## Can I still access support services such as the EAP, MSD and Mental Health Services?

Yes, all of the support services normally offered to our employees are there for you to access, however, to comply with Public Health England's advice they are providing support remotely via telephone and/or video calls.

## The government have said that I now need to have a 2m separation from other people as part of the self-distancing measures but I currently car share to work. What should I do?

As the government have told us all to keep 2m separation in line with their self-distancing measures, in order to protect all colleagues, we are advising that you should no longer be car sharing to work (unless you also live in the same household).

In these circumstances, we are asking colleagues to consider alternative transport options. If this includes the use of public transport please ensure you follow government guidelines on self distancing.

If you are chose not to use public transport or find an alternative way into work, we'll let you request time off work but this would count as unpaid leave.

## What happens if I don't follow the social distancing guidelines while at work?

We have provided guidance to everyone on the social distancing measures that the government has introduced. As a result, we expect everyone to follow these guidelines while at work. If anyone chooses not to follow these guidelines, they may subject to the disciplinary procedure.

## I'm working from home; will I need additional home insurance?

All company provided property and equipment will be covered by BTs existing insurance policy. If you are working from home on a temporary basis, this shouldn't impact your own home insurance.

## I've seen that I might be able to claim an allowance while I'm working from home. How do I do this?

We're aware that Money Saving Expert has put out some guidance around this however, we are waiting for the details to be provided from HMRC. Once we have these available, we will provide a further update?