Protect your workforce

An important message from Jim McManus, director of Public Health, Hertfordshire

Dear colleague

Thank you for everything you are doing to help keep Hertfordshire safe.

We're not through this yet though, so I am writing to you to ask that you play your part by putting the right controls in place to protect your workforce, customers and visitors from COVID-19.

To date, there has been a lower rate of spread of COVID-19 infection in Hertfordshire than in many other areas. This is really good news.

However, we cannot be complacent. The challenge to prevent the spread of the virus is now more important than ever. We know workplaces can be the source of outbreaks and we cannot afford to throw away the gains we have made locally.

I would, at all costs, like to avoid a situation where a Hertfordshire business is forced to close due to a significant outbreak, so I urge you to follow all relevant government guidance to ensure that your workplace is as safe as it can be and is fully prepared to respond appropriately to any case of COVID-19 within the workforce.

I would especially ask you to be a responsible employer when dealing with employees who might be unwell. It is essential that they are able to self-isolate and that they contact the NHS Test and Trace service to book a test. I know this may present operational issues for some businesses, but it is very important that everyone complies. We have attached a poster that you can display if you wish to explain to people why they may be asked to provide contact details.

Please also find overleaf a flowchart that explains what to do if you have a suspected or confirmed case in your business**. It is vital that you follow this guidance**. We are relying on you to help us protect our communities.

We're aware that some businesses may be concerned about collecting data and reporting cases due to reputational issues if this leads to connection with an outbreak. I would like to reassure you that by following the guidance, it will increase the likelihood of your business remaining open, reflect positively on you as a responsible employer, contribute to national efforts to fight this virus and ultimately save lives. Any failure to comply could delay a Public

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Health England response and negatively impact your business as well as local and national efforts to prevent outbreaks.

Please also encourage your staff and customers to continue to carry out the simple actions that can prevent the spread of COVID-19. These are:

1. Wash their hands as often as possible, for 20 seconds with warm water and soap or use a hand sanitiser

2. Keep their distance from others, particularly in indoor spaces (2m if possible or 1m plus other measures such as wearing a face covering)

3. Wear a face covering in the places they are required to and when it is difficult to stay socially distanced

4. If they show symptoms, self-isolate and book a test immediately at www.gov.uk/coronavirus or telephone 119

Posters, leaflets and social media posts promoting these messages are available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/playyourparttoolkit.

Guidance, checklists and templates for Hertfordshire businesses to ensure they are 'Covid Secure' can be found here: Covid19 Trading Safely Toolkit

If you need further guidance on this information or trading safely in your workplace, including your health and safety risk assessment, please contact your Environmental Health team at your local council (available on your council's website).

Thank you for helping everyone to stay safe in Hertfordshire

Jim McManus
Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council

Further support:

NHS Test and Trace service and other government information
Hertfordshire County Council information
Practical suggestions and signage to keep your business safe
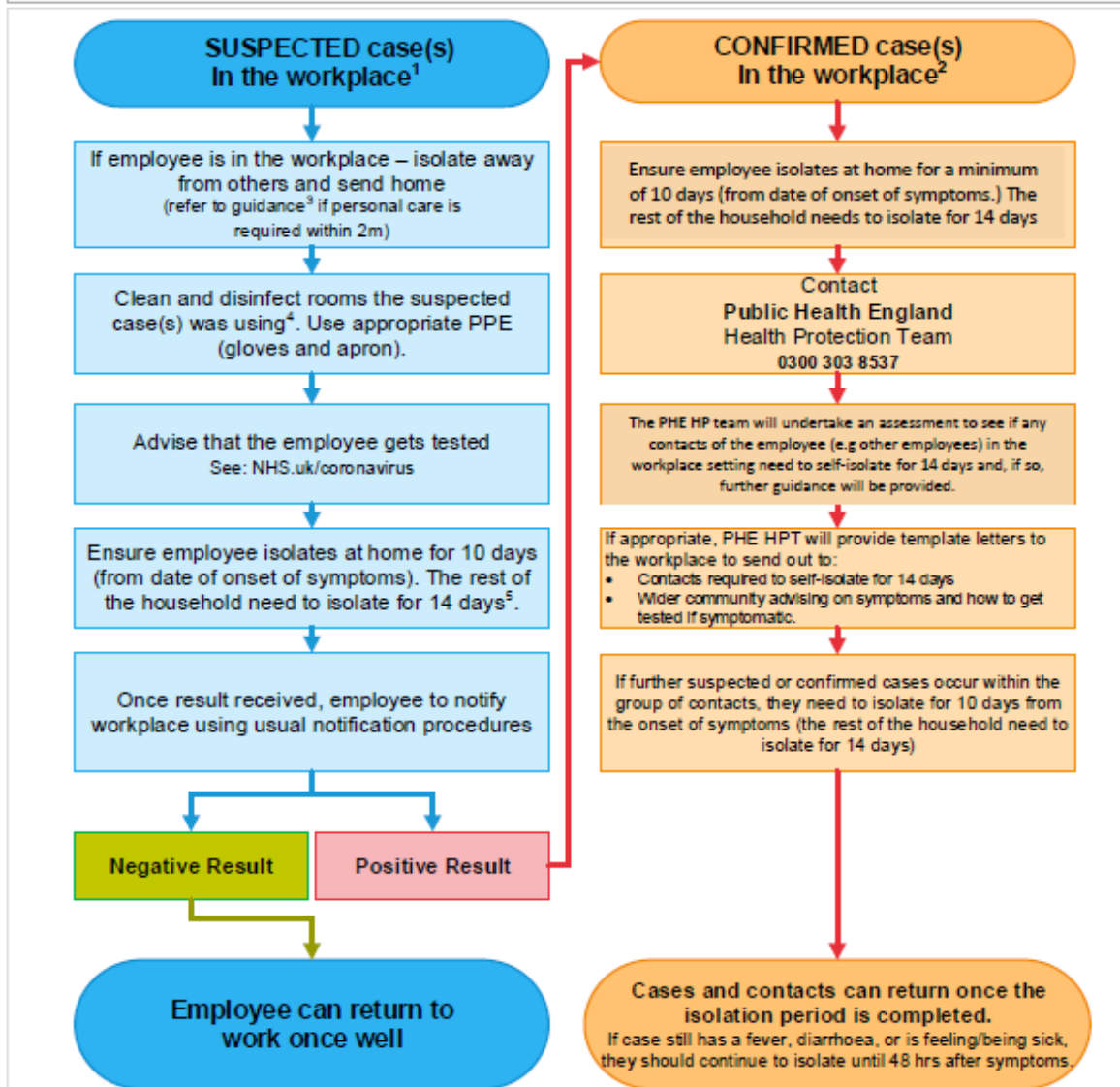NHS Test and trace workplace guidelines
Govt guidance on maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors

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Guidance for management of COVID-19 in Hertfordshire

Workplace Settings

Hertfordshire

- To notify a case(s) please call **the Public Health England Health Protection Team (PHE HPT)** on **0300 303 8537**. If your concern is not urgent you can also email EoE.CRC@phe.gov.uk.
- General queries or concerns should be directed to your **local district or borough council Environmental Health Team**. Contact details for these can be found at GOV.uk/find-local-council.
- COVID-19 workplace guidance can be accessed here.

SUSPECTED case(s) In the workplace[1]

If employee is in the workplace – isolate away from others and send home
(refer to guidance[3] if personal care is required within 2m)

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Clean and disinfect rooms the suspected case(s) was using[4]. Use appropriate PPE (gloves and apron).

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Advise that the employee gets tested
See: NHS.uk/coronavirus

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Ensure employee isolates at home for 10 days (from date of onset of symptoms). The rest of the household need to isolate for 14 days[5].

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Once result received, employee to notify workplace using usual notification procedures

Negative Result | **Positive Result**

Employee can return to work once well

CONFIRMED case(s) In the workplace[2]

Ensure employee isolates at home for a minimum of 10 days (from date of onset of symptoms.) The rest of the household needs to isolate for 14 days

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Contact
**Public Health England
Health Protection Team
0300 303 8537**

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The PHE HP team will undertake an assessment to see if any contacts of the employee (e.g other employees) in the workplace setting need to self-isolate for 14 days and, if so, further guidance will be provided.

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If appropriate, PHE HPT will provide template letters to the workplace to send out to:
- Contacts required to self-isolate for 14 days
- Wider community advising on symptoms and how to get tested if symptomatic.

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If further suspected or confirmed cases occur within the group of contacts, they need to isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms (the rest of the household need to isolate for 14 days)

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Cases and contacts can return once the isolation period is completed.
If case still has a fever, diarrhoea, or is feeling/being sick, they should continue to isolate until 48 hrs after symptoms.

1: Suspected case: anyone with a new continuous cough and/or high temperature and/or loss, or change, in sense of taste or smell
2: Confirmed case: a positive test result
3: Guidance for first responders & PPE guidance for healthcare settings
4: Cleaning in non-healthcare settings
5: Stay at home guidance

Contact details for your district or borough council can be found at
GOV.uk/find-local-council

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