

**FAQs for Employees – Relating to Dealing with the Coronavirus Situation - @ 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**(These FAQs will continue to be updated as more information is made available.)**

Theme	Ref	Question	Answer
<b>Working from home</b>	1.	<b>Should I be working from home?</b>	<p>As of 24<sup>th</sup> March, you should work from home if you able to do so. This will not be possible for everyone as many of you deliver essential services to enable the Council to run effectively, or due to the nature of your work. Some staff working in some essential services will be able to work from home.</p> <p>Please discuss with your manager if you are uncertain.</p>
<b>Absence from work</b>	2.	<p><b>If I am sick or unfit for work should I remain at home, rather than come into the workplace?</b></p> <p><b>If I have a new cough, cold or flu like symptoms what should I do?</b></p>	<p>If you are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus you <b>MUST</b> phone your manager and <b>NOT</b> turn up to work if you had been due to so do and follow normal absence reporting procedure.</p> <p>Stay at home if you have either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul> <p>In all circumstances, your Manager will keep in touch to support you.</p> <p>You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying</p>

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			<p>at home.</p> <p>How long to stay at home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if you have symptoms, stay at home for 7 days</li> <li>• if you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day of your first symptoms</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the isolation period, please follow the additional guidance about keeping all journeys to essential ones.</p>
	3.	<b>When do I need to self-isolate?</b>	The guidance from the NHS regarding Coronavirus and self-isolation is changing all the time. Guidance can be found on the <a href="#">NHS website</a> but if in doubt call NHS direct 111. Then please contact your Manager.
	4.	<b>What should I do about obtaining advice about time off for self- isolation?</b>	<p><b>If you have been advised to self – isolate, or fall within one of the vulnerable groups, please inform your manager immediately.</b></p> <p>If you are fit for work but you are instructed, to self-isolate, your absence should not be recorded as sickness absence. You should continue to work at home if this is possible in your role but you need to inform your manager of your self isolation period. You do not need a fit note for a period of self-isolation.</p>
	5.	<b>What about employees who are pregnant?</b>	Pregnant employees fall into one of the vulnerable groups, and so should work from home if this is possible in your role. Please discuss with your line manager to ensure that you can be supported appropriately.

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			Pregnant employees are requested to notify their Manager as early as possible, so that the health and safety risk assessment can be undertaken.
	6.	<b>If I contracted Coronavirus, would this count towards my sickness record?</b>	Given the exceptional circumstances, the Council will be suspending the use of sickness absence triggers during this period for Coronavirus related sickness.
	7.	<b>Will we still move people on to half pay and no pay in line with sick pay scheme?</b>	The sick pay arrangements as outlined in your terms and conditions will continue to apply, therefore your sickness absence may result in a reduction in pay if you exceed your entitlement to full or half pay. Manager discretion would apply, especially for those with long term high risk conditions.
<b>Child Care</b>	8.	<b>What are employees entitled to, where they have child care responsibilities and alternative arrangements cannot be put in place as provisions are now closed or carers fall into the vulnerable categories due to the current situation?</b>	<p>Those employees not defined as priority workers and who have child care responsibilities where possible, should arrange alternative childcare without impacting on their job. If it is at all possible for children to be at home then they should be.</p> <p>Employees will be expected to continue to be available for work as much as they possibly can, but will not be able to apply for discretionary or special leave.</p> <p>We recognise that this deviates from policy and appreciate that we are operating in extreme and unprecedented times, however, instead we will be asking that managers and employees consider other flexible options to ensure people can continue to work, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexible working, for example, could you work two</li> </ul>

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			<p>long 10 hour shifts at the weekend, work early mornings and evenings where someone can care for your child?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you could be redeployed to a priority worker role which would enable your child to access school</li> </ul> <p>We would encourage employees to discuss their individual circumstances with their line manager to identify possible solutions to enable individuals to continue working.</p> <p>A briefing was released through Int Comms 23/03/2020 with this information</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>LCC coronavirus (COVID-19) update 23</p> </div>
<p><b>Health and well being</b></p>	<p>9.</p>	<p><b>I am concerned and anxious about the situation, what support is available?</b></p>	<p>We acknowledge that some employees may be worried about catching the virus, while others will have concerns about their family or friends. We would encourage individuals to discuss any concerns with their manager/colleagues and to seek any further support they may feel is appropriate.</p> <p>Further support is available through the employee assistance programme and other well-being resources which includes the following:-</p> <p>Sodexo work place assistance service 24/7.</p>

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			<p>The number to call is 0808 168 2143</p> <p>or</p> <p>access via the web <a href="http://www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk">www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk</a> and entering:  Username: LCC  Password: employee</p> <p>The Employee Support and Counselling Service are offering telephone appointments only</p> <p>Please email  <a href="mailto:emp.supportandcounselling@lincolnshire.gov.uk">emp.supportandcounselling@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Some useful information has been published on how to protect your mental health that may be useful for employees :</p> <p><a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/">https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2">https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak">https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak</a></p>
	10.	<b>If it is deemed that I require an appointment with Occupational Health will I be able to get an</b>	Occupational Health will be conducting appointments via telephone only at this time.

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		appointment ?	
Relief workers	11.	<b>I am a relief worker. What will I be entitled to if I am unable to continue to work due to sickness?</b>	<p>As a relief worker there is no entitlement to occupational sick pay. However, you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay if you have sufficient qualifying pay in the Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) qualifying period (namely the 8 weeks prior to the start of the current sickness absence period).</p> <p>To qualify for SSP, an employee must have average weekly earnings (AWE) at or above the lower earnings limit (LEL) - £118 a week in the 2019-20 tax year - regardless of whether they are required to pay National Insurance contributions.</p> <p>These calculations will be undertaken by the Payroll Team retrospectively when looking at data of those individuals recorded as absent due to sickness.</p>
	12.	<b>As a relief employee, if I am unable to undertake work due to illness/ isolation measures in accordance with Covid-19 guidance what does that mean for me?</b>	<p>If a relief worker was due to be at work (where work has been offered and accepted), but due to isolation cannot complete that work, pay should still apply for the work days booked. This will require a claim to be made with the usual manager approval, which will be processed through the payroll system for payment in accordance with the schedule of payment in arrears.</p>
	13.	<b>I am a relief worker, but due to self-isolation/ sickness I am unable to submit a claim form for the hours I have worked, or hours due to work because of self-isolating measures, how do I get paid?</b>	<p>Please liaise with your line manager and provide them with the details of the hours you have worked or were due to work but couldn't because of self-isolation/ sickness and they will complete a claim form on your behalf and submit for payment in accordance with normal payroll</p>

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			deadlines.
Priority workers	14.	Who are priority workers?	Int Comms email dated 20/03/2020 with document outlining priority workers as of that date   Priority workers in LCC.msg
Flexible Resourcing	15.	If I cover a critical role and undertake different duties (even if that means working less hours) to my normal everyday responsibilities, will I be paid differently?	No, due to the need to respond urgently and flexibly, there will be no change to your existing pay. If the role you cover is graded at a higher rate, we will reconcile your pay to the higher grade at a later point in time.
	16.	Will I receive additional pay if I work beyond your normal hours which may include weekends or evenings?	If you are covering critical roles you will be entitled to be paid overtime when working above 37 hours a week, or additional hours up to 37 hours. This needs to be approved in advance by line managers.
	17.	If I volunteer to work different days to my usual working pattern will I receive different pay?	No, you will receive the same pay as normal.
	18.	If I cover a critical role and undertake higher level duties, this will be addressed at a later stage.	We cannot arrange changes to payments in advance due to the need to respond urgently. If the role you cover is graded at a higher rate, we will reconcile your pay to the higher grade at a later point in time

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	19.	<b>What training will I receive to enable me to undertake different work?</b>	A manager from the area you are being asked to work in will ensure that you receive training and instruction on everything you need to know.
	20.	<b>Will my manager maintain contact with me whilst undertaking different duties?</b>	Managers will be advised to maintain regular contact with their employees and agree a plan with you and what that will look like.
	21.	<b>Will I receive reimbursement for any extra mileage if I am required to work at a different location?</b>	For short term changes (up to 6 months) additional mileage incurred will be paid in line with the Business Travel Policy.
	22.	<b>If I like this role, will I be able to stay in it permanently?</b>	The normal selection process would be required to appoint to roles on a permanent basis.
<b>General Queries</b>	23.	<b>I am a key worker, and cannot work at home but the numbers of staff in my office are too high for me to work at a safe social distance.</b>	<p>If you are concerned about the office and the way this is set up currently you should speak with your manager about the office and work with them to reduce risk.</p> <p>Managers are working with property services to ensure that there is hand gel and wipes for all desks and equipment.</p> <p>There should be safe social distance when working at desks and you should move desks where needed to accommodate this. Public Health advice is that people should remain 2 metres apart.</p> <p>You may want to consider a rota system where the office is used solely by the key workers and only at certain times</p>

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			<p>to stagger use and amount of people in the office. If you are able to work flexibly to accommodate this, please speak to your manager.</p> <p>As a key worker please utilise your ability to work agile from another office that may have less people in or one closer to your home location to minimise travel. Please discuss with your manager.</p>
Annual leave	24.	<p><b>Will my Manager ask me to cancel leave that I have booked?</b></p> <p><b>Can I cancel annual leave that I had booked to go away on holiday, but will now be unable to do so?</b></p>	<p>We know that many staff have booked annual leave throughout the year and we are keen to continue to support staff to have regular leave which will support their wellbeing.</p> <p>It is also important from a business continuity perspective to ensure that the workforce does not accumulate leave affecting business continuity following this period of challenge</p> <p>For staff who are working from home, any annual leave already approved will be honoured and you will not be able to cancel it. The only circumstances where you would be able to cancel annual leave, would be due to sickness absence.</p> <p>New requests for leave may be considered, but could be declined where it is operationally necessary and alternative dates agreed when circumstances allow, balancing the need for staff to take regular leave to support their wellbeing .</p> <p>In extreme circumstance, if we require you to cancel you</p>

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			annual leave, we would provide the maximum possible notice and we would only cancel leave with your agreement.