



**New Shire Hall
Emery Crescent
Enterprise Campus, Weald
Huntingdon PE28 4YE**

February 28, 2022

Dear Employer

Once, I would like to thank all employers and employees who have played such big part in the fight against COVID-19. It has been long hard two years and people are tired and we would like to have good summer when we can enjoy ourselves.

The Government's "Living with COVID-19" Plan means the relaxation of the mandatory restrictions. The changes are staggered with the majority effective from 24 February 2022.

The changes we know about:

From 21 February:

- The guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing was removed

From 24 February:

1. The requirement to self-isolate following a positive test was removed. Adults and children who test positive are still advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days and then continue to follow the Guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days and do not have high temperature.
2. Fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 are no longer required to test daily for 7 days.
3. The requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate ended.
4. Self-isolation support payments, national funding for practical support and the medicine delivery service is no longer available.
5. With contacts no longer being required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests all routine contact tracing ended.
6. The legal obligation for individuals to tell their employers when they are required to self-isolate ended.
7. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No.3) Regulations were revoked.

From 24 March:

1. The COVID-19 provisions within the Statutory Sick Pay and Employment and Support Allowance regulations which means the £500 support grant for those eligible will end.

From 1 April:

1. The voluntary COVID-19 status certification Guidance in domestic settings will end.
2. The NHS App will however still be available for vaccination status if required for foreign travel.
3. The recommendation that certain venues should use the NHS COVID Pass will no longer apply.
4. Free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for the public in England will no longer be provided.
5. The Guidance for ongoing steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with other people will be updated to align with the changes to testing.
6. The Guidance to the public and businesses will be consolidated in line with public health advice.
7. The health and safety requirement for every employer to explicitly consider COVID-19 in their risk assessments will be removed. However, employers are expected to take mitigating actions that are appropriate for their workplaces.
8. The existing set of 'Working Safely' guidance will be replaced with new public health guidance. This will ask for employers to consider the needs of employees of greater risk from COVID-19 because of health issues.

What does this mean for workplaces?

Although the Plan sets out de-escalation of many mandatory Covid-19 measures, it does still encourage protective behaviours to continue, especially where rates are high.

Currently our rates of infection remain high and therefore it is still important to maximise all the measures to reduce risks of Covid-19 infection. We need to ensure that our workforces and the communities where they live are fit and well and able to be safe at work and minimise transmission. The health of our communities is a key priority, but we also recognise the many economic and business pressures that you have experienced during the pandemic.

Keeping where possible the infection controls in place will help your workforce keep fit and well, so we are advising the following Public Health measures. Please note this link [Continuing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in workplaces \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/covid19/workplaces/) from the Health and Safety Executive that references some of the key controls.

Testing and keeping safe

- Encourage employees to continue rapid testing twice weekly for staff coming into the workplace or if they have been involved in any activity that has brought them into close contact with others.
- Employees feeling unwell should be advised to work from home if this is possible and if tested positive for 5 days. If you have employees who test positive and work with clinically vulnerable people, they should test on day 5 onwards and not come into work until they have 2 negative tests on consecutive days or until 10 days have passed.

Mixing with other people

- Where there are groups of people working or meeting together, if possible, follow the Health and Safety risk assessments on room capacity.
- Employees working closely together should, if possible, maintain social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable).

Controlling the spread of infection

- Strongly encourage employees to wear a face covering when moving around the workplace as per the Living with Covid-19 guidance which states “Wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially where you come into contact with people you do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high”.
- Ask visitors to your workplace to wear face coverings when they visit.
- Effective ventilation is important in meeting rooms/shared areas so follow the site/room-specific risk assessment on Covid and ventilation, if you have CO₂ monitors, respond to any alerts.
- Ensure good hand hygiene through encouraging hand washing and providing of hand sanitisers.

Vaccination

We have written before about vaccination being the key factor to protect us from COVID-19. Many workplaces have substantial numbers of employees who are not vaccinated.

Do continue to encourage and enable vaccination. As the spring approaches many of our local workplaces employ overseas workers who may not be vaccinated.

information about local vaccination options and how to secure information resources (in different languages) for employees please go to the following NHS sites.

<https://www.thevaccinators.co.uk/> is the link for the Vaccinators on Tour website which is specifically for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It includes the local opening times and details of permanent mass vaccination centres (such as Queensgate and Grafton shopping centres etc) as well as upcoming bespoke pop-up vaccination events in the community.

The site will advise on both bookable appointment venues and walk in options. There is also a 'Vax Facts' tab which provides information about vaccination.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/> is the National 'Grab a Jab' website for those who want to find out who/when/where someone can just walk into a clinic as a walk in (without an appointment).

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/> is the link for the National Booking System website for booking appointments.

There is a local Single Point of Contact email for vaccinations which is monitored 7 days a week from 8am – 6pm capccq.vacprogcapccq@nhs.net where employers can request support.

Employers can also contact their local authorities; they will be able to provide vaccination information and resources in different languages.

I would also like to thank you for the prompt reporting of cases amongst your employees to Public Health and Environment Health over the course of the past two years. This has helped us understand how the pandemic is affecting our population and workplaces. However, going forwards we are confident that employers have become experts at managing COVID-19 and there is no expectation for you report any workplace cases to us or to Environmental Health. However please do contact us if you have any concerns or would like information and advice.

This guidance will support us over the next month whilst we wait for further Government guidance on "working safely" due by April. We will continue to monitor the local Covid-19 rate and will revise this advice at the end of March.

Yours sincerely



Val Thomas
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Cambridgeshire County Council (working across Peterborough City Council)