POLICY

Advice on policy changes about our response to coronavirus

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About this document

This document provides the latest policy position in relation to coronavirus for all Government employees, excluding Health and Community Services and States of Jersey Police, where separate guidance will be issued.

This follows the advice provided by the Government of Jersey for employers as we prepare and respond to the coronavirus pandemic on the Island.

This policy may change frequently, and we’re continually reviewing our advice to managers and employees. We consider the guidance issued by the Medical Officer for Health alongside our requirements to maintain services. You should visit our employee pages on MyStates or at gov.je/employees regularly where the latest version of this document will be available.

Where this document advises that you ‘must’ take action, this is a direct management instruction and is mandatory for all employees covered by this policy.

Additional guidance for health professionals and their support staff will be provided by Health and Community Services.

Current status

PREPARE

This means that we’re preparing to implement our business continuity plans, which means that we’ll be taking decisions about what services we’re providing, how we’re providing them and who'll provide them.

Beyond the actions set out in this document, you should not take any further actions unless specifically requested to do so by your Director General.
Advice and guidance

All advice and guidance on the Government’s response to coronavirus (Covid-19) is on

www.gov.je


You are advised to check for daily updates in relation to your work through our dedicated webpages for employees:

www.gov.je/employees

Contacting us

If you have a question about how to apply a policy or need information on any topic not mentioned here please speak with your line manager. We’ll shortly issue a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from the most common areas asked.

Line managers should email questions to peopleservices@gov.je
The following policy changes have been made:

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Absence reporting

We have changed the reporting requirements for all absences.

You must report all absences from work, or unavailability to work, through our online form.

If you’re unsure of your employee/payroll number, you can find this on your payslip or your line manager will be able to provide this to you.

You must report all absences from work, including being unavailable to work, through our online form. If you can’t access the online form, you must call your line manager who must complete the form on your behalf.

If you use the online form, your line manager will be notified automatically.

For hospital-based employees using e-rostering, you should continue to report your absence in the usual way.

The link to the absence reporting form is on the www.gov.je/employees site.

Advice and support

www.gov.je/coronavirus is the best source of official advice and information about coronavirus. To ensure that our employees who aren’t in work can access the latest information, we’ve also introduced an external place for information: www.gov.je/employees. These pages, along with MyStates, will provide regular updates and instructions to employees and managers.

If you are feeling worried then you can also contact or Be Supported helpline, which is available 24/7 on 0800 072 7072 or speak with your line manager.

Business travel

Non-essential business travel is suspended. This includes travel already booked, attendances at training or conferences out of the Island and off-Island school trips.

If you’re already on a trip, you should return as planned. If you’re delayed or required to isolate while away on business, you must make bookings for alternative travel and accommodation through the HRG system. The usual travel booking policy applies.

Essential business travel must be approved by the Director General (or their nominee). Essential business would be events such as accompanying a patient or undertaking a statutory visit to a child in care off-Island.

If you’re an interim or agency worker who travels to Jersey to work, you must speak to your line manager or point of contact in the Government of Jersey to understand if your role and your work has been identified as essential. If it has, you then need to agree whether it’s necessary for the work to be undertaken on-Island or remotely.

If it’s been identified as essential, on-Island work, you’ll be asked to continue to travel to Jersey as usual. Otherwise, we’ll ask you to work remotely from your usual off-Island base. You will find further advice from the Government about general travel online.
Carer responsibilities, dependants.

If you are not able to attend work because you need to care for a dependant who has become unwell or has had to self-isolate then you should report your absence through our online form. During this period you will continue to receive your normal pay.

Employee personal information

All employees must complete the business continuity information form by Wednesday 18 March 2020. All managers must ensure employees are supported and given time to complete the information.

We need this information to help us plan and activate our response for business continuity.

Essential workers

Essential workers are classed as anyone who is dedicated to the Government emergency response or business continuity arrangements. This includes all roles within the Jersey General Hospital, blue light services, customs and key support staff for these services.

For our business as usual arrangements, essential workers are those who are providing regulatory and statutory services, safeguarding roles, maintaining business critical systems, or maintaining critical Island infrastructure. This includes major projects that would be adversely impacted by a delay in delivery.

Where we are providing a service and there is a minimum number of employees required by regulation or legislation to deliver this (such as childcare), the minimum number of employees will be considered essential.

Those within the criminal, civil and administrative justice systems must continue as directed by the Courts, including participants who may be off-Island. States Assembly and legislative support will continue as essential services.

Community services to the most vulnerable continues to be a priority. Both frontline employees and volunteers are essential to maintaining these services. This may include private and third sector partners.

Teachers continuing to teach classes remotely (if a school is closed) are also considered essential workers.

Contractors, locums, bank staff and agency workers who meet the above criteria are also included.
**Flu-like symptoms**

Employees with flu-like symptoms must self-isolate at home for a minimum of seven days (or until after the symptoms have clearly passed). Check [gov.je](http://gov.je) for information about the symptoms.

If you have symptoms, please seek advice from the dedicated Government helpline (open 8am – 8pm) on 01534 445566. Please do not visit your GP or the hospital, seek advice first.

If the nature of your role allows you to work from home (and you’re fit to work), then you should plan to do this via your line manager. If it isn’t possible for you to work from home, then you’ll be entitled to receive your normal pay.

You must report all absences from work, or unavailability to work, through our [online form](http://onlineform).

If you can work from home, Modernisation and Digital have provided guidance to managers for home working.

**Health and safety**

You must follow the requirements to maintain hygiene within the workplace, including regular handwashing and use of hand gels if provided. We are all responsible for ensuring that individually we do this, therefore we must challenge colleagues who don’t use hand gels where provided when they enter the workplace. Additional supplies of hand gel should be ordered through Supply Jersey.

Line managers must update their risk assessments for their place(s) of work, relevant to the [advice issued](http://adviceissued) by the Government. All risk assessments must be submitted to [healthandsafetyhub@gov.je](mailto:healthandsafetyhub@gov.je)

Line managers must discharge our duty of care by maintaining regular contact with employees who are off work (through isolation, sickness or working from home).

**Recruitment**

To allow colleagues in Customer and Local Services to respond to a high level of queries, we are working with a reduced capacity in the People Hub. This means we are prioritising essential recruitment activity. Other than essential workers, we will be postponing current and new recruitment for a short period.

Essential workers will continue to be recruited.

We will continue to review the capacity of the team to ensure this is a temporary measure. For urgent recruitment, please contact [Emma Mackley](mailto:EmmaMackley) or [Courtenay Ward](mailto:CourtenayWard) in the [People Hub](http://PeopleHub) (448230).

**School closure**

If it becomes necessary to close the Island’s schools, we understand that many of our employees will have caring responsibilities for their children and will need to be at home. If you are not able to attend work for this reason, then you should report your absence through our online form. During periods of school closure, you would continue to receive your usual pay.
Self-isolation

You must report your isolation. From Monday, 16 March 2020, an online reporting form will apply to all absences. (See absence reporting). You must self-isolate if:

- you have flu-like symptoms as described on the coronavirus pages on gov.je. You should self-isolate for a minimum of seven days. This applies whether you’ve travelled outside Jersey or not and is irrespective of contact with a coronavirus case
- you meet the criteria set out in the travel advice. This advice changes from time-to-time, so you are advised to regularly check the criteria if you’ve travelled recently.
- you’ve been in contact with someone with a confirmed case of coronavirus. You must check gov.je and contact the coronavirus helpline on 01534 445566. In an emergency (seriously ill, injured, or their life at risk) you must call 999.
- you have been advised by a medical professional to self-isolate.

You will be paid during your period of isolation under ‘special leave’ provisions. The absence will not be counted as sickness absence.

Social distancing advice for over 65s

Social distancing means limiting unnecessary contact with people outside of your household unless essential. Social distancing is not the same as self-isolation. Government advice about social distancing can be found on gov.je.

This means for our employees over 65 we need you to stay at home. If the nature of your role allows you to work from home, then you should plan to do this through your line manager. If it isn’t possible for you to work from home, then you’ll be entitled to receive your normal pay.

You must report all absences from work, or unavailability to work, through our online form.

If you can work from home, we will shortly provide guidance for home working.
Somebody becomes unwell at work

If anyone becomes unwell whilst working, or a client visiting one or our buildings, and they have symptoms of coronavirus the following steps must be followed:

(Each building or floor in a building where Government of Jersey is the sole occupant should have a designated area or room with a phone, ideally located near to an exit and which should be easy to clean)

- Remove the person to the designated area and keep them at least 2 metres away from other people. Whenever possible open the window for ventilation
- If possible, the individual should use their own mobile phone to call the coronavirus helpline on 01534 445566 giving information about their symptoms and any travel history. Otherwise they should use the phone provided in the room. They should not call their GP or the Emergency Department unless they are very unwell and need an ambulance. If an individual is seriously ill and unable to call for themselves, an ambulance must be called (not using the individual’s phone). If known, symptoms and travel history must be given when calling.
- Whilst waiting for advice from the helpline the individual should remain 2 metres away from other people, avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze. Any tissues used should be put in a bag sealed or tied and then thrown in the bin.
- If the individual needs to use the toilet whilst waiting for medical advice a separate bathroom should be used. No one else must use this bathroom until a terminal clean has taken place.
- Plans should be made by the individual to travel home if they are well enough.
- When the individual has vacated the building Facilities must contact cleaning services to ensure all surfaces that the individual has come into contact with are cleaned this includes all surfaces and objects that are visibly contaminated with any body fluids and all potentially high contact areas such as toilets, door handles, key boards and telephones.
- If Covid-19 is confirmed, then the advice on Gov.je about self-isolation should be followed for anyone who has been in contact with the individual.

https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Pages/CoronavirusInformation.aspx

- A list should be kept of people who have been in direct contact with the individual, including cleaning staff who have cleaned the room/any infected areas.

List of items required in rooms
1. Sealable bags
2. Tissues
3. Wipes
4. Sanitiser
5. Spray disinfectant e.g. Dettol
Underlying health conditions

If you have one of the underlying health conditions listed below, then you should let your line manager know as soon as possible.

1. Heart conditions
2. Diabetes (both types)
3. Respiratory conditions, including asthma
4. Suppressed or compromised immune systems
   (these are subject to change as Government of Jersey advice changes)

We may prefer you to work from home in order that you have contact with fewer people. If due to the nature of your role, it is not possible to work from home then your line manager will do a risk assessment of your duties and work location to establish whether it is appropriate for you to stay in the workplace or not. You and your line manager must review the risk assessment outcome in line with the latest Government of Jersey advice.

If it isn’t possible for you to continue working, then you’ll be entitled to receive your normal pay.

You must report all absences from work if you are unavailable to work, through our online form.

If you can work from home, Modernisation and Digital has provided guidance to line managers for home working.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, then you should let your line manager know as soon as possible.

If we ask you to work from home, it will be to allow you to have contact with fewer people. If due to the nature of your role, it is not possible to work from home then your line manager will do a risk assessment of your duties and work location to establish whether it is appropriate for you to stay in the workplace or not.

You must report all absences from work, or unavailability to work (including caring responsibilities), through our online form.

If you can work from home, we will shortly be providing guidance for home working.

Working elsewhere in the Government of Jersey (redeployment)

During these unique circumstances, you may be asked to work in a different role, or at a different location within the Government of Jersey to ensure the delivery of essential services to the public.

We would ask that you remain flexible during this period, where possible we will seek volunteers first. This may mean that you carry out your normal role from a different location or a different role depending on essential service needs. For example, you may be asked to work on a helpdesk taking calls or providing other vital support services.
Working from home

We don’t need employees to work from home at this time, however:

- you must prepare to work from home if asked. This includes having an agreed workplan for up to four weeks.
- if you have a laptop, you must take your laptop (and charging lead) home with you each evening.

If you’re sent home but your work isn’t practical to do at home, you’ll still be paid. You must make yourself available for work within your contractual arrangements.
Zero hours workers, directly employed by the Government of Jersey

(i) Maintaining essential services

In order to maintain essential services in such areas as Health and Community Services and across the wider Government of Jersey, it is likely that we will need to ask colleagues who are contracted on zero hours basis to work. If you are contacted and offered work, and are not restricted through self-isolation, social distancing or an underlying health condition then you should consider making yourself available for work to help us to maintain essential services for the Island.

(ii) Unable to attend work

Due to the nature of a zero hours contract those employed on a zero hours basis who cannot attend work would not usually be paid for work that they do not undertake. However, given the unique circumstances that the coronavirus pandemic presents, we will honour your pay only if you had already been offered or rostered to work a specific shift or number of hours. In this situation this would need to be verified by the relevant line manager to guarantee payment. This would be the case in the following scenarios:

- You have to self-isolate
- Care for dependants affected by coronavirus, or due to a school closure
- You have an underlying health condition
- You have flu-like symptoms