

Coronavirus Emerging News and Changes 25 June 2020



HM Government

CORONAVIRUS
STAY ALERT
TO STAY SAFE

NHS

- ✓ Keep a safe distance from others
- ✓ Stay home as much as possible
- ✓ Keep washing your hands regularly

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES



Today's Webinar Panel

- **Lorna Young**, Principal Consultant HR
- **Harry Honnor**, Principal Adviser Workforce

Supported by **Abbey-Jane Law** – Business & Corporate Services
Team Leader

Today's discussion

1. Shielding – Proposed Changes
2. Social Distancing – Proposed Changes
3. Revisiting Absence Recording
4. Over to you – open questions session

Please type your questions and we will get through as many as possible during the webinar

If you don't get chance to ask your question, we can respond by email in a follow up

Shielding – Proposed Changes

Shielding – Extremely Clinically Vulnerable Persons

Current position

- Those who received a letter stating they were identified as clinically extremely vulnerable
- Were advised to stay at home completely for 12 weeks
- Entitled to support re: food & medication delivery
- Where possible could work from home

Proposed Changes

- From 6 July can meet up to 5 other people outside (SD maintained)
- Can form a support bubble with another household
- Shielding support to remain in place until 31 July
- **Can return to work from 1 August***

Shielding – Proposed Changes – Workplace Impact

- No immediate changes
- NJC circulars 17 & 23 still applicable
- Currently all should be working from home where they can (paid in full if this is not possible)

Going Forward – from 1 August

- Advice remains **ALL** staff should work from home work where they can
- Apply 5 principles of Covid-19 secure workplaces
 - 1. Work from home, if you can
 - 2. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment, in consultation with workers or trade unions
 - 3. Maintain 2 metres social distancing, wherever possible
 - 4. Where people cannot be 2 metres apart, manage transmission risk
 - 5. Reinforcing cleaning processes

Shielding – Proposed Changes – Workplace Impact

Well established procedures already in place should be followed if roles cannot be undertaken from home

- Alternative work/role at home/temporary redeployment
- Safest available role in the workplace
- General workplace risk assessment
- Specific individual risk assessment – **OH involvement**
- Employee engagement to address concerns
- Union involvement
- Consideration of reasonable adjustments – Equalities Act

What if they still refuse to work?

- Currently concerned that s44 ERA claims higher risk – reasonable belief that serious and imminent danger to health
- WME advise against action i.e. reduction in pay or disciplinary action at this stage
- If employees had been furloughed for at least 3 weeks prior to 30 June this is still an option (very limited numbers this may apply to in LAs)

Social Distancing Proposed Changes

Government carried out a review of the 2m social distancing rule

From 4 July proposal:

2m should stay in place where possible where this is not possible at least 1m distance with measures to reduce transmission risk

- No significant change to most of LA workplace practices implemented
- Not about getting more people into the office
- Some LAs experience difficulties keeping employees out now
- Maintain current arrangements where this is not possible apply principles of covid-19 secure workplace – well established process

Revisiting Absence Recording for COVID-19

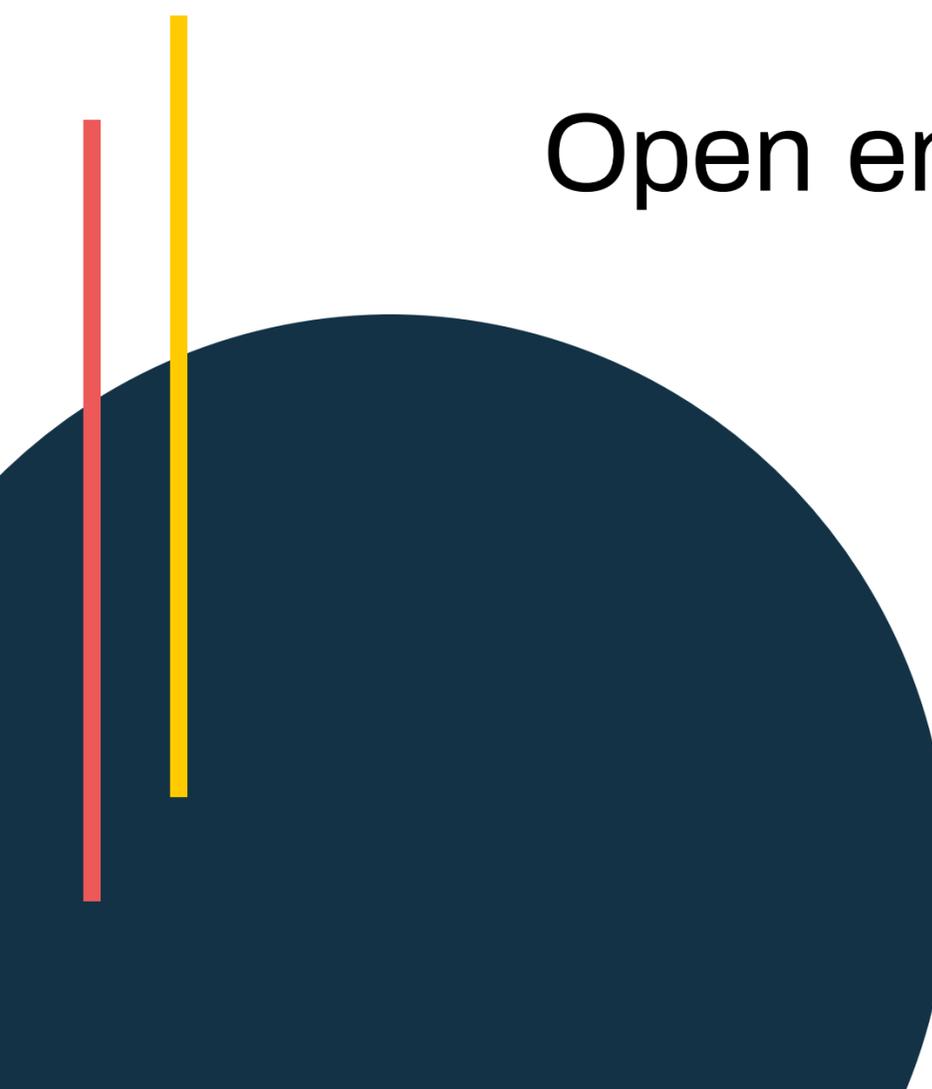
Some LAs have experience challenge around sickness absence recording/pay issues around covid-19 absences.

- Self-isolation due to potential contact – para 10.9 not sick pay not recorded as sickness absence (some differences in Burgundy Book)
- Unfit to work due to covid-19 – sick pay/sickness absence but recommended that does not count towards “absence triggers”

Difficulties between what you might be recording (i.e. self-isolating with and without symptoms) and the structure of the guidance which was prior to widespread testing

Need to be clear – self-isolation is either individual decision or NHS test and trace request – not sick. Contracting the virus preventing someone from working is sickness

Working from home – may be self-isolating from society but no requirement to come into work and work continues not being prevented from working



Open employment questions – it's over to you.....

Next Steps

WME will:

- Continue to review FAQs in line with changing guidance (including separate school guidance and FAQs)
- Run webinar as needed and weekly virtual meetings for Heads of HR
- Canvassing views and surveying on information relevant to your decision making
- Develop templates and guidance documents
- Working groups around Education, wellbeing, L&D will continue – planning for the next phases and return to new BAU

West Midlands Employers



A reminder of how to contact us:

Please call or email us for any advice or support needs:

L.young@wmemployers.org.uk

Or

Info@wmemployers.org.uk

Use our website: www.wmemployers.org.uk/coronavirus - realtime updated FAQs



Twitter - @wmemployers OR @rebeccadavisWME