



## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

### Augean's Specific Questions

#### ***Q. What can I do to avoid catching infections like coronavirus?***

- A.** You can reduce your risk of getting and spreading respiratory infections by:
- avoiding direct hand contact with your eyes, nose and mouth
  - maintaining good hand hygiene - washing hands with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser:
    - after coughing or sneezing or after going to the toilet or before eating and drinking
  - avoiding direct contact with people that have a respiratory illness and avoiding using their personal items such as their mobile phone
  - covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with disposable tissues and disposing of them in the nearest waste bin after use
  - avoid public places and large gatherings of people

#### ***Q. Are we classed as a key sector and if not, should I still come to work?***

- A.** Yes, waste treatment and disposal is a critical part of the UK infrastructure and one of the key sectors highlighted by government.

Our ongoing service and support is vital to the overall economy and as such all our employees are Critical Workers.

Detailed contingency plans have been introduced at site to help minimise disruption, which detail staffing requirements.

As staff are able to travel to and from work, we have produced a "Critical Worker" authorisation letter which supports you in confirming your status as a key worker, if it is requested. A copy can be obtained from your Manager.

For those remote working, we have installed additional VPN lines and are utilising web-based applications.

**Q. *With the closures of schools, how does this affect me as a parent?***

- A.** As with our current emergency leave policy, where we will authorise unpaid absence to allow parents to make alternative arrangements for a short period of time – we appreciate that this is probably unrealistic in the current COVID-19 environment. However, we cannot offer paid leave as this is just not realistic as a company when the business will be facing its own financial pressures.

Please talk to your line manager what support each party can give, ie: remote working; work patterns, condensed hours, etc.

**Q. *What is social distancing?***

- A.** Social distancing measures are steps to reduce social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are to:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible
3. Work from home, where possible, or keep at least 2 metres (7 feet) away from other people
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

**Q. *What can I do to protect my mental wellbeing?***

- A.** Understandably, you may find that social distancing can be boring or frustrating. You may find your mood and feelings are affected and you may feel low, worried or have problems sleeping and you might miss being outside with other people.

At times like these, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour which in turn can make you feel worse. There are simple things you can do that may help, to stay mentally and physically active during this time such as:

- look for ideas of exercises you can do at home on the [NHS website](#)
- spend time doing things you enjoy – this might include reading, cooking, other indoor hobbies or listening to the radio or watching TV programmes
- try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- keep your windows open to let in fresh air, get some natural sunlight if you can, or get outside into the garden
- stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or on social media.

You can also go for a walk or exercise outdoors if you stay more than 2 metres from others.

More advice and information can be found at:

- [Every Mind Matters: 10 tips to help if you are worried about coronavirus](#)
- [Every Mind Matters: how to look after your mental wellbeing while staying at home](#)

**Q. *If I have to board a vessel or attend a 3<sup>rd</sup> party site and they ask me to complete a disclosure form, do I need to do this?***

- A. Yes, it is vitally important to contain the spread of COVID-19 This is an additional measure that helps to protect them and you.

We are restricting visitor access to all Augean sites and have implemented an assessment form for all non-company staff to complete before attending site.

**Q. *I sometimes need to go offshore for my job and have returned home through one of the countries that are identified by the PHE as being high risk, what do I need to do?***

- A. We are following advice from Oil and Gas UK. You should **not** mobilise to any offshore installations if you have travelled from or through any country. This applies even if you are not showing symptoms. You need to call your manager who will advise you of what to do. You may be asked to complete a medical declaration prior to going offshore.

You should not mobilise if you have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days or have experienced a cough, shortness of breath or high temperature within the last 72 hours

**Q. *I fall into the category of people who are at risk from COVID-19, what do I need to do?***

- A. At this time, you do not need to do anything unless you have been advised differently by a Medical Practitioner. You should make your line manager aware if they have not already been informed of any medical condition that you have or .

You must complete the questionnaire sent by your HR representative so we can assess your risk factors.

**Q. *How would I know if I have COVID-19 or just the flu?***

- A. NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

**Q. *I have a holiday booked, what should I do?***

- A. There are new [guidelines for British people travelling overseas during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#). You need to speak to your travel agent and also get the necessary advice from them. You need to assess the risk and discuss with your line manager or HR your rationale for, knowingly, putting yourself at higher risk of being in contact with the COVID -19.

Prior to booking any vacation or business travel you should review the status of a location to minimise risk of exposure.

We have restricted non-essential work travel within the UK. Please consult your line management before making any arrangements.

**Q. *What should I do if I start to show symptoms of the disease following my return to work from another country?***

- A. You should self-isolate and call your local medical provider (call 111 in the UK). You should call your line manager to make them aware of the situation.

If you are self-isolating you should request an Isolation Note (<https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>) and forward this to your line manager.

**Q. *Is it safe to receive a package from an area where COVID-19 has been reported?***

- A. Yes. The likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a package that has been moved, travelled, and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low.

**Q. *Is there a chance that I could pick up COVID-19 from toilets, handrails or door handles?***

- A. In the same way that it is highly unlikely to pick up coronavirus from handling parcels, it is highly unlikely that you would get it from any other surfaces. The best way to ensure that you do not become infected is to maintain high standards of hygiene and wash your hands thoroughly with warm soapy water.

We have guidelines in place at all our sites for cleaning and disinfecting. Speak to your line manager to understand what measures have been taken at your work site.

**Q. *Will using hand sanitisers help to reduce the risk of infection?***

- A. These products have been shown to help to reduce the spread of viral infections and we have distributed these to our sites.

**Q. *How do we know if truck and van drivers who deliver to us are free from infection?***

- A. We can never be 100% sure of this but we are in regular contact with our supply chain to understand what measures they are taking to reduce the risk. The advice published by the relevant authorities applies to everyone and employers are checking their staff as much as everyone else is.

When handling paperwork, always wear disposable gloves.

**Q. *Should I have additional PPE to protect me and prevent the spread of COVID-19?***

- A. There is no need for additional PPE at this time.

**Q. *Will I be paid if I have to self-isolate?***

- A. COVID-19 will be treated no differently than any other illness in keeping with our attendance policy. If you are still within a probationary period, you will receive full sick pay from the company.

If you are self-isolating you should request an Isolation Note (<https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>) and forward this to your line manager.

***Q. Will any absence I have be separate to my normal annual company sickness entitlement?***

**A.** No, this will just be part of your annual entitlement.

## **Questions & Answers from the World Health Organisation**

***Q. What is coronavirus?***

**A.** Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

***Q. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?***

**A.** The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, shortness of breath and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhoea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually.

***Q. If I get COVID-19, will I die?***

**A.** Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing special treatment. Around 1 out of every 6 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty breathing. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. Roughly 2% of people with the disease have died.

***Q. How does COVID-19 spread?***

**A.** People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets.

***Q. Can the virus that caused COVID-19 be transmitted through the air?***

**A.** Studies suggest that the virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through contact with respiratory droplets rather than through the air.

**Q. *Can COVID-19 be caught from a person who has no symptoms?***

- A. The main way the disease spreads is through respiratory droplets expelled by someone who is coughing. The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms at all is very low. However, many people with COVID-19 experience only mild symptoms. This is particularly true at the early stages of the disease. It is therefore possible to catch COVID-19 from someone who has, for example, just a mild cough and does not feel ill.

**Q. *Should I worry about COVID-19?***

- A. If you are not in an area where COVID-19 is spreading, or if you have not travelled from one of those areas or have not been in close contact with someone who has and is feeling unwell, your chances of getting it are currently low. However, it's understandable that you may feel stressed and anxious about the situation. It's a good idea to get the facts to help you accurately determine your risks so that you can take reasonable precautions.

**Q. *Are antibiotics effective in preventing or treating COVID-19?***

- A. No. Antibiotics do not work against viruses, they only work on bacterial infections. COVID-19 is caused by a virus, so antibiotics do not work.

**Q. *Is there a vaccine, drug or treatment for COVID-19?***

- A. Not yet. To date, there is no vaccine and no specific antiviral medicine to prevent or treat COVID-19. However, those affected should receive care to relieve the symptoms.

**Q. *Should I wear a mask to protect myself?***

- A. People with no respiratory symptoms, such as cough, do not need to wear a medical mask. They should be used by people who have symptoms of COVID-19 and for those caring for individuals who have symptoms. The most effective ways to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 are to frequently clean your hands, cover your cough with the bend of elbow or tissue and maintain a distance of at least 1 meter (3 feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing.

**Q. *How long is the incubation period (between catching and showing symptoms) for COVID-19?***

- A. This ranges from 1 to 14 days, most commonly around 5 days.

**Q. *Can I catch COVID-19 from my pets?***

- A. There is no evidence that pets could become infected and spread the virus.

**Q. *How long does the virus survive on surfaces?***

- A. It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. It may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days, but this may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment). If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean

your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

***Q. Is there anything that I should NOT do?***

**A.** The following measures are **NOT** effective against COVID-19 and can be harmful:

- Smoking
- Taking traditional herbal remedies
- Wearing multiple masks
- Taking self-medication such as antibiotics