POLICY ON DEALING WITH CORONAVIRUS IN THE WORKPLACE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Company is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all employees. To this end, this policy sets out steps that the Company is taking in order to tackle the coronavirus outbreak, alongside expectations that are placed upon employees.

1. INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

We strongly encourage all employees to follow these guidelines from the World Health Organisation on infection control, both whilst at work and in their daily lives. This includes:

* frequently cleaning their hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water
* when coughing and sneezing, covering mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, throwing this tissue away immediately and washing their hands
* avoiding close contact with anyone who has fever and cough.
1. IF YOU DEVELOP SYMPTOMS

If you begin to display symptoms of the virus, you must follow government guidance to find out what to do next, which may involve internet and phone services. You should not go to your doctor’s surgery. You must also notify your manager at the earliest opportunity.

1. (*OPTIONAL*) BUSINESS TRAVEL

The Government advises against travel from time to time. During times when those in the UK are not under advisement not to travel, the Company will nonetheless consider each business trip that is planned and identify if alternatives to making the trip can be considered, where it is considered that travel may put the employee at risk of infection. This may include postponing the trip, or holding meetings via other means such as Skype.

If travel is deemed necessary, we will conduct a full risk assessment into the risks associated with the trip with involvement from employees who are being asked to travel.

1. PERIODS OF SELF-ISOLATION

The Government is currently advising people to self-isolate in certain situations, which means staying at home and not having contact with other people. In the event that this applies to you, you must not attend work during the isolation period. You must inform your manager at the earliest opportunity that you are under guidance to self-isolate. Your manager will keep in contact with you during this period. Where feasible, we may consider whether you can work from home during this period, or whether we can agree a period of paid annual leave with you. Where no other agreement is made ***(Client to delete/amend as applicable - you will receive statutory sick pay subject to qualifying criteria in place at the relevant time/you will receive contractual sick pay subject to normal qualifying criteria/you will be on authorised absence and receive full pay during this time off).***

In addition, employees may have been strongly advised to remain at home due to being classed as at particularly high risk of catching coronavirus, otherwise known as ‘shielding’. Affected employees will be encouraged to work from home where this is possible. If homeworking is not feasible, you will receive ***(Client to insert payment details)*** during your absence.

1. SENDING EMPLOYEES HOME/REQUIRING EMPLOYEES NOT TO ATTEND WORK

If we are concerned that you may have been exposed to the virus, even though you are not displaying symptoms, we may take the decision to send you home/require you not to attend work. This may occur if, for example, you inform us that you have been in close contact with someone else who has, or may have, the virus but fall outside of the Government rules on self-isolation. This is treated as a period of suspension for medical reasons. It is not considered a disciplinary sanction; the period of suspension will be in recognition of the possibility that your continued presence in the workplace poses a risk of spreading the virus. You will receive full pay during this time off. Alternatively, we may agree a period of paid annual leave with you or agree that you work from home, where feasible.

If, during this period of suspension, you develop symptoms, you should follow Government guidance on what to do next, which may include using internet or telephone services, and also follow our normal sickness reporting procedures. You will then be treated as being on a period of sickness absence.

1. EMPLOYEES WHO CONTRACT THE VIRUS

If you contract the virus, you should take and follow medical advice on the length of your sickness absence. You are required to produce a medical certificate for illnesses lasting more than seven calendar days, however, we appreciate that you may not be in a position to obtain a medical certificate in usual timescales, therefore you should provide it as soon as is reasonably practicable.

*(Client to delete/amend as applicable)*

*(If SSP scheme only)*

During your absence, you will receive statutory sick pay in accordance with Government rules in place from time to time.

*(If contractual sick pay scheme in place)*

Our normal contractual sick pay scheme will apply during your absence. If you don’t meet the eligibility criteria, you will receive statutory sick pay in accordance with Government rules in place from time to time.

1. ATTENDANCE AT WORK

Unless you have followed our usual reporting procedures in relation to sickness absence, are in self-isolation following Government guidance or not attending work under our specific instruction, you are expected to work, though this may be from home where feasible. However, if there is a reason why you think you may have been exposed to the virus, you should let your manager know before you attend the workplace.

1. TEMPORARY BUSINESS CLOSURE

As time progresses, it may become clear that the business is temporarily unable to continue its operations as normal. In this scenario, we may be forced to close all, or part, of the business temporarily until such a time as we are able to resume operations and will not be able to provide you with work. Alternatively, whilst we may be able to continue operating, we may identify some roles for which no work can be provided. Whilst we will do everything we can to ensure that this does not happen, we may be left with no option but to place you on lay off, or short time working as an alternative to redundancy. *(Client to delete/amend as applicable - During this period, your pay will be reduced accordingly to the number of hours worked, and you may receive statutory guarantee pay, where eligible, in line with statutory provisions/During this time, you will receive full pay.)*

As an alternative, we may discuss with you designating you as a furloughed worker under the Government’s Job Retention Scheme which includes the ability for us to receive a grant to cover 80% of your basic pay, to a maximum of £2,500 per month. This will mean temporarily changing your status to a ‘furloughed worker’ and you will do no work for us for a period of time to be defined by us. If we decide to take this step, we will seek your agreement before designating you as a furloughed worker.

1. WORKING FROM ANOTHER LOCATION

It may be necessary for us to require you to work from an alternative work location if, for example, instructions from a third party mean that entry into our current workplace is not permitted or we are under Government instruction to close our workplace. Your flexibility in this regard will be expected, however, all instructions of this nature will be reasonable.

The Company will consider, as part of its general approach to maintaining normal business operations, whether employees are to work from home. Obviously, this will not be possible in every case due to the nature of individual roles. However, we will assess the viability of this option, taking into consideration any equipment needed, at the relevant time and, as a result, you may be required to work from home for a temporary period. Employees should not assume that they will be permitted to work from home and advance authorisation will be needed in every case.

1. HARASSMENT/BULLYING

We operate a zero tolerance policy to all forms of harassment and bullying in the workplace. We will not tolerate any unacceptable behaviour to colleagues, suppliers, members of the public etc. Any complaints of this nature will be investigated in line with our usual policy and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

1. (OPTIONAL) EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

We would like to remind employees that, if they have any worries or concerns about any aspect of the current situation, they have access to a confidential 24-hour telephone counselling service on ***(Client to insert details).***