

**Isle of Man Government
Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Summary of Key Points of OHR Guidance

The policies and guidance, including those which have been archived, can be found here:

<https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

Over the last few months OHR has published a series of guidance documents and FAQs covering a variety of topics relating to the HR response to the pandemic.

In order assist staff and managers to navigate these documents, this is a helpful summary of some of the key points from within the guidance to address some of the questions asked most regularly.

Self-Isolation following Off-Island Travel

Employees are strongly discouraged from traveling off-Island and those who do travel off-Island are required to consider the implications of mandatory self-isolation periods when requesting leave and must ensure advanced agreement is gained from their line manager regarding how the period of self-isolation will be managed.

Options available will depend upon the operational requirements of specific roles and could include one or a combination of their leave allowance (annual, flexi, TOIL) or homeworking/redeployment.

Where an employee is required to travel off-Island to receive medical treatment, a period of self-isolation on return may be treated as sick leave.

Where an employee travels off-Island to accompany someone receiving medical treatment a period of self-isolation on return will not be treated as sick leave, but in accordance with the other options contained within the guidelines.

Employees who travel off-Island who are contracted to attend work at specific times of the year (e.g. people working term time or annualised hours), must return to the Island in sufficient time to complete any required period of self-isolation and be available to attend work by the date they are required to recommence work.

Note: If an employee is able to work from home during a period of self-isolation, there is an expectation that a proportion of that period is met by the use of annual leave, flexi leave or TOIL.

Where the circumstances of the individual do not lend themselves to any of the options above, alternative options can be considered as a last resort.

Self-Isolation and Sick Pay

If an employee is absent as a consequence of COVID-19 and is required to self-isolate (they have symptoms or are diagnosed), the employee's absence should be recorded as sick leave

and the sick pay provisions set out in their terms and conditions applied. At present, employees can self-certify a sickness absence for up to 14 days and any ongoing absence will require the employee to provide a medical certificate from their GP.

Self-Isolation due to Contact Tracing Advice or Direction Notice

An absence for an employee who does not necessarily have symptoms of COVID-19 and remains well, but has received advice from the COVID-19 111 or the Contact Tracing Team, Cabinet Office and/or a Direction Notice to self-isolate and is therefore absent from work, would normally be recorded as sick leave. Alternatively one of the other options at section 2.2 of the COVID-19 Guidelines on the Management of Self-Isolation may be utilised if appropriate. If self-isolating the period of sickness absence will not count towards an employee's Bradford Factor score.

COVID-19 Guidelines on the Management of Self-Isolation here:

<https://hr.gov.im/media/1869/management-of-self-isolation-guidelines-v18-final.pdf>

Homeworking

The Isle of Man Government is committed to promoting and practising equal opportunities in employment and, where practical, supports employees to work flexibly which includes homeworking. This may be on a regular or ad-hoc basis as part of a flexible and agile approach to undertaking a role. Requests for homeworking will be considered and accommodated where possible, based on the ability of the employee to fulfil their role from the home environment.

Further information in relation to homeworking can be found in the dedicated Homeworking section on the OHR website here: <https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

Vulnerable / Extremely Vulnerable Persons

These guidelines are intended to assist staff and managers in enabling staff to continue to work where at all possible and avoid periods of financial hardship during periods of time where they are classed as vulnerable or extremely vulnerable. The Guidelines include the process to follow for employees who are identified as vulnerable or extremely vulnerable.

Managers should complete a risk assessment for employees that are confirmed as vulnerable or extremely vulnerable in order to identify any reasonable adjustments that can be applied. Where an employee and manager are unable to agree adjustments to enable the employee to continue working, a referral must be made to occupational health. If it is not possible to allocate work as per the options available in the guidelines alternative options are set out in the guidelines.

Where a vulnerable or extremely vulnerable person is unable to continue working, they may take sick leave if the employee can provide written confirmation from their GP, Consultant or Occupational Health stating that they must self-isolate and cannot work outside of the home environment. Alternatively a letter from the Department of Health and Social Care advising the individual to practice shielding measures will be considered sufficient evidence.

In all other cases, employees should obtain a sick note from their GP.

Where employees who are clinically vulnerable or extremely clinically vulnerable and have been advised to shield have exhausted their sick pay, full sick pay will be extended only where no other alternatives are available. Alternative options as to how the absence may be treated are detailed at point 6 of the COVID-19 Vulnerable Persons – Management Guidelines.

Full details can be found in the COVID-19 Vulnerable Persons –Management Guidelines here: <https://hr.gov.im/media/1845/vulnerable-persons-guidelines-16-13121.pdf>

Caring Responsibilities

These guidelines are intended to assist staff and managers in enabling staff to continue to work where at all possible and avoid periods of financial hardship during periods of time where they are undertaking caring responsibilities caused by COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Where employees care for children or a disabled, elderly or sick partner or relative, and request time off, managers should consider agreeing an alternative shift or working pattern; home/remote working; redeployment or use of available annual leave, flexi leave or TOIL. Where the caring responsibilities or role requirements do not lend themselves to any of these options please consider unpaid Special Leave or continuing to pay the employee their ordinary pay during the period of leave with written agreement from the employee to repay the unworked hours (within 12 months) or undertake additional hours on return.

Full details can be found in the COVID-19 Caring Responsibilities Guidelines here: <https://hr.gov.im/media/1819/20210106-caring-responsibilities-guidance-v16-no-form-final.pdf>

Mobilisation and Redeployment Guidelines

These guidelines set out the process for the central co-ordination of redeployment in instances where redeployment is required as a response to COVID-19.

Redeployed employees should continue to work under their substantive terms and conditions of service, including pay, and treated as if they are seconded. Where redeployment is to a position at a higher grade, or involves different shift patterns, arrangements will be made at the end of the redeployment period for an appropriate ex gratia payment to recognise the additional responsibility.

**Issued by the Office of Human Resources
On behalf of the Cabinet Office
January 2021**