

Office of Human Resources Coronavirus (Covid-19) – Endemic Approach

From the 1 April 2022 all remaining Covid-19 restrictions were removed. The removal of the restrictions signals Government's move to treat coronavirus as an endemic disease similar to other illnesses such as flu and norovirus, therefore normal sick pay and sick leave provisions apply.

The changes mean that there will no longer be a legal requirement to isolate at home following a positive test, but guidance has been issued for people to follow. All border restrictions have been lifted, including the need for isolation or testing for all travellers, and the requirement to complete a travel declaration, or landing card.

The answers to these Frequently Asked Questions are designed to give a summary of information for staff and managers. Colleagues should be sensitive of individual's personal assessment of risk and mitigations.

The Health, Safety and Welfare Advisory Service has put together a risk based approach for the public service which is available here: <https://hr.gov.im/media/2382/20220815-risk-based-assessment-v30-002.pdf>. It recognises that every location across the public service has different risks associated with it and each location should have its own risk assessment. Within certain areas of higher risk, e.g. health and care settings, please ensure you are aware of any current local requirements.

Public Service Covid-19 related guidelines are available on the Office of Human Resources website at the following link <https://hr.gov.im/policies-procedures-codes-guidance-and-forms/>

Further guidance and the most up to date public health information regarding the Covid-19 is available on the government website at <https://covid19.gov.im/>.

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What should I do if I have symptoms of Covid-19?

If you have symptoms of Covid-19 you should stay at home until symptoms have subsided and you feel better, just like you would with any other respiratory infections, like cold or flu.

Where possible and only if you feel well enough you should work from home.

What should I do if I have tested positive for Covid-19 but have no symptoms?

If you are asymptomatic you should work from home where you can.

If you occupy a role that does not readily lend itself to working at home, consideration should be given to alternative ways of working, a change in working pattern or attending work with appropriate control measures in place.

For further information see <https://hr.gov.im/media/2382/20220815-risk-based-assessment-v30-002.pdf> and discuss any suitable alternatives with your line manager.

Will I get paid if I am off sick with Covid-19?

Your normal sick leave and sick pay provisions apply, based on your terms and conditions of service.

I am a bank / casual / relief / supply worker, am I eligible for sick pay?

Sick pay would be paid as per your terms of conditions where applicable.

Do I need to provide a Drs note if I'm off sick?

You are able to self-certify a sickness absence for up to 14 days.

If you remain unwell and off work after 14 days you will need to provide a Drs note to certify your absence from work.

Can I claim incapacity benefit?

If you receive full pay whilst off sick you are not eligible to claim incapacity benefit.

You should only claim incapacity benefit when you go on to half or nil sick pay.

Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.im/categories/benefits-and-financial-support/illness-and-disabilities/incapacity-benefit/>

I live in the same household as someone who has symptoms Covid-19 or has tested positive but I do not have symptoms, can I continue to go in to work?

Yes, though please give consideration to your colleagues and practice good basic hygiene. If possible wear a face covering and maintain distance whilst in the workplace until the member of your household is well again.

If I am off sick with Covid-19, will the period of absence be counted towards my Bradford Factor score?

Yes, for any Covid-19 sickness absences from 1 April 2023 the period of absence will be counted towards your Bradford Factor score. However, any Covid-19 sickness absences prior to 1 April 2023 will not be counted towards your Bradford Factor score.

What if I don't have any sick pay left and I am off sick with Covid-19?

Your normal sick leave and sick pay provisions apply, based on your terms and conditions of employment. However, some terms and conditions have provisions that allow for sick pay to be extended.

What if I have Covid-19, feel well but I am unable to work from home. Are there any alternative arrangements for me to work?

If you occupy a role that does not readily lend itself to working at home, consideration should be given to alternative ways of working, a change in working pattern or attending work with appropriate control measures in place. For further information see <https://hr.gov.im/media/2382/20220815-risk-based-assessment-v30-002.pdf> and discuss any suitable alternatives with your line manager.

Within certain areas of higher risk, e.g. health and care settings, please ensure you are aware of any local requirements.

Will I get time off work for caring responsibilities?

If you have caring responsibilities then you should consider how you can get support from outside of work. You should also make sure your line manager is aware of these responsibilities now.

If you need to make arrangements for your child or dependent to be cared for, notify your line manager as soon as possible and at the very least on the first day of absence. Consideration will be given to flexible shift patterns, home working, flexi time, annual leave and special leave as appropriate.

Do I have a right to be notified if a colleague has Covid-19?

No, there is no specific right and there is a duty of confidentiality and data privacy regarding health information.

What if I am vulnerable such as I have underlying health conditions or I am pregnant?

Consideration should be given to vulnerable people with individual risk assessments in place and you should discuss your concerns with your line manager.

It may be possible to make reasonable adjustments and further advice should be sought from Occupational Health or HR Advisor, Office of Human Resources.

What can I do to prevent the spread of Covid-19?

From Friday 1 April 2022, although there are no legal restrictions or requirements in place, individuals are encouraged to:

- 'Be smart' and take up their offer of vaccinations and boosters
- 'Be safe' and continue to practice good basic hygiene
- 'Be kind' and self-test when showing symptoms of Covid-19 in order to make informed personal decisions
- 'Be aware', respecting and supporting others personal choices

Where can I find out more?

The most up to date information is available on the Isle of Man Government [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Should you require any specific advice or guidance as an employee or manager on a HR matter relating to Covid-19, please contact a HR Advisor in the Office of Human Resources.

Contact details are available here:

<https://hr.gov.im/about-us/divisions/office-of-human-resources/human-resources-division/>

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

October 2023

Last updated: 23/10/2023
Version 5.0