**SCSN AND CORONAVIRUS – business continuty plan**

This information is intended to indicate the steps that SCSN are taking in light of the spread of the covid-19 virus.

We’ll keep this information up to date. This information was last updated on **12 March 2020**.

**What is the coronavirus?**

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. This strain, covid-19, is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in January 2020.

**What are the symptoms?**

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has covid-19 infection:

* A cough
* A high temperature
* Shortness of breath

If you are worried about symptoms, please call NHS 111 [or go to the NHS 111 coronavirus advice website](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19). Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

[The latest advice and developments on the covid-19 situation can be found on the GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public).

**What’s the best way to prevent the spread of covid-19?**

* Wash your hands often with soap ([or soap substitutes](http://www.eczema.org/coronavirus))and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. This is particularly important after taking public transport.
* Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. You can [download a ’Catch it, Bin it, Kill it’ poster](https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf) (PDF, 940KB) for your workplace from the NHS.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

**What do we need to do to protect staff, volunteers and visitors?**

* Information: We will provide clear information using communication channels including posters and email.  There are clear notices on entry doors of our office and also posted in the lifts. We will publish this plan and risk assessment on our website.
* Handwashing facilities: Handwashing facilities are available and well supplied in our shared office space. Staff and board members should follow guidelines on handwashing when in public spaces or in other work sites. GOV.UK has published clear and printable [instructions on handwashing techniques](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866065/Handwashing_techniques.pdf) (PDF, 130KB) which can be displayed around the workplace.
* Cleaning regimes: Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to eight hours. Frequently clean key areas including keyboards and door handles.
* There is government advice on [social care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19) and [educational](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19) settings you may want to review if they apply to your organisation.
* We will support staff working from home: Staff may be required to work from home, particularly if impacted by school closures. Consideration will be given to the infrastructure, equipment and processes required to allow staff to work remotely. All SCSN staff are enabled to work from home using provided equipment and technology.
* We will manage travel risks: We will keep up to date on current travel advice. The Foreign Office has published [information and advice on travel safety](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-the-foreign-commonwealth-office-puts-together-travel-advice#history) and the World Health Organisation is providing updated [covid-19 travel advice](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice).
* We will review travel arrangements. Staff are asked to consider - is travel necessary? Are there possible alternatives such as video conferencing?
* We will ensure emergency contact details are up to date

**Should our employees take sick leave?**

* There is no need for most staff or volunteers to avoid the workplace.  Our Landlords (SCVO) has issued clear guidelines on risk assessing and using office space.
* The government has listed high risk areas/countries by [category 1 (highest risk areas) and category 2 areas](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk).
* Employees who are symptomless but have returned from category 1 areas within the last 14 days should [self-isolate](https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/02/20/what-is-self-isolation-and-why-is-it-important/) for 14 days from their return.
* Employees who have returned from a category 2 area within the last 14 days and who develop symptoms should self-isolate.
* Employees who are recommended to self-isolate are entitled to sick leave but not necessarily sick pay. SCSN board have agreed that employees having to self-isolate will not lose pay or sick day allowances.
* If employees are sick with the virus then they would qualify for [Statutory Sick Pay](https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay) subject to meeting eligibility requirements.
* [Further advice on employee sick leave and sick pay entitlements can be found on the Acas website](https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus).

**Should we cancel our events?**

* Currently the advice is for most people to continue to go to work, school and other public places.
* Currently, SCSN have no events planned. If we had, advice is to keep plans under review
* If we are hosting a formal meeting, we will plan for reduced attendance or the need to move locations and times meetings.
* Check cancellation policies for venue bookings you’ve made or are about to make.
* Further advice on planning formal meetings can be found on the [Bates Wells website](https://bateswells.co.uk/2020/03/coronavirus-and-your-organisation/).

**How do we support members of communities facing discrimination?**

* Members of some communities are experiencing acts of racism, discrimination and verbal abuse with the outbreak of the virus.
* Covid-19 does not discriminate and the containment or spread of the virus is not based on ethnicity.
* These communities must feel supported and know that these acts of discrimination should not be tolerated.
* Stop Hate UK are providing anyone experiencing or witnessing such discrimination with a confidential [24-hour third-party reporting service](https://www.stophateuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Stop-Hate-UK-%C2%AD-Coronavirus-Statement-and-Advice-for-Helpline-Areas_Email.pdf).
* See also Police Scotland current hate campaign and any others by Crimestoppers and/or Fearless

**Contingency measures**

* We have considered how SCSN will run if a significant proportion of staff were unavailable, or if we have to work from home. Inevitably this will impact onto our work and business plans. At the moment the risk is high that will be impacted but because of the short predicted timescale and severity of associated illness and self-isolation, we expect the impact will be low to medium. We will contact the Scottish Government and members at any sign of reduced capacity and will prioritise outstanding business whilst capacity is maintained.
* The [Association of British Insurers has released a statement](https://www.abi.org.uk/news/news-articles/2020/03/abi-comment-on-coronavirus-and-commercial-insurance/) regarding the declaration from the government that the coronavirus is a 'notifiable disease'.

**Will there be financial implications?**

SCSN board have agreed to continue to pay staff self-isolating. This is within current budgets,

* .  A reduction in stock values could also impact defined liability pension schemes, where the employer guarantees the pension on retirement regardless of what happens to the underlying assets of the scheme. This should be less of an issue provided stocks recover in the medium to long term.
* If covid-19 is a short-term issue, then it is likely that markets will recover and investments will gain the value they lost in the medium term.

**How are charities helping to deal with covid-19?**

* Diabetes UK has provided an [updated information page](https://www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus) for people living with diabetes.
* Asthma UK has released a [blog post with advice for people with asthma](http://asthma.org.uk/about/media/news/Coronavirus/).
* The British Heart Foundation has published [guidance for people with health problems](https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/news/coronavirus-and-your-health).
* The National Eczema Society has offered [advice on handwashing techniques](http://www.eczema.org/coronavirus) for people with eczema and other skin conditions.
* SignHealth has created [British Sign Language (BSL) videos](http://www.signhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/) to help deaf BSL users either working in charities or receiving support.
* Carers UK has produced [recommendations for carers](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/77-help-advice/health/your-mental-and-physical-health/6268-coronavirus-guidance).
* Housing Justice has issued [specialised advice to homeless shelters](https://housingjustice.org.uk/what-we-do/night-shelters/wns-network-membership/coronavirus-advice-for-night-shelters). Glass Door is emphasising the importance of handwashing and has [boosted their stock of hand gels](https://www.glassdoor.org.uk/things-we-need) kept in their vans that move between shelters. [Pathway](https://www.pathway.org.uk/news/press-releases/) and [Crisis](https://www.crisis.org.uk/about-us/latest-news/crisis-calls-on-government-for-guidance-on-how-best-to-protect-homeless-people-against-coronavirus/) have called on the government for guidance on how best to protect homeless people against coronavirus.
* Full Fact has generated a [fact check page](https://fullfact.org/health/wuhan-coronavirus/) on covid-19 to help dispel any false information.
* The [Cystic Fibrosis Trust](https://www.cysticfibrosis.org.uk/news/uk-cf-medical-associations-statement-on-coronavirus), [Primary Immunodeficiency UK](http://www.piduk.org/whatarepids/treatment/immunoglobulinreplacementtherapy/coronavirus) and the [Mental Health Foundation](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak) have all issued advice and support.

**Resources**

**Key up-to-date information from the government:**

* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 latest information and advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)
* [NHS coronavirus advice](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

**Sector-specific guidance**

* [GOV.UK: Guidance for social or community care and residential settings on COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19)
* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 guidance for educational settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19)
* [NHS England: Coronavirus information for health professionals](https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/eprr/coronavirus/)

**Risk management**

* [GOV.UK: Guidance on charities and risk management](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-risk-management-cc26/charities-and-risk-management-cc26)
* [Zurich: Organisational resilience guidance on pandemic planning](https://newsandviews.zurich.co.uk/talking-point/organisational-resilience-guidance-on-pandemic-planning/)
* [Charities Facilities Management Group: Business continuity for charities](https://charitiesfmgroup.org/business-continuity-management-charities)

**Travel advice**

* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus)
* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 specified countries and areas with implications for returning travellers or visitors arriving in the UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk)

**Further Information**

This guidance is not exhaustive. This information is intended to provide an overview of the covid-19 virus and how it may impact charities and the voluntary sector.

If you have any specific questions related to covid-19 and your organisation please email NCVO at ncvo@ncvo.org.uk.