

## **COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Policy**

### **Purpose:**

North West Community Services Training Ltd (NWCS) have included this policy as an amendment to their current health and safety policy in respect of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The following policy includes the measures NWCS have put in place to actively mitigate the spread of the virus as much as is reasonably practicable. NWCS's duty is to provide a safe and healthy working environment, insofar as it is reasonably practicable to do so and provide suitable and adequate guidance, support and training for all staff. NWCS will ensure that all personal health data relating to COVID-19 will be treated as confidential and in a sensitive and secure manner in accordance with GDPR requirements.

### **Scope:**

The following provisions apply to all NWCS staff whether their work be office-based or remotely from home or another site. NWCS will provide a copy of this policy to all staff. A further copy will be displayed upon the Covid19 section of the departmental website <https://www.apprenticeshipsnorthwest.com/covid19> to ensure we collectively and uniformly respond to this challenge.

### **Operations:**

-At the time of writing majority operations are remote, subject to Tier 3 restrictions. All business meetings, teaching, learning support and recruitment processes are being conducted virtually via Zoom or MS Teams, until further notice.

-Face to face meetings will not be permitted unless authorised by SMT. A risk assessment will be carried out and guidance provided to all parties to ensure social distancing is adhered to.

### **COVID-19 Information:**

Information within this policy has been provided from information contained at the following:-

-National Health Service: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

-Government Information: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> [www.hse.co.uk](http://www.hse.co.uk)

### **Symptoms:**

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

-A new continuous cough

-A high temperature

-A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

Most people infected with COVID-19 (coronavirus), will experience mild to moderate illness and their recovery may not require specialist treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions may experience a serious illness. Click on the link below for more information on vulnerable groups, shielding and protection: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protectingextremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

### **Self Isolating:**

If you have any symptoms of coronavirus, are waiting for a coronavirus test result or live with someone who has symptoms, or have tested positive then you must follow the self-isolating processes. Click on the link below for more information on self-isolation and treatment: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/>

**Sick leave arrangements:**

-If you have any of the coronavirus symptoms, a cough/sneezing/fever, or feel poorly, contact your doctor. If you are worried, you can access the following website <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/> for further support and guidance.

-Once the Tier 3 restrictions have been lifted and centre-based operations have resumed; it may be possible for you to work remotely, should you become ill with COVID-19 symptoms, depending upon how severe your symptoms are.

-If you have a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, you must follow the NHS medical advice you would have been provided with. Only after you have fully recovered, with a doctor's note confirming your recovery, can you return to work.

**Remote working approval:**

1. Meetings are conducted virtually, until further notice. In all cases this will be approved by SMT.
2. If a family member within your household has COVID-19 symptoms but has not been tested then you must follow the guidance for self-isolation until such time as the person has been tested and the result is negative, can you return to work.
3. If you have been in close contact with someone infected by COVID-19, there would a high risk of infection you should cease work duties and inform SMT immediately to discuss arrangements to commence the self-isolation process. Whether you should work at home will be decided by SMT.
4. If you're a parent and you have to stay at home with your children, you should speak with SMT immediately.
5. If you need to provide care to a family member infected by COVID-19, you should follow the guidance in points 3 and 4 above.
6. You will only be permitted to return to work, 14 calendar days after your family member has fully recovered, provided that you're asymptomatic or you have a doctor's note confirming that you do not have the virus.

**Traveling/commuting measures:**

-All work-related visits and events involving physical contact are prohibited until further notice.

-If you normally commute to the office by public transport and do not have other alternatives, then you must follow the safe distancing guidance provided by the Government <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travelguidance-for-passengers>

-If you travel by car, please ensure you travel alone and not with another work colleague.

**Resuming centre working and client-based visits:**

-When it is deemed legal and safe to resume centre-based operations SMT will conduct a company briefing to establish that all staff have accessed, read and understood the new procedures; ensuring every effort has been made to ensure staff safety.

-All COVID-19 relevant policies and information has been published to our website and uploaded to the quality manual for staff and stakeholders, to ensure all staff understand the specific guidance on keeping themselves and others safe and well during the pandemic.

-All workplace employers will be asked to forward copies of their own operational arrangements to NWCS before allowing NWCS staff to visit their premises.

-It may be a considerable period of time before face-to-face visits resume

**General health, safety and wellbeing:**

- Ensure your work clothes are clean and changed daily.
- Increase the frequency of hand washing, after using the toilet, before eating, using the 20 second hand-washing rule, numerous sanitisers and designated bins are also provided.
- If you use a tissue, discard it properly in the designated tissue bins and wash/sanitise your hands immediately
- Coughing or sneezing without a tissue should be into your sleeve, preferably your elbow crease
- Windows will be open to ensure good ventilation in the centre
- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands
- Use of facial masks/coverings is compulsory when in and around communal areas within the centre.

**Review and evaluation of the policy: - current version 2 (amended October 2020)**

This policy is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional Government guidelines. For this purpose all staff will be updated as soon as possible by email and at such time the policy is reviewed.

Other relevant reading:

NWCS asserts that this policy and associated procedures should be read and understood in the context of other relevant guidance, policies and procedures:

- Company health and safety policy
- Health and safety supporting Information pack
- Company and COVID-19 risk assessments

Related website links

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Government                        | <a href="https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus">https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus</a>   |
| National Health Service (NHS)     | <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/</a> |
| Health and Safety Executive (HSE) | <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/">https://www.hse.gov.uk/</a>   |