

## OFFICIAL

### Introduction

The service you deliver is crucial to making sure we support our customers and our most vulnerable service users across the city.

We are all currently adjusting to the new restrictions and following government guidance with regards to social distancing, as such we appreciate that people can be apprehensive when coming to work.

**While food hygiene is always an important consideration, now more than ever, it is crucial to follow strict health and safety protocols when working in catering sites - the council's Food Safety policy should be followed at all times.**

This document provides general information about COVID-19 and Service specific questions and answers about ways of working during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### General Information about COVID-19

#### 1. How is COVID-19 spread?

The Government information and that of the World Health Organisation states that Coronavirus can be transmitted:

- **Directly:** from close contact with an infected person (within 2 metres) where respiratory secretions can enter the eyes, mouth, nose or airways. This risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person who has symptoms.
- **Indirectly:** by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching own mouth, nose, or eyes.

#### 2. How can you prevent the spread of infection and COVID-19?

There are general principles organisations and individuals can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. These are:

- **washing hands regularly**, please refer to the following: [How to handwash - step by step guide.](#)
- **washing hands with soap and water; or use alcohol hand sanitizer** where available before eating and drinking, and after coughing, sneezing and going to the toilet
- **avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth** with your hands
- **wherever possible, avoid direct contact with people** that have a respiratory illness.

#### 3. What are the typical signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms include:

- high temperature or fever
- sore throat and or
- new continuous cough.

#### 4. What is the guidance around Self-Isolation?

- People with symptoms are advised to self-isolate for seven days from the start of the symptoms **even** if the symptoms are mild.

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### **Only phone NHS 24 (111) if your symptoms:**

- are severe or you have shortness of breath
- worsen during home isolation
- have not improved after 7 days.

In addition, individuals living in the same household as a symptomatic person should self-isolate for 14 days (household isolation).

**Information on COVID-19**, including “stay at home” advice for people who are self-isolating and their households, can be found on NHS Inform site here: [NHS Inform - common-questions](#)

### **5. When does Physical Distancing apply?**

- **Physical distancing must apply at all times.** It is vital that we all follow the government guidance on physical distancing and these measures should be followed by everyone, including children. The aim of physical distancing is to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.
- **All staff members must make sure they maintain a 2 metre distance** from colleagues and customers. Where this is not achievable, turn your head and body to prevent directly breathing onto a person.
- **It is perfectly acceptable to kindly ask a person to take a step back** in order that you can maintain safe social distancing.

### **6. How long can the virus survive on environmental surfaces?**

- Under most circumstances, even without cleaning or disinfection, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.
- We know viruses, are transferred to and by people’s hands, therefore frequent hand hygiene and regular decontamination of frequently touched surfaces is required. To reduce transmission and contamination, it is important we pay particular attention to the cleaning of touch points such as; work benches, handles, surfaces, operating buttons on equipment, serving utensils and trays.

## Service Specific Questions and Answers

### **1. How can catering staff physically distance in kitchens?**

- It is recognised this may be difficult, however you must try as much as possible to physically distance.
- Communicate with each other and where possible ask colleagues to move to allow you to get passed or to access areas you need. Where the distance is impossible to manage, position your bodies to angle yourselves away from each other such as turn your back on each other.

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### 2. If a catering team member is absent due to displaying symptoms or confirmed COVID-19 do the team need to self-isolate?

- No, the government guidance does not currently recommend this.

### 3. Why are we not wearing gloves at all times?

- **It is not a legal requirement for food handlers working in the food business to wear gloves.** The use of disposable gloves in kitchens was removed a number of years ago because catering staff were not following the non-multi task rule, ensuring a pair of gloves was only worn once for a single task – increasing the presence of cross contamination hazards.
- All Catering Staff as part of their induction and food safety training, including the back to basics programme have been trained on good hand hygiene; personal hygiene in the kitchen and Cross-contamination of food. All of which are dependent upon good hand hygiene.
- **There is currently no requirement for catering staff to wear disposable gloves when working in kitchens** - there is a constant supply of hot running water and soap. The most likely way for a caterer to become infected by COVID-19 will be through ingestion (the mouth); inhalation (the nose); and or absorption (the eyes). The guidance about washing hands frequently will prevent any possible risk of infection. If staff wear gloves, this may reduce the frequency of hand washing. Gloves only keep the surface of the hands clean, they do not prevent cross contamination if the gloved hand touches any part of the face.

### 4. What if a colleague, customer, user of the kitchen or service area develops symptoms, how should we clean this area?

- You should isolate the area and contact your line manager immediately who will arrange for the area to be cleaned.

### 5. During the COVID-19 period will the cleaning chemicals used in the kitchen be changed?

- No. All sites will continue to use existing cleaning chemicals for standard service delivery processes.

### 6. I currently work in Encore, have there been changes to standard operational ways of working in these sites?

Yes. To ensure safety and prevent the spread of COVID-19 the following changes have been introduced:

- contactless purchasing is in place
- only takeaway food can be purchased - all customers must return to their work station/desk after purchase.
- communal seating areas are closed.

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### 7. What if I currently work in Encore - Primary School or Nursery establishments and I am asked to work in a Home for Life, will ways of working be different?

- The service delivery will differ from what you currently do. The Food Safety procedures in Homes for Life are the same. The onsite manager will brief you about the duties you are required to perform before starting work.

## Additional Information and Support

### Key Contacts

- In the first instance, and when you are on duty you should direct any queries or questions you have to your line manager or team leader onsite.
- We have introduced an email address which provides all colleagues in Catering and FM direct access to Senior and HR Management. This will ensure that if for any reason line managers are unavailable, or unable to support their team members during this time, then there will always be a way for you to contact a member of the senior team with any issues you may have. The email address is: [HRWorkForcePlanning@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:HRWorkForcePlanning@glasgow.gov.uk)

### Catering and FM – Section on the council's website

- A specific section has also been set up on the council website called Catering and FM Staff Operational Activity. You will find all the updates relevant to you in this dedicated section. You should check these pages on a regular basis – you can access this Service section on the council's website here: <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates>.

### Group Text Messaging

- If you have provided us with your mobile telephone number, a group text messaging facility is available to us so that we can make sure you receive important messages and updates as soon as possible.