

## **B.B. Price Group of Companies**

### **Policy on Coronavirus: Advice for Employees**

#### **Introduction**

The company has set out these guidelines in the event that coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads more widely in the UK. Its aim is to help protect the health and safety of our staff, our company and our customers and suppliers: those we do business with. It sets out our joint responsibilities and what will happen in certain situations.

#### **What is Coronavirus?**

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as MERS-CoV and SARS (Cov). The official name for this new disease, not previously seen in humans, is Covid-19.

It was first identified in Wuhan City, in Hubei province, China. Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. As this new strain causes a new illness, it's not known exactly how it spreads from person to person, but similar viruses spread by cough droplets.

#### **What are the symptoms?**

You should ensure you are aware of the common signs of the disease. These can include:

- loss of taste and smell,
- respiratory symptoms,
- fever,
- cough,
- shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and death.

Generally, more severe cases occur in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

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## Employer Responsibilities

As the employer, we will :

- Keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure in the workplace,
- Make sure everyone's contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date,
- Make sure managers know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus and are clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting and sick pay, and procedures in case someone in the workplace develops the virus,
- Make sure there are clean places to wash hands with hot water and soap, and encourage everyone to wash their hands regularly,
- Give out hand sanitisers and tissues to staff, and encourage you to use them,
- Consider if protective face masks might help for people working in particularly vulnerable situations,
- Consider if any travel planned to affected areas is essential. If and when required and as advised by UK Chief Medical officers, we will consider ceasing all non-emergency business travel.
- Consider alternative ways to hold external meetings to limit the amount of face-to face contact, for example, video conferencing to facilitate remote meetings. For customer facing roles, we may consider introducing or maximising the use of self-service options and online services.
- Have in place plans that will enable the company to operate on a skeleton staff if necessary and/or work from home.
- Take action if any employee is singled out due to their ethnicity, for example, if they are from China or Italy.
- If, and when necessary, and as advised by the UK Chief Medical officers, we will consider temporarily closing the company.

## Employee Responsibilities

Your responsibility is to:

- Ensure your contact details are up to date. If they change, please let the company know,
- Wash your hands with soap on a regular basis,
- Sneeze into a tissue and safely bin the tissue,
- Inform us if you have recently returned from or are going to travel to an affected area, or if you have been in contact with someone who has.
- Inform us if you have a condition which makes you particularly vulnerable or if you are pregnant.

## If you are not sick but cannot work because you are in self-isolation or quarantine

We wish to reduce the risk that employees will come to work due to not being paid and spread the virus. Therefore, if you are in self-isolation or quarantine because:

- You have been told by a medical expert (typically a GP or by 111) to self-isolate
- You have had to go into quarantine
- You are abroad in an affected area and are not allowed to travel back to the UK

we will treat this as sick leave and we will adhere to our usual sick procedures and pay sick pay (please see below). Alternatively, you may wish to take the time as holiday or unpaid leave. Where possible and you are in self-isolation at home, we will consider if you can work from home.

Please inform us as soon as possible if you cannot work. It will be helpful to let us know the reason and how long you are likely to be off for.

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## **Self-isolation and Statutory Sick Pay**

If someone who self isolates does so because they are given a written notice, typically issued by a GP or by 111, then they are deemed in accordance with the Regulations to be incapable of work, and so are entitled to statutory sick pay.

However, if somebody chooses to self-isolate, and/or is not given that written notice, then they are not entitled to statutory sick pay.

## **If you do not want to go to work**

It is understandable that you might feel you do not want to go to work if you are afraid of catching coronavirus.

We will listen to your concerns and if there are genuine concerns, we will attempt to resolve them to protect the health and safety of our staff.

If you still do not want to go in, we may be able to arrange some time off as holiday or unpaid leave, however, this is at our discretion.

## **If you need time off work to look after someone**

All employees are entitled to time off work to help someone who depends on them (a 'dependant') in an unexpected event or emergency. This would apply to situations to do with coronavirus. For example:

- if they have children they need to look after or arrange childcare for because their school has closed
- to help their child or another dependant if they're sick, or need to go into isolation or hospital

Each case will be judged on its own merits, however reasonable time off will be considered. For example, an initial 2 days may be given as dependents leave, with any remainder being taken as unpaid leave or holiday.

Time off for dependents leave is unpaid.

## **If you are not sick but we tell you not to come to work**

If you are not sick but we ask you not to come to work, you will receive furlough pay. This may happen, for example, if you have returned from China, Northern Italy or another affected area.

## **If you or a colleague become unwell at work**

If you, or someone else, becomes unwell in the workplace and has recently come back from an area affected by coronavirus, you should:

- get at least 2 metres (7 feet) away from other people
- go to a room or area behind a closed door, such as a sick bay or staff office
- avoid touching anything
- cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- use a separate bathroom from others, if possible

You should use their own mobile phone to call either:

- for NHS advice: 111
- for an ambulance, if you are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk: 999

You should tell the operator:

- their symptoms
- which country they've returned from in the last 14 days

### **If someone with coronavirus comes to work**

If someone with coronavirus comes to work, the workplace does not necessarily have to close.

The local Public Health England (PHE) health protection team will get in contact with the Company to:

- discuss the case
- identify people who have been in contact with the affected person
- carry out a risk assessment
- advise on any actions or precautions to take

### **If we decide to close the workplace**

It is currently unlikely we will need to temporarily close the workplace. However, we do need to plan for this eventuality.

We will consider the following:

- ask staff who have work laptops or mobile phones to take them home so they can carry on working,
- where staff do not have laptops, arrange paperwork tasks that can be done at home,
- make sure staff have a way to communicate with us and with their colleagues.

Where we need to close down the company for a short time, we will continue to pay you for this time.

However, if this is the case, we will talk to you as early as possible and throughout the closure.

### **Where you can find more information**

- [coronavirus on NHS.UK](#)
- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

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