



1st December 2020

An important message from Dr Liz Robin, Director of Public Health for Peterborough

We are reaching out to you, as a business leader, to let you know there have been a number of coronavirus outbreaks in workplaces across the city. We urge employers to consider whether their staff need to be in the workplace and to tell them they must work from home if they can effectively do so. The fewer people in the workplace, the lesser the chance of an outbreak occurring.

A common theme in some of the outbreaks, has been people coming into contact with others whilst not wearing face coverings in the workplace. You are probably aware, there are rules around face coverings in the workplace. It is important that you know these legal requirements and ensure employees adhere to these in the workplace.

Wearing face coverings in the workplace now joins social distancing, infection control and other measures that you have put in place to protect your employees and your customers. Reminding staff of the importance of adhering to these measures is an important way of avoiding an outbreak in your workplace and the knock-on financial impact.

You will find below some general advice on how face coverings should be used in the workplace. If you would like specific industry guidance, please visit www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

For coronavirus updates in your area visit

www.peterborough.gov.uk/healthcare/public-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-overview

Face coverings in the workplace

Who should wear a face covering in the workplace?

It is a legal requirement that employees and the public wear a face covering in indoor public spaces. It is the responsibility of the business to insist that these measures are in adhered to. This includes shops, supermarkets, bars, pubs, restaurants, cafes, banks, estate agents, post offices, public areas of hotels and hostels. Visit the full list of organisations at www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own

Employees should also wear a face covering in any indoor places where they will come into contact with people they do not normally meet. Generally employees do not have to wear a face covering in parts of the workplace that are not open to the public. Please refer to government guidance for advice on your particular workplace, visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

What is a face covering?

A face covering is something that safely covers the nose and mouth. It can be a purpose-made reusable or single-use face covering. A hand-made cloth covering, scarf, bandana or religious garment can also be used, but it must securely fit round the side of the face.

How should a face covering be worn?

A face covering should be secured to the head and must cover the nose and mouth. It is ineffective to wear a face covering below the nose or mouth. Employees should avoid wearing it on their neck or forehead.

To be effective, employees must wash their hands before putting on a face covering. They should avoid touching it and should change it if it becomes damp. It's important to avoid taking it off and putting it back on again in quick succession.

How should a face covering be removed?

Firstly, employees should wash their hands, then only handle the straps or ties. If it is single use, dispose of it carefully in a residual bin and do not recycle. If it is reusable, wash it at the highest temperature for the fabric. Lastly, they should wash their hands again.

Continued overleaf

Frequently asked questions

Our customers wear a face covering, do my employees need to wear a face covering too?

Yes, employees working in indoor public spaces must wear a face covering that covers their nose and mouth.

Some of my employees work in the back office or stock room. Do they need to wear a face covering?

It is not a legal requirement to wear a face covering in an area not open to the public or where an employee would come into contact with a lot of new people. But they must follow the government guidelines around cleanliness and social distancing.

My employees are wearing their face coverings correctly, how else can I protect my employees and customers from the Coronavirus?

You must take the required steps to provide a safe workplace for your employees. This includes a well-ventilated environment and ensuring cleanliness protocols are being followed. Find guidance specific to your workplace at www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Is anyone exempt from wearing a face covering?

Yes, some people may have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering. Find information at www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own

What happens if employees do not wear a face covering?

It is a legal requirement to wear a face covering in an indoors public workspace. If employees do not wear a face covering, they will be breaking the law and could be fined.

Cases of coronavirus are lower than the national average in Peterborough, but the number has been rising in recent weeks, so we need you to help us stop the transmission in our community. We can only do this if business leaders take sensible steps to keep their employees and customers safe.

I hope you found this information useful.

Thank you



Dr Liz Robin
Director of Public Health



Other useful information

For local updates and advice check our website which is updated regularly, visit www.peterborough.gov.uk

If you have any general questions or concerns, please contact Peterborough City Council at www.peterborough.gov.uk/contact-us

Guidance changes rapidly and latest guidance should always be consulted at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

For information about COVID-19 early outbreak management visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/reporting-outbreaks-of-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-early-outbreak-management