



Coronavirus (COVID-19): Infectious Diseases In The Workplace Policy & Risk Assessment

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is important to note that the situation is very fluid and Government guidance is changing daily. We can therefore only provide a general guide that should be used with care. Furthermore, as we are not medical professionals, we cannot provide any medical advice on the virus, its treatment or transmission. This guidance is current for 15 May 2020.

Motor Industry Legal Services

Motor Industry Legal Services (MILS Legal Ltd) provides fully comprehensive legal advice and representation to UK motor retailers for one annual fee. It is the only law firm in the UK which specialises in motor law and motor trade law. MILS currently advises over 1,000 individual businesses within the sector as well as the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMI) and its members.

Infectious diseases in the workplace policy

Introduction

We have developed this policy on minimising the risk of infectious diseases spreading in the workplace through effective prevention and management.

It seeks to ensure that you are aware of the issues relating to infectious diseases at work. It also provides guidelines for managers and supervisors on minimising the risk of you contracting diseases while at work, and on dealing with infections if they are contracted. Infectious diseases can be airborne (for example flu), blood borne (for example hepatitis) and faecal-oral borne (for example gastroenteritis).

Business case

Infectious diseases emerge and spread quickly across the world as a result of global travel and other interconnections. Workplaces can be incubators for disease, particularly if hygiene and infection control is poor, or if employees go to work when they are unwell.

These diseases can have a potentially significant impact on the business. An employee who is off sick with a flu-related illness is typically absent for six days. As well as the direct costs of infection-related sickness absence, there are also indirect costs associated with lost productivity, damaged customer confidence and poor service levels.

Minimising the risk of disease transmission

We have a duty of care to maintain a healthy and safe working environment. This includes minimising the risk of you contracting an infectious disease from colleagues, customers or clients.

We will promote awareness and understanding of the issues and concerns relating to the transmission of infectious diseases in the workplace, including risks associated with more serious infections such as measles or mumps.

To achieve this, we will provide information on the nature and spread of common infectious diseases, and the procedures to be followed in the event of an individual illness or an outbreak affecting a significant number of employees.

When employees have contracted infectious diseases

If you have an infectious disease, you will not be excluded from work, nor have your duties restricted, as long as you are physically and mentally fit for work and your continued attendance in the workplace does not present a significant risk of disease transmission to other employees, customers or clients.

The decision as to whether or not you should stay away from the workplace will take into account:

- how your infection is transmitted and the ease of transmission;
- the typical duration of the infection; and

- the potential harm that the infection could cause to others.

As an employee, you have a responsibility to minimise the risk of disease transmission in the workplace and are expected to employ good hygiene control measures and use personal protective equipment (PPE) where provided.

Immunisation/vaccination

From time to time, we may decide that it is appropriate to offer our employees vaccinations/immunisations as part of our wellbeing policy. This may include, for example, a winter flu vaccination.

In this case, any costs of vaccination will be met by the organisation. Prior to any immunisation programme, we will raise awareness of the potential seriousness of the infection, the business case for controlling it, and the role of immunisation in preventing infectious diseases in the workplace.

Standard hygiene practices at work

We will develop routine procedures for hygiene control, taking into account professional guidelines and advice from statutory bodies, such as Public Health England (PHE) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). In relation to Covid-19 we are following government guidance to ensure that our workplace is as safe as possible:-

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

We will take steps to raise awareness of these procedures through education, training materials and induction sessions.

You are encouraged to adopt effective hand hygiene practices and to sterilise shared kitchen utensils when necessary.

Personal protective equipment

If you are issued with PPE to minimise the risk of work-related infection, you should use it appropriately and clean your hands immediately after removing gloves or facemasks.

Disease outbreak

In the event of a disease outbreak affecting a significant number of employees, a working group of line managers and other designated individuals will be formed to monitor and coordinate activities to control the outbreak. This will include managing exclusions/restrictions from work and the reassignment of duties.