

TEC COVID-19 Policy

MAN-999-D

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1.0 Policy Statement

TEC recognises its responsibility and statutory duties to its workforce under Section 100 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

The aim of this Policy is to ensure we meet government guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19 and to ensure that we are and remain to be COVID-19 Secure.

This Policy includes descriptions of how The Energy Checking Company (TEC) will implement as a minimum the following:

- a) COVID-19 infection prevention measures;
- b) responses to local restrictions including the 3-tier alert system and guidance as well as national social contact restrictions;
- c) handling self-isolation of employees (and their households if symptoms are present) for those returning to the UK from non-exempt countries;
- d) prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- e) practical and administrative controls for social distancing;
- f) housekeeping, including cleaning, disinfecting and, if necessary, decontamination;
- g) communications and training for managers, staff and visitors necessary to implement the policy; and
- h) provisions for management and supervision necessary to ensure effective ongoing implementation of the policy and its protocols.

This Policy will be reviewed regularly by SMT as guidance, research and community transmission evolves, and will include the updated revision date. In the event of a conflict with other policies or a consensus cannot be agreed on interpretation or operation of this policy the final decision rests with the director responsible for H&S issues.

2.0 Who must comply with this policy?

It applies to all of TEC's activities; its personnel, including all levels and grades, those permanently employed, temporary staff, agency staff, contractors, agents and consultants as well as to visitors to our offices.

This Policy will be supported through our ongoing commitment to supporting appropriate measures and by oversight of monthly reports to the Senior Management Team (SMT).

3.0 Description of the policy issue

3.1 What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness¹.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronavirus>
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The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the COVID- 19 virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands regularly with soap and water or by using an alcohol-based hand rub frequently and not touching your face.

3.2 How COVID-19 is spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease spreads primarily from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or speaks. These droplets are relatively heavy, do not travel far and quickly sink to the ground.

These droplets can land on objects and surfaces around the person such as tables, doorknobs and handrails. People can become infected by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. This is why it is important to wash your hands regularly with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand rub.

People can catch COVID-19 if they breathe in these droplets from a person infected with the virus. Therefore, it is important to follow government guidelines on social distancing keeping away from other people.

3.3 Who may be suspected of having COVID-19?

Anyone can catch COVID-19 and become seriously ill. However, many people with COVID-19 experience only mild symptoms. This is particularly true in the early stages of the disease. It is possible to catch COVID-19 from someone who has just a mild cough and does not feel ill. Some reports have indicated that people with no symptoms can transmit the virus. It is not yet known how often it happens.

3.4 What to do if you are required to assist someone who is symptomatic and suspected of having COVID-19?

If you do need to provide assistance to an individual wherever possible, place the person in a place away from others. If there is no separate room, ask others who are not involved in providing assistance to distance themselves away from the individual, in line with government guidelines.

3.5 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

Government guidance states that when managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what you usually wear is **not** beneficial. This is because COVID-19 is a different type of risk to the risks you normally face in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and fixed teams or partnering (bubbles), not through the use of PPE.

Individuals may wish to wear facemasks as an extra safety measure – this is entirely of your own choosing.

It is advised you wash your clothing as soon as you get home.

4.0 TEC's approach to managing COVID-19 in the workplace

In order to minimise the risk posed to its employees by COVID-19, TEC adopts an approach that is designed to improve both prevention and detection.

Government guidelines are changing regularly, and this Policy will be held under regular review.

TEC have supplied every employee with hand sanitiser and a pack of anti-bacterial wipes. Also, to help prevent the spread of the virus within the work place each employee has also been given their own reusable water bottle.

Employees should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water regularly.

We will also carry out detailed risk assessments all of which will be done in line with the RIDDOR and HSE guidance and follow the people first key principles of:

Is it essential?

Is it sufficiently safe? Is
it mutually agreed?

4.1 Risk Assessment

In writing this Policy TEC has followed Government Guidance and in particular the COVID-19 secure guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed as it was updated on 10 July 2020 and Working Safely during Coronavirus updated on 7th January 2021.

Within this guidance the Government have published 8 separate guides, we have selected and followed the guide for **Offices and Contact Centres** also updated on 7th January 2021.

A copy of the company's risk assessment (and any updates) will be published on the BMS.

4.2 As an employer, TEC also requires our employees to do the following:

- a) Stay home if ill. Employees are encouraged to monitor health and stay in contact with their Line Manager and HR.
- b) If returning to the UK from a [non-exempt country](#) (this list is updated daily) self-isolate for 10 days from the date after arrival in the UK and for a minimum of 10 days should symptoms develop after day 4. Note – members of the same household do not need to self-isolate if no symptoms are apparent but should self-isolate for 10 days if symptoms appear.

- c) Continue to work from home and come in only as needed².
- d) Reduce transmission by limiting face-to-face meetings and maintain social distancing in the workplace wherever possible.
- e) Employees are encouraged to take their temperature before coming to work and if they have a temperature of 100°F / 38.8°C or over, they are asked to stay home and contact their Line Manager and HR.
- f) Whilst on site, participate in health screening, sanitize their hands, and check-in before proceeding to their desk. A designated person will take employees temperatures when arriving at the office using one of 3 infrared non-contact thermometers. Any employee with a temperature of 100°F / 38.8°C or higher will be asked to return home, notify their Line Manager and HR and monitor their health.
- g) Staff may also be asked to answer screening questions (see below at 6.6) and these answers will be recorded for this purpose. Responses are collected and available only to Senior Management and HR to help manage the health screening process, and data will be held for no longer than is necessary. Any employee who has COVID-19 symptoms or has been exposed to COVID-19 will be asked to go home, notify their Line Manager and HR.
- h) All employees returned home will be asked to contact their health care provider, self-monitor, and to return to work only after being cleared to return by their health care provider. Employees who are ill need to work with their Line Manager to determine when they can return to the office. Generally, employees will be asked to quarantine at home for 10 days if they are positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed, or someone in their family / household has been exposed.
- i) Wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitiser upon arrival at work and frequently while in the workplace. Hand sanitiser will also be readily available at entrances to each Unit.
- j) Avoid in-person meetings and continue to use remote working tools even when participants are in the office.
- k) Avoid all travel into areas assessed as Tier 3 or 4 in England under the new 4-tier alert system or other UK countries in national lockdown. A [postcode checker](#) on GOV.UK shows which alert level applies in each area and the NHS COVID-19 app will also direct people to this information.
- l) Only when absolutely necessary should employees attend meetings and should maintain social distancing guidelines and refrain from sharing pens, documents and other objects.
- m) Disinfect areas where you are working on a frequent basis, especially flat surfaces and areas touched (e.g. doorknobs, light switches, handles, keyboards, phones).
- n) To always disinfect toilets areas after use. Disinfecting cleaning supplies will be readily available in various work, office and shared areas. If supplies are needed contact Paul Comerford.
- o) Assist with new arrangements for visitors and deliveries – see 6.6 below.
- p) Not rearrange desks and office layouts, share desks, chairs or equipment, or remove cleaning supplies and notices.

4.3 Protecting people who are at a higher risk.

² From 22 September 2020 Government guidance changed to “work from home if you can” to reduce social mixing and the spread of the virus.
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We recognise that some employees may need to be protected as they are clinically extremely vulnerable. Where an employee falls into this category we will continue to require them to work from home until such time as community infection rates are low i.e. COVID-19 Alert level is *Level 2 - the number of cases and transmission are low - minimal social distancing*; or lower.

4.4 Self-isolation

Employees should self-isolate if:

- They have Covid symptoms - a new continuous cough, high temperature, or change in sense of taste or smell
- They test positive for Covid-19
- They live with someone who has symptoms, or is ill
- They arrive in the UK from one of a number of countries which aren't exempt from quarantine rules
- They are contacted by NHS Test and Trace to say they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

Self-isolating means staying at home and not leaving it.

From 28 September, anyone in England who does not self-isolate after a positive test could be fined up to £10,000. Under the rules, individuals are now required by law to tell their employer if they've tested positive or been asked to self-isolate by the official track and trace service.

TEC also recognises that from 28th September 2020 employers in England could also face £10,000 fines for asking self-isolating staff to attend work.

We also recognise that some employees may contract COVID19, have suspected symptoms or live in a household or are in a support bubble with someone who has symptoms and required to self-isolate. In such instances we will enable our staff to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.

In all cases we will treat everyone fairly in applying guidance and in the application of this Policy, taking into account the particular circumstances of those affected.

Through our mental health advocates, we will also continue to support staff with their mental health and wellbeing needs.

4.5 Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

All employees and visitors are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face (in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes) with their hands.

They should dispose of tissues in the bin and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward.

Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters (i.e. Catch it, Bin it, Kill It) and supported by making ~~tissues and bins available to all.~~

Employees will be oriented to these new instructions prior to their return to work to the office. Any staff members with visitors are responsible for instructing guests on these requirements.

4.6 Staff Communications and Training

This Policy will be subject to consultation and once finalised will be communicated to employees via PeopleHR in order that we may keep a record.

The Policy will be subject to regular review and updates will be provided to employees as and when these occur.

The Policy will also be launched via an All Staff Teams presentation (included a Q&A session) led by a member of the SMT and recorded so it can be delivered to others to review as part of their return to work.

A copy of this policy and any updates will also be uploaded to the BMS.

An online COVID-19 Awareness course is also available and is mandatory for all employees.

Managers and supervisors are to monitor how effectively the requirements of this Policy are being met by doing regular checks and to ask staff for feedback at weekly departmental meetings.

SMT members will report in their regular full SMT meetings about how the Policy is being implemented and raise any issues that need to be addressed to improve safety for TEC employees and visitors.

To ensure all understand COVID-19 related safety procedures both management and employees will work through this new program together and update any communication or training as necessary. Regular communications will be maintained to make sure everybody is kept up to date on how safety measures are being implemented and updated.

5.0 Individual reports of COVID-19 within the TEC population

5.1 As a responsible business we have taken all reasonable steps to reduce the potential for infection at work and have completed a full risk assessment and declared the offices *CovidSecure*. This is kept under continuous review.

Notwithstanding the above transmission of the disease is easy and with high rates of new cases being reported within the South Tyneside (and the wider North East Region) local authority areas and with so many of our employees living within these areas it is highly likely that at least one individual will become infected at some point in the future.

Responding quickly and decisively will be key to limit the impact upon TEC business activities.

5.2 Legal obligations

TEC are aware that it must meet certain legal obligations, and these largely fall into three distinct categories:

- Contractual - Employment contracts contain implied obligations to take reasonable care of the health and safety of employees and of trust and confidence.
- Common Law - Employers also owe a common law duty to take reasonable care of the safety of their employees, which includes providing them with a safe place of work.
- Legislative – all businesses are subject to similar statutory obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated legislation, breaches of which can lead to criminal prosecution.

5.3 Mitigation

To mitigate the impact upon TEC operations and to facilitate the safe movement of staff will be allocated staff to one of four 'bubbles' as outlined below:

Bubble 1 – Unit 4

Bubble 2 – Unit 5

Bubble 3 – Unit 7 Upper

Bubble 4 – Unit 7 Lower

These bubbles will be used to stagger start of day, break, lunch and end of day times.

Social distancing guidelines also apply to outside areas including car parks and smoking shelters.

It is therefore intended that any outbreak will be localized further to individual Units rather than to all staff currently operating from TEC offices, unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

Movement between bubbles – should an employee need to move permanently between bubbles this is permitted provided they do not display symptoms and SMT are made aware and agree to the move.

5.4 TEC response in the event of an outbreak (Response Plan)

As stated, earlier TEC recognizes that it must take affirmative steps to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and reduce its impact upon our employees and the work environment to comply with our legal obligations. To satisfy those requirements, we are actively encouraging sick employees to stay at home, identifying where and how workers may be exposed to COVID-19 and taking steps to reduce those potential exposures.

But what will we do if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19?

If this situation arises, we will follow this quick seven-step process to ensure we have satisfied our legal responsibilities pertaining to both the sick employee and the remainder of our workforce.

Step 1 - Send home any employee who is sick whether or not they have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Employers may require an employee to stay home from or leave work if they have or appear to have ~~symptoms of the virus. It is important to express sympathy; symptoms may be light but the employee~~

will still be anxious about what might happen. Any line manager faced with this scenario should **inform Paul Comerford and HR immediately.**

Where an employee identifies that they have contracted the virus whilst at work the matter should be escalated to the Director of Legal, Commercial & IT immediately.

Step 2 - If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, notify other employees who may have been exposed to them.

We will notify potentially exposed employees of the diagnosis and the need to contact their health care providers to get a COVID test. We will also be mindful of any requirements to notify the Public Health Team when employees are diagnosed with COVID-19. We will also consider notifying clients or visitor to the office who may have been exposed to the diagnosed employee of the diagnosis. Any notification will need to be conducted safely and ideally by video or phone. Time matters here — if we can't reach them personally, we will email them with "important action required" in the subject heading.

Either way, our message is the same: *"Someone in our workplace has tested positive for Covid-19, and they have identified you as a close contact. We are here to support you. If you are at work, please prepare to leave as quickly as you can. Once you get home — or if you are already working from there — find a place to self-isolate, monitor yourself for any symptoms, and talk to your GP. How can we support you in doing all this?"*

Following any communication HR will follow this up in writing and conduct regular welfare checks during the employee's absence from work.

Step 3 - Protect the privacy of the diagnosed employee.

Data protection legislation requires the confidentiality of employees' medical information, and employers may not disclose the identity of the employee diagnosed with COVID-19. Employers are also required to maintain the privacy of any health information they gather related to an employee's medical condition or their symptoms, and any such documentation will only be kept in a personnel folder with limited access by HR staff.

Step 4 - We will not permit the diagnosed employee to return to work until s/he has been free of symptoms for 72 hours or cleared by a GP.

It may be unrealistic in the current health climate to expect a formal return to work certification from a primary care doctor, but we may rely upon a form from a local clinic or an email from such a facility or testing centre to confirm the employee does not have the virus.

Advice about the government test and trace services in England can be found [here](#).

Step 5 - Continue to require employees to monitor themselves for symptoms and stay home if they exhibit any symptoms.

We are permitted to ask employees if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, and whether they have been in contact with anyone diagnosed with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Step 6 - Deep clean the office

If someone with coronavirus comes to work, the workplace does not necessarily have to close, but we will conduct a deep clean following cleaning advice published by the government. - [See advice for cleaning workplaces on GOV.UK.](#)

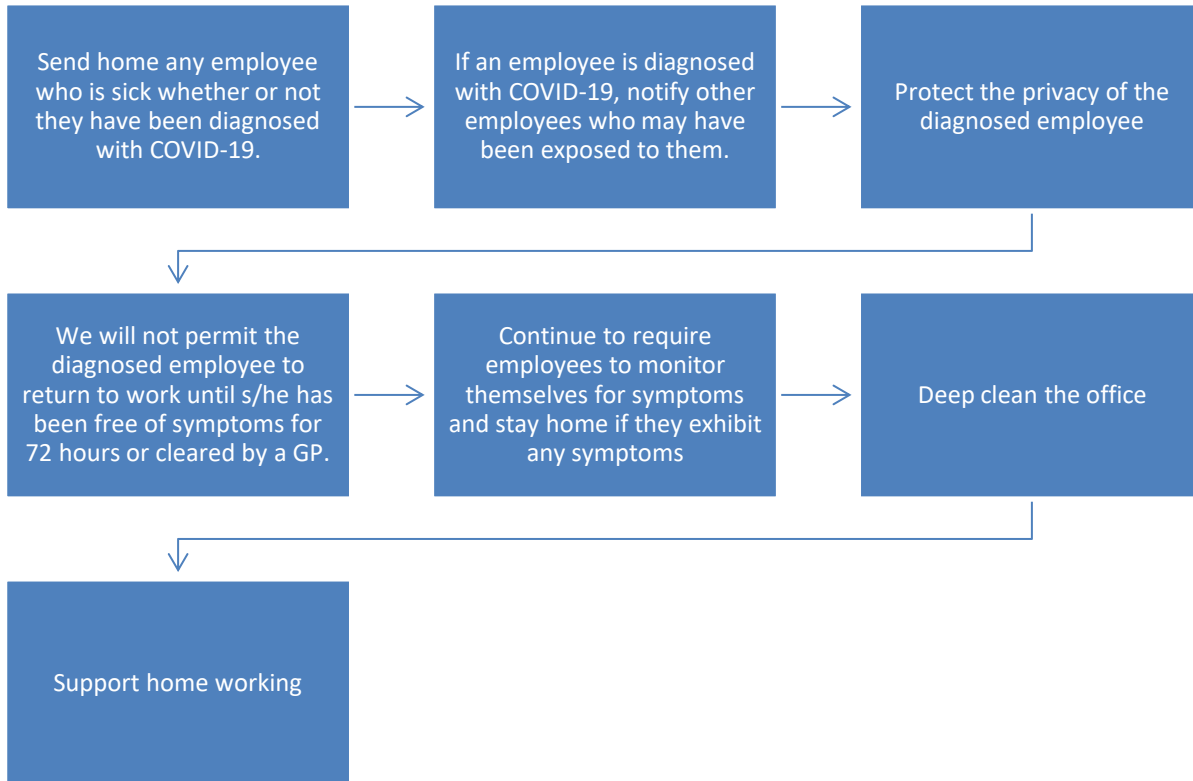
Step 7 - Support home working

If someone needs to self-isolate, we will:

- send them home immediately, if they're at work
- support them staying at home while they self-isolate
- arrange for them to work from home, if they're well enough to work
- pay them any sick pay they're entitled to while self-isolating
- support their wellbeing and mental health – see ACAS guidance about supporting [mental health during coronavirus](#)

Depending on someone's circumstances, they might have to self-isolate more than once, we will support them in the same way each time.

Diagram – TEC Response Plan



6.0 Other Protocols

In support of our overall risk assessment and return to work plan we also require that all employees adhere to the following guidelines in the workplace.

6.1 Hand hygiene

Wash your hands before going out of the office and then again when you come in, including any rest breaks.

After contact with anyone wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol- based hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity.

Avoid touching your mouth, eyes or nose, unless you have recently cleaned/sanitised your hands after having contact with other people.

Do not shake hands with anyone or let anyone hug you (where possible) and try and avoid skin to skin contact.

6.2 Litter

We ask that employees take all rubbish home with them at the end of every working day.

If you find litter leave it be!

As research currently suggests that the virus can live on plastic for up to three days, the health risk posed to the community outweighs our efforts to keep the community tidy. Therefore, in this vain, litter should only be touched if it poses a risk to life, such as a glass bottle lying somewhere where there is a strong chance it could be used recklessly.

6.3 Clothes and bags

Outdoor clothing and bags pose an additional risk to the transmission of the virus, to avoid cross-contamination from and to coats and bags every member of staff will be issued with a storage box to keep under their desk. As the existing coat stands are insufficient, and to avoid them being used these will be removed from site.

Outdoor clothing should not be placed on the back of chairs.

6.4 Cleaning & Ventilation

Please make sure you wipe down equipment after use, this includes photocopiers, security keypads, the franking and vending machines as well as kettles and microwaves. Anti-bacterial wipes will be made available locally to each device.

Please make sure all TEC provided eating utensils that have been used during the day are washed thoroughly before being replaced back in the cupboards immediately after use and all surfaces have been wiped down with antibacterial wipes or disinfectant.

Dispose of used wipes in the bins provided.

If you are cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 then you should refer to the specific guidance but not before seeking advice from a member of SMT.

To assist in the control of the virus we will increase the frequency of cleaning and maintain good ventilation by opening windows and doors frequently, where possible.

6.5 Moving between offices

For the South Shields office movement between Units 4, 5 and 7 should be kept to a minimum and only for essential matters. In-person communication should be avoided, and communication should be via telephone or MS Teams.

To facilitate the safe movement of staff throughout the units in South Shields staff will be allocated to one of four 'bubbles' as outlined above at 5.3

6.6 Visitors and deliveries

To minimise the number of unnecessary visits to the office visitors and deliveries must also be kept to a minimum and should only attend when absolutely essential for business continuity. To reduce the frequency of deliveries the principle of larger quantities less often should be applied, and all visitors and deliveries to South Shields should be directed to Unit 5 Reception.

Employees **must** refrain from arranging personal or non-business deliveries to the office including takeaway foods.

When visitors do attend Reception Staff will ask visitors to answer screening questions (see below) and these answers will be recorded for this purpose. Responses are collected and available only to SMT and HR to help manage the health screening process, and data will be held for as long as is necessary before being securely disposed of.

Visitors will be asked to provide contact information in case contact tracing becomes necessary if an employee or a visitor is exposed to COVID-19 or develops COVID-19 symptoms.

On or before arrival visitors will also be provided with our on-site guidance on physical distancing and hygiene. To reduce transmission further the issuing of visitor badges and lanyards will be suspended until community infection rates are low.

Screening questions

The following health screening questions will be asked, and the data collected will be protected under the Data Protection Act 2018. If a visitor answers 'Yes' to any of these questions, they will be asked to leave immediately and seek medical advice.

Do you have:

- A new fever (100°F / 38.8°C or higher), or a sense of having a fever?
- A new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- New shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- A new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition.
- Chills?
- New muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition, or that may have been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)
- Loss of sense to taste or smell?
- Reason to believe that you have been in close contact with anyone with a known, or probable case of COVID-19?
- Have you recently entered a Tier 3 or 4 alert area or UK country under national lockdown?
- Have you recently arrived back into the UK from overseas?

As an additional precaution a visitor will also be asked to submit to a temperature check using one of our infrared non-contact thermometers. Anyone with a temperature of 100°F / 38.8°C or higher will be asked to leave immediately and seek medical advice.

6.7 Work-related travel (Including travelling to and from the office)

It is not envisaged that work-related travel will be the norm for some time and all remote workers will be required to continue to work from home and travel will be kept to an absolute minimum.

Whether travelling to or for work employees should avoid using public transport, and aim to walk, cycle, or drive instead. If using public transport is necessary, wearing a face covering is mandatory.

Employees should also avoid travelling together in any one vehicle, or use fixed travel partners from the same bubble, using face coverings as appropriate and increasing ventilation..

Members of staff using shared or pool vehicles will be required to clean upholstery and other contact points on handover with the equipment provided and any wipes disposed of in the bins provided.

Where fixed travel partners are used personnel shall inform HR and/or SMT to enable track and trace principles to be applied should one of the party report symptoms.

Where employees are required to stay away from their home for work, they **must** log the stay with their line manager and **must** ensure any overnight accommodation meets social distancing guidelines by confirming that the accommodation is COVID-19 Secure prior to travelling. Any evidence gathered such as risk assessments or COVID Secure Certificates must also be kept for future reference.

Employees should avoid travelling into areas of England that are assessed as Tier 3 (Very High) or Tier 4 (Essentially Lockdown) other parts of the UK under national lockdown. A [postcode checker](#) on GOV.UK shows which alert level applies in each area and the NHS COVID-19 app will also direct people to this information.

Overseas travel should be limited to key personnel only and those who do travel overseas must self-isolate on returning to the UK in accordance with government guidelines.

6.8 Incident and Emergency procedures

Normal fire evacuation procedures are suspended whilst social distancing is in place, currently the requirement for social distancing is 1 metre or more. Accordingly, office evacuation will require a great amount of space, we therefore ask that staff assemble within their allocated bubble, maintaining social distancing, as follows:

Bubble 1 – Unit 4 – Long Row (East towards River Drive)

Bubble 2 – Unit 5 – Long Row (East towards the wharf)

Bubble 3 – Unit 7 Upper – Long Row (West from River Drive towards the wharf)

Bubble 4 – Unit 7 Lower - Long Row (Across the road, down the steps towards Broad Landing)

Fire wardens should pay particular attention to sanitation measures and help colleagues maintain social distancing as far as practicable. To alleviate pressures fire drills will be done by Unit rather than companywide.

6.9 First Aid and offering assistance

Staff must exercise caution when offering first aid assistance at this time and only if a qualified First Aider. If you come across someone in need of first aid, then call for an ambulance (999/111) and keep others away from the person needing assistance.

If you choose to administer First Aid, remember to follow all infection/ cross contamination control measures given in your training.

6.10 If there has been a blood or body-fluid spill

Keep people away from the area. Using gloves provided in first aid kits place paper towels/roll onto the spill and seek further advice from emergency services when they arrive if they have been called. Otherwise clean the area as best as possible using cleaning aids.

Dispose of all towels/ paper bowls/ roll or cloths containing any body fluids in the bins provided.

6.11 Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

If you are required to perform CPR, you should conduct a risk assessment and adopt appropriate precautions for infection control.

Where possible, it is recommended that you do not perform rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation; perform chest compressions only. [Resuscitation Council \(UK\) Guidelines 2015](#) for Basic Life Support state that studies have shown that compression-only CPR may be as effective as combined ventilation and compression in the first few minutes after a cardiac arrest due to lack of oxygen.

No mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be undertaken, and individuals should call 999 instead.

6.12 Contact with an unwell person

If anyone has had direct contact with an individual who later tested positive for COVID-19 and makes themselves known to you, ask them to call NHS 111 and explain what has happened.

6.13 If you are feeling unwell

If you feel unwell or have had any recognised symptoms or a temperature in the past 7 days, please let your Team Leader know and do not turn up for work. If you start to feel unwell go home immediately and advise your Team Leader.

If you have a partner or family member living with you who is in an at-risk group, you should speak with HR in the first instance and follow the advice of your GP or clinical team. If you are advised by your clinical team not to attend work, you must notify your line manager and HR.

If you have already been given specific advice from your GP or Public Health England (PHE) about who to call if you become unwell, follow that advice.

Otherwise, if you develop high temperature, fever, cough or difficulty breathing within 14 days of assisting someone unwell and at risk of COVID-19, call NHS 111 (or 999 if it is a medical emergency) and explain that you recently provided assistance to someone with the virus.

This is offered as guidance only and should be modified and agreed locally as different situations will require different guidance. It may be worth speaking to local Police/NHS /Public Health Department/Local Authority contacts.

7.0 In the event of an Outbreak

As part of our risk assessment, we have ensured we have an up to date plan in case there is a COVID-19 outbreak. This forms part of our Business Continuity Plan (TEC-200) however to ensure continuity in messaging we have nominated a single point of contact (Paul Comerford) who will lead on contacting the Public Health team.

If there is more than one case of COVID-19 associated with our workplace, Paul will contact our local PHE health protection team (details below) to report the suspected outbreak.

PHE North East Health Protection Team, Floor 2 Citygate,
Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4WH
Tel: 0300 303 8596 (option 1)

If the PHE health protection team declares an outbreak, we must be prepared to record details of symptomatic staff and assist with identifying contacts.

Employees should therefore ensure all employment records are up to date on PeopleHR.

We will be provided with information about the outbreak management process, which will help us to implement control measures, assist with communications to staff, and reinforce prevention messages.

Ultimately, in the event of an outbreak the office will be closed for a minimum of 7 days and decontamination undertaken by a qualified contractor.

8.0 How to raise a concern

In the first instance any TEC employee, business partner, or stakeholder can raise a concern if they believe this policy is being, or at risk of being, breached. TEC employees should raise any concern as soon as practically possible with their line manager and HR Business Partner or the H&S Officer – Paul Comerford.

Alternatively, concerns can be raised confidentially via the company’s confidential reporting procedures.

Otherwise concerns can be raised directly with the HSE by phoning 0300 790 6787

9.0 Breaches of this policy

Breaches of this policy must be managed in accordance with the TEC Disciplinary & Grievance Policy (TEC-293).

10.0 References and Further Information

Additional information can be found via the websites listed below:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions>

11.0 Amendments

The following are the key changes to document.

Description	Date
Changes to reflect concerns over foreign travel and increased restrictions and penalties effective 30 th September 2020	30 th September 2020
Changes to reflect the introduction of the 3-tier alert system in England from 14 th October	30 th October 2020
Changes to reflect addition of a Tier 4, updated GOV.UK guidance, changes to self-isolation periods and reduction of Bubbles	26 th January 2021