



RHA COVID-19: guidance for staff in the transport sector

Guidance on COVID-19, including general precautions for staff and guidance on the assessment and management of arrivals into the UK

What you need to know

- if someone becomes unwell while at a transport hub or on their journey with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they should be sent home
- passengers should wash their hands for 20 seconds before and after they have been on public transport and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues
- frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products
- advise passengers they should not travel if they are feeling unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) - a new, continuous cough or high temperature. This will also help to protect others from infection
- use announcements in transport hubs to reinforce key messages, such as washing hands before and after travel, and what to do if unwell

Background

This guidance will assist transport settings in addressing coronavirus (COVID-19).

This guidance may be updated in line with the changing situation.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature.

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection.

What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a transport setting

If anyone becomes unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a transport setting they should be sent home and advised to follow the [stay at home guidance](#).

If they need clinical advice, they should go online to [NHS 111](#) (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff or a passenger has helped someone who was taken unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

It is not necessary to close the transport setting or send any staff home unless government policy changes. Keep monitoring the website for the latest details.

Travel arrangements

Anyone who has symptoms should be advised to quickly and directly return home, to remain there and avoid contact with other people. While using public transport, they should try to keep away from other people and catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue.

This will prevent them from spreading the disease to family, friends and the wider community.

Cleaning and waste

You can find guidance on [cleaning and waste disposal](#). See **ANNEX 1**

Limiting spread in transport hubs

Transport hubs should use posters and announcements to remind travellers and staff to wash their hands often and follow general hygiene advice. [Posters, leaflets and other materials](#) available.

- **Hand Cleaning see ANNEX 2**
- **Usage of toilets at distribution centres. See ANNEX 3** - Public Health England letter - no public health reason to deny access to toilet facilities to freight drivers.

Handling baggage, post or freight

There is no known increase in risk for handling baggage, post or freight from specified countries. Staff should continue to follow existing risk assessments and safe systems of work.

Arrivals into the UK

Maritime

Maritime Declarations of Health are already required for all ships arriving from a foreign port. If the Maritime Declaration of Health reports any instances of illness, the usual procedures for infectious diseases will be followed.

Aviation

All passengers will be provided with information leaflets on arrival in the UK.

All flights to the UK are required to:

- provide health announcements to passengers relating to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- provide information to the relevant airport in line with standard operating procedure, and to the PHE (Public Health England) Health Control Unit at London Heathrow (LHR), in the event that there is a seriously unwell passenger

Performing body or bag searches

PHE recommends that passengers be asked if they have a new, continuous cough or a high temperature prior to the search. PHE recommend that staff consider wearing gloves for each search and wash their hands as frequently as possible.

ANNEX 1

CLEANING & WASTE DISPOSAL

What you need to know

- cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after someone with suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people
- if an area can be kept closed and secure for 72 hours, wait until this time has passed for cleaning as the amount of virus living on surfaces will have reduced significantly by 72 hours
- wherever possible, wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished
- using a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells and door handles
- if an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (COVID-19), consider using protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron
- wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning

Background

Experience of new coronaviruses (SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV) has been used to inform this guidance. The risk of infection depends on many factors, including:

- the type of surfaces contaminated
- the amount of virus shed from the individual
- the time the individual spent in the setting
- the time since the individual was last in the setting

The infection risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) following contamination of the environment decreases over time. It is not yet clear at what point there is no risk.

However, studies of other viruses in the same family suggest that, in most circumstances, the risk is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours.

Principles of cleaning after the case has left the setting or area

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) is disposable gloves and an apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.

If a risk assessment of the setting indicates that a higher level of virus may be present (for example, where unwell individuals have slept such as a hotel room or boarding school dormitory) or there is visible contamination with body fluids, then the need for additional PPE to protect the cleaner's eyes, mouth and nose might be necessary. The local Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection Team (HPT) can advise on this.

Cleaning and disinfection

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.

All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including:

- objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below:

- use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine

or

- a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants

or

- if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.

Any items that are heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of.

If possible, keep an area closed off and secure for 72 hours. After this time the amount of virus contamination will have decreased substantially, and you can clean as normal with your usual products.

Laundry

Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other people's items.

Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.

Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above.

Waste

Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues):

1. Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full.
2. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.
3. It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known.

Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.

- if the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste
- if the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste

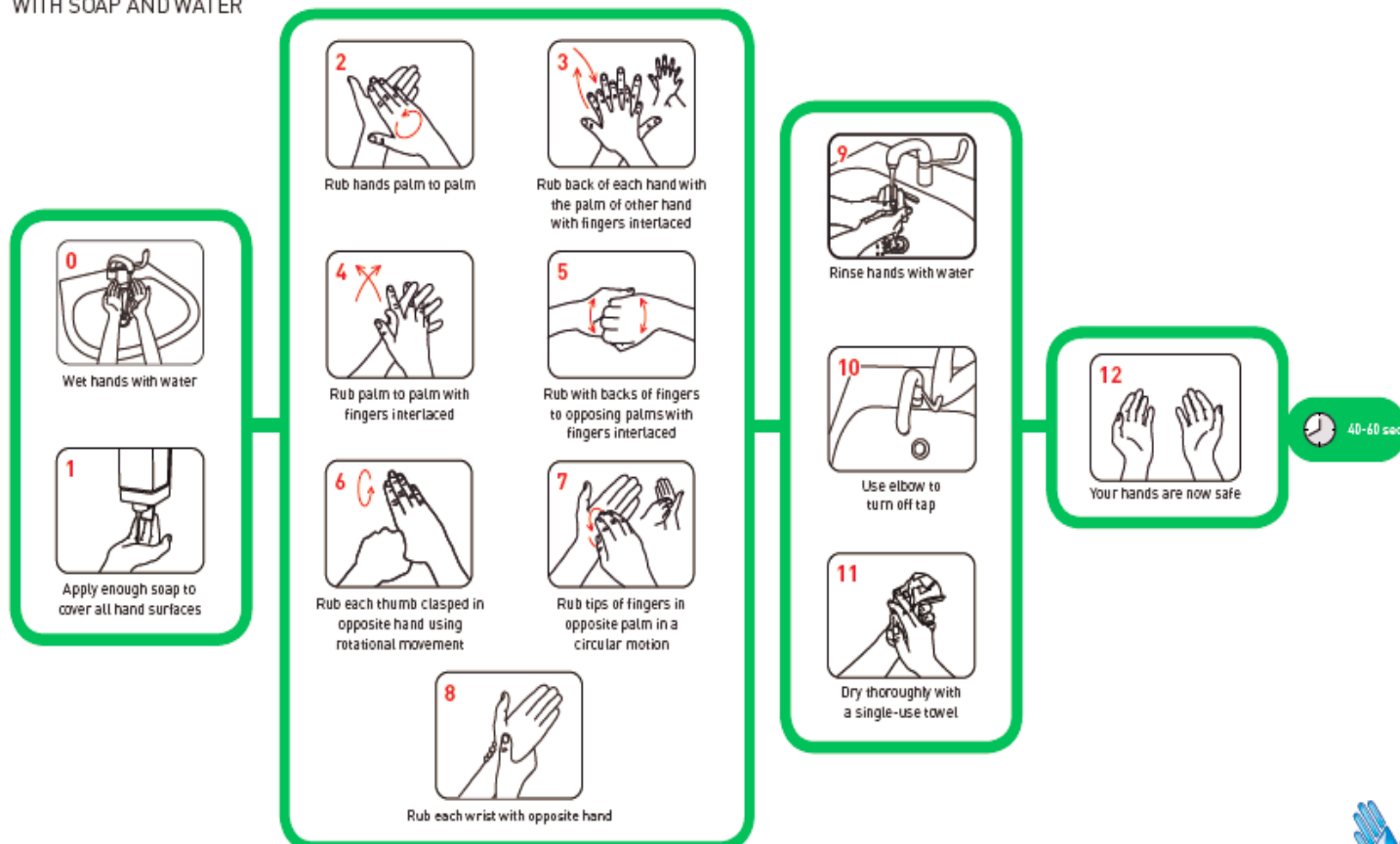
If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, arrange for collection as a Category B infectious waste either by your local waste collection authority if they currently collect your waste or otherwise by a specialist clinical waste contractor. They will supply you with orange clinical waste bags for you to place your bags into so the waste can be sent for appropriate treatment.

ANNEX 2

HAND CLEANING TECHNIQUES

How to handwash?

WITH SOAP AND WATER



www.npsa.nhs.uk/cleanyourhands

Adapted from World Health Organization *Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care*

ANNEX 3



**Public Health England South East
Surrey and Sussex Health Protection Team**
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Horsham
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RH12 1XA
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www.gov.uk/phe

17 March 2020

To whom it may concern,

Re: Usage of toilets at distribution centres.

We have had several enquiries regarding the use of toilet facilities at distribution centres by freight drivers, given the current circulating Coronavirus (COVID-19).

This letter is to confirm that there is no public health reason to deny access to toilet facilities to freight drivers (or others) who do not have symptoms of cough or high temperature. **At this time, it is particularly important that everyone increases the frequency of hand washing, so access to toilet facilities is particularly important.** Please facilitate freight drivers and others to continue to access toilet facilities and handwashing facilities.

This letter has been provided to the Road Haulage Association for onward distribution to their drivers, and to distribution centres.

For all up-to-date information regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

Best wishes,

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Consultant in Health Protection, Surrey and Sussex Health Protection Team

Public Health England