



Message from the Chief Executive Althea Loderick

I want to extend my ongoing thanks to you all. The past few months have been incredibly difficult for people in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing. As services begin to reopen, we are asking a very limited number of colleagues to return to the workplace, to join the many that have been undertaking front-line duties throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. While a small number of you will be returning, many of you will continue working from home. We want to ensure we continue to support you regardless of where you are working. I know all staff are working above and beyond the call of duty to help us continue servicing our local community.

This update has been created specifically for staff who don't have access to council IT systems so that we can keep you up-to-date on general news about Coronavirus and any issues specific to your service. Please check the new staff pages on the website: www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo regularly for updates.

Thank you!

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Keeping you in touch

- This is a slide-based briefing which should be cascaded to all staff through line management chains and shared / discussed with all those who are not on email at weekly or daily briefings. It is issued to Managers at least once a week on Thursday, or more frequently as required.
- It can be also be accessed on the new staff information page: www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo
- More detailed information and guidance is on the **new Covid19 pages** on the Intranet and managers should ensure all staff (who have email) are able to access it.
- **This briefing covers:**
 - Latest national / regional / local figures re cases
 - Latest guidance and advice
 - Key messages for staff in Newham

National and local status

The number of infections recorded as of **4.03pm on 29 July 2020**:

- **301,455 cases** of coronavirus have been confirmed. **
- There have been **45,961 deaths** in the UK.
- Newham has **1,319 confirmed cases**. **

****Please note:** new recording methods were introduced on July 2, 2020 removing duplications in the government's testing regime and improved reporting of testing in local settings.



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**

HR update: 30/07/2020

- Now that lockdown is easing and the Government has announced that the national shielding programme will be paused from 1 August 2020, the Council has revisited a number of HR policy variations put in place to support our workforce during the pandemic.
- **Shielding - employees who are clinically extremely vulnerable - from Saturday 1 August the council will end the special arrangement it has offered to employees who are shielding**, principally the commitment to not ask these employees to attend the workplace. Instead, the normal arrangements in place for all employees will apply. In practical terms, this means:
 - **Employees who have been shielding should work from home wherever possible.**
 - If an **employee who has been shielding is unable to work from home** - either because they provide a public-facing service or because they are unable to access the ICT required to work from home – or are required to return to the workplace to support service delivery as Council operations resume, then from Saturday 1 August, **managers may ask an employee to attend the workplace.**
- Manager's should follow the council's guidance on safely returning employees to the workplace, which includes completion of an individual risk assessment. (more information is available in this briefing)
- Employees are encouraged to read the Safe Attendance Guidance:
<https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1465/hr-guidance-safe-attendance-at-the-workplace>

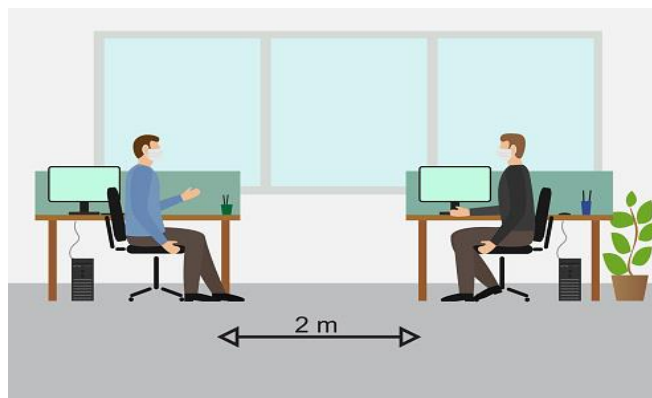


HR update: 30/07/2020

- **Casual and Agency Workers – from Saturday 1 August, the Council will end the special leave and pay arrangements** that have been offered to casual and agency workers during the pandemic. From this date onwards, normal arrangements will apply. In particular, both casual and agency workers will only be paid for the hours/days that they work, and where workers are unable to work or not required to work, whatever the reason, they will forego pay and if appropriate their assignment will be ended in the usual manner.
- **Employees with a child/children who cannot attend nursery/school** - the government has announced that all children and young people will be able to return to nursery and school in September 2020. The Council has decided that **from the first day of the autumn term, which for Newham schools is Tuesday 1 September 2020, the Council will no longer provide special dispensation for those employees who have a child/children** and normal childcare arrangements for a child/children should resume.
- HR are in the process of **amending the current guidance**, which will be updated in the relevant documents – available on the intranet and www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo under (Return to Work). We will keep this new **position under review** and it may be subject to further variation – for example, **if a second wave and/or lockdown is experienced** in the future.

Return to work – risk assessment

- **Covid-19 affects some people more than others** – including those with pre-existing health conditions, black & minority ethnic communities, older people, & affects men more than women.
- To enable us to make decisions about how and where people work, we are **asking everyone working onsite or in the office and everyone who is about to be asked to come back to onsite working, to work with your manager to complete a ‘Covid-19 Individual Vulnerability Questionnaire and Risk Assessment’**.
- This **risk assessment** will ensure that your manager discusses with you the **measures already put in place to make your working environment safer**, and that you **work together to consider any risk factors specific to you** and whether those risk factors require us to take more steps to support you.
- The **Covid-19 HR Guidance on safe attendance at the workplace is available** www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo (under “Return to Work”).
- **All managers will be sent a link to the risk assessment form, and to a step-by-step guide** on how to work with you to conduct the risk assessments.
- Your manager will also talk to you about other aspects, including your **arrangements for travelling to and from work** and whether we can help **stagger your start and finish times to avoid peak travel**.



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**

Staff update: 30/07/2020

- The next **#AskAlthea** call will be today (Thursday) 30 July, from
- **2-2.30pm**. The call will be hosted on Zoom and you can join via the link below. Join the call using the Zoom link below, or via phone just before 2pm.
- Join via link Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://zoom.us/j/95721559275?pwd=Zi9nRGRrd3hHNDMvbzFRajh5aWJ4dz09> or
Call: 020 3481 5237
Meeting ID: 957 2155 9275
Passcode: 195123
- At Dockside arrangements have been put in place for **Covid secure prayer and a quiet space**.
- The quiet room remains open all day for all faith and non-faith users on a first come first serve basis. Smaller congregations are provided between Mon-Thu during the lunch hour. The rooms are divided for users between EG.04/05 for males and the quiet room for females. **There is no need to book a time to pray as the rooms have been pre-booked for the next 2 months.**
- Prayer mats will no longer be shared or provided. The maximum capacity is 2 people for the quiet room and room EG.04/05 will have a limit of 20 persons – operating on a first come first serve basis.

30 July 2020

Keeping you in touch v34.1



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**

Staff update: 30/07/2020

- If you hold a **full first aid at work qualification, and your certificate expired or expires between May and September 2020**, we have been granted permission to extend current certificates by a further 3 months.
- Staff whose certificate has or is due to expire **can apply for refresher training**. We have limited availability and a reduced class size so please get in touch as soon as possible to secure your space by emailing firstaid@onesource.co.uk
- For those staff considering cycling to work - **The Cycle to Work scheme enables you to save money on a new bike** and accessories while spreading the cost over 12 months.
- The scheme is open to **permanent employees and employees on a fixed term contract with at least 12 months remaining**. For more information www.cyclescheme.co.uk.
- Staff can also take advantage of the **Try Before You Buy cycle scheme**. Trial a new or nearly new bike for a monthly fee from £10 for kids / £20 for adults / £20 for folding / £50 for electric. Find out more: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/transport-streets/try-bike-scheme/1>
- Staff are reminded that if you need advice or support, please **ask for help at any time**. You can access our Employee Assistance Programme www.employeeassistance.org.uk (access code: Newham), with freephone access **24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year to counsellors and advisors** on 0800 328 1437 (minicom: 01482 661 814). You can also contact hr@newham.gov.uk and ask for a chat with a Mental Health First Aider.



Reminder: Staff mental health training

- There are extra dates available in August for online Mental Health Awareness training for staff. The training will be delivered via Zoom and you will need to ensure your device has access to a microphone and a camera. The **four hour introductory course is designed to increase mental health awareness, provide an understanding of how to look after wellbeing** and challenge stigma towards mental health. The following dates are available:

- 13th August 10am-2pm (Course code PMH400)
- 18th August 12.30pm-4.30pm (Course code PMH401)
- 20th August 9.30am-1.30pm (Course code PMH402)
- 25th August 9.30am-1.30pm (Course code PMH403)
- 26th August 12.30pm-4.30pm (Course code PMH404)



- On completion of the course you will get a certificate of attendance and a manual will be sent to your place of work for you to keep and refer to whenever you need it.
- If you **would like to attend and have your manager's authorisation, you can enrol** by calling the adult college on 01708 434 955 select option 1, and then option 1 again. Or email wellbeing@newham.gov.uk.
- Margaret Fasanya has set up a **Newham Staff Walking Group** to promote Mental Health and Wellbeing. The walks will explore open spaces and forests including Epping Forest and take place either every Saturday, or fortnightly in the morning or afternoon, and will take 2 hours.
- For staff to express their interest email margaret.fasanya@newham.gov.uk

**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**

#HelpNewham update

- We want to extend our thanks to everyone who has been involved in #HelpNewham so far and who will continue to be involved going forward.
- **Over 30,000 residents received calls** and, at its peak, over **7,200 households were supported each week with food and supply parcels** by a combination of **over 350 redeployed staff** and thousands of volunteers.
- In total **over 70,000 food supply boxes, over 3,200 family boxes and nearly 15,000 prescriptions have been delivered.**
- With the number of people on #HelpNewham list continuing to decrease, now that the immediate emergency is over, #HelpNewham is transitioning to a new **Well Newham approach**. The council will be continuing to be an active partner in the **Newham Food Alliance** to ensure that all households who need direct food support in Newham, can get the help they need.
- All residents who receive food parcels have had a call recently to see whether they still need food support, with many now able to support themselves. We are door knocking any residents we have not been able to contact to see how they are coping.
- The **council is working with any residents that still need direct food support** to make sure they will be connected with a Newham Food Alliance partner. We expect **to stop direct food delivery from #HelpNewham by the end of the summer.**



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**