

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 staff pages on the website: www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo regularly for updates.

Thank you!

Congratulations Ajitha Sajeev



Congratulating Ajitha Sajeev who has been awarded a British Empire Medal for Services to Rough Sleepers.

We so proud of Ajitha and delighted that her fantastic work has been recognised and rewarded after 30-years at Newham Council, she truly deserves this honour.

Ajitha said in response to receiving the award “I am so proud and deeply humbled by this honour, but this work is all about the team and treating people with the dignity, respect, care and compassion they deserve when they are at their most vulnerable. This has never been truer than now with the extra health risks, and anxieties and fear that Covid-19 has brought... It makes me very proud, and quite emotional when I see some of the people we have helped, some of whom have been sleeping rough for years resisting efforts to get them off the streets. We’ve genuinely seen lives turned around.”

We hope Ajitha is an inspiration to us all as we strive to offer the best services to the people of Newham, whoever they are and whatever their personal circumstances

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 advice and guidance
- Key messages for staff in Newham

New Covid-19 tiered system of restrictions

On Monday the Government announced a new tiered system of restrictions depending on the prevalence of cases in an area. These restrictions and the powers needed to enforce them passed through parliament on Wednesday 14 October, and come into force as of 12.01am Thursday 15 October. London is at Tier 1 level, although Mayor of London Sadiq Khan indicated this could change by the end of the week. The Prime Minister has said in order for these restrictions to be lifted, the R number would have to fall below 1.

Rules for places at medium alert level (tier 1)

This is for areas where national restrictions continue to be in place. This means:

- All businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a Covid-Secure manner, other than those that remain closed in law, such as nightclubs.
- Certain businesses selling food or drink on their premises are required to close between 10pm and 5am. Businesses and venues selling food for consumption off the premises can continue to do so after 10pm as long as this is through delivery service, click-and-collect or drive-thru.
- Schools, universities and places of worship remain open.
- Weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on the number of attendees.
- Organised indoor sport and exercise classes can continue to take place, provided the rule of six is followed.
- People must not meet in groups larger than six, indoors or outdoors

Rules for places at medium alert level (tier 2)

This is for areas with a higher level of infections. This means the following additional measures are in place:

- People must not meet with anybody outside their household or support bubble in any indoor setting, whether at home or in a public place.
- People must not meet in a group of more than six outside, including in a garden or other space.
- People should aim to reduce the number of journeys they make where possible. If they need to travel, they should walk or cycle where possible, or to plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport.

Rules for places at medium alert level (tier 3)

This is for areas with a very high level of infections. The government will set a baseline of measures for any area in this local alert level. Consultation with local authorities will determine additional measures. The baseline means the below additional measures are in place:

- Pubs and bars must close, and can only remain open where they operate as if they were a restaurant - which means serving substantial meals, like a main lunchtime or evening meal. They may only serve alcohol as part of such a meal.
- Wedding receptions are not allowed.
- People must not meet with anybody outside their household or support bubble in any indoor or outdoor setting, whether at home or in a public space. The rule of six applies in open public spaces like parks and beaches.
- People should try to avoid travelling outside the 'Very High' area they are in, or entering a 'Very High' area, other than for things like work, education, accessing youth services, to meet caring responsibilities or if they are in transit.
- People should avoid staying overnight in another part of the UK if they are resident in a 'Very High' area, or avoid staying overnight in a 'Very High' area if they are resident elsewhere.

National and local status

The number of infections recorded as of **6.30pm on 14 October 2020**:

- 654,644 **cases** of coronavirus have been confirmed.
- There have been **43,155 deaths*** in the UK. Of those **220*** were in Newham.
- Newham has had **2,672 positive cases since the start of pandemic.**
- Public Health Newham have also created a **weekly dashboard of Covid-19 information**:
<https://www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-dashboard/1>

** Where death has occurred within 28 days of positive Covid test*

Hands. Face. Space.

- Remember the basics - **Hands. Face. Space.**
- **Staying home is key:** If you have symptoms **isolate for 10 days**. Do this until you have a negative test. If you live with someone or have had close contact with someone who has symptoms you need to **isolate for 14 days**, having your own test, unfortunately, doesn't make a difference as you may still be incubating the virus. Only if the person who had symptoms is negative can you stop isolating.
- **Stay 2m away from people you don't live with; wash your hands regularly; wear a face-covering inside and outside if you can't stay 2m from people.**
- **Ask for help when you need it:** isolating is hard, particularly when we've just started to come back into seeing people. And limiting who we see is hard. Newham's COVID-19 help line remains open 1pm-7pm, 7 days a week on 0207 473 9711 (1-7pm, 7 days a week).
- You can **meet up to 5 other people** – maximum of 6 in a group including yourself. The rule applies to people in private homes, indoors and outdoors, and places such as pubs, restaurants, cafes and public outdoor spaces. **People who ignore the rule of 6 could be fined £100 - doubling with each offence to a maximum of £3,200.** Find out more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

Social distancing reminder

- With the number of **new Covid-19 cases on the rise both in Newham and nationally**, it is vital **that everyone that does access our offices or other work sites follows all of Newham's workforce social distancing protocols.**
- Staff are to maintain the **2 metre distancing rule at all times** (wherever practically possible) when working in any Council building.
- We have **increased cleaning regimes & improved access to sanitisers & wipes**: please use these to minimise the risk of infection.
- **Only one person is allowed in a lift at any one time** – enclosed spaces increase the risk of infection.
- **Staff are to use stairs to go down & elevators to go up** floors (unless they cannot use stairs).
- Some of **desks have been closed off to enable staff to maintain social distancing**, Only use desks identified as being available to use.
- Any **one-way building circulation advice and meeting room capacities should be strictly followed.**
- You should make **increased use of the hand sanitisers and desk wipes that have been made available at our open sites.**
- **Strictly follow any advice on face coverings or personal protective equipment that you have been issued with** in relation to your particular role.

Flu vaccinations

- **Newham are providing flu vaccines to all frontline staff who are NOT eligible for the national NHS flu vaccine offer.** If you do not qualify for a free flu vaccine according to the criteria below and you work in a frontline role, where you are around or interact with residents, you will be eligible for a vaccination through the Newham scheme.
- If you're **unsure if you are eligible** for a free flu vaccine please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>
- To **request a vaccine as part of the Newham staff offer**, you will need to complete this online form: <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4Wk2NRiX-Eab7ZWvyHdsihDhrX7PGd5LhkerOls7huZUNDNVWEhZWIZFSEc2UEIJREIESIRRNEFXRi4u>
- **Please ensure you have approval from your manager before submitting the form.** The deadline to submit your request is by 5pm on Friday 16 October.
- **Receiving your flu voucher**
- Once you have completed the form, you will be sent a paper voucher to your home or place of work. This **voucher can be redeemed at multiple outlets** including local pharmacies where a trained nurse or pharmacist will administer the vaccine.
- Most high street and local pharmacies are participating in this programme. Due to demand, it is advisable that you ring first to confirm participation and availability.
- **Please note: vouchers are worth £12 each and have been pre-paid in advance. Therefore it is important that you use the voucher once you receive it.**
- All vouchers will expire at the end of December 2020.
- For further information wellbeing@newham.gov.uk

Testing

- If you have symptoms, stay home for 10 days and to try and get a test if you can.
- If you are worried about your symptoms **please call NHS 111 or your GP.**
- The walkthrough test site in East Ham is currently seeing high demand so **you should not attend without a booked test** (as you may not be able to get a test as a walk-up).
- If you live with someone who has symptoms you **need to stay home for 14 days.**
- If you have been in close contact with someone who has received a positive test or has symptoms, **stay home for 14 days.**
- If you develop symptoms during isolation, **try to get a test and stay home.**
- Please **do not get tested if you have no symptoms.**
- The new NHS Test and Trace App is an additional tool that you can use to help keep yourself safe and stop the spread of the virus. www.newham.gov.uk/testandtrace
- **Health and social care COVID-19 priority testing is available.**
- NHS and Social Care staff and members of their household can access priority testing if they have symptoms via the NEL Portal: <https://nhscovidtestlondon.onk2.com> or by calling 0191 691 3656.

Young Person & Early Careers Forum

- Are you looking for more career development opportunities, and to join a supportive network of your peers?
Are you 27 years old or younger?

Come along to the Young Person & Early Careers Forum.

- Join our first meeting on **Friday 16 October** for the chance to network with your peers, hear from expert speakers and have your say on what you would like the Young Person/Early Careers Forum to look like.
- Looking forward to seeing you all there soon and please send this invite onto anyone else who you think may be interested.
- Email Youngstaff.forum@newham.gov.uk to get the invite to the meeting

Interim fire safety and first aid arrangements

- **Fire Safety**
- You must familiarise yourself with the fire safety arrangements for the building in which you are working (as Covid secure measures are in place i.e. one-way systems, possible altered access etc.).
- If you work in a main building such as Dockside/Stratford Town Hall/East Ham Town Hall etc, a board has been placed in the reception so that Fire Wardens and First Aiders can identify when they are in the building.
- In the absence of a 'designated' Evacuation Warden, please ensure:
 - If the alarm sounds (for more than 30 seconds) you leave by the nearest available fire exit;
 - You know where your fire exits are located;
 - You know how to raise the alarm (via fire call point);
 - You know where your muster point is located;
 - You work with your colleagues to ensure that the area in which you are working is clear of people including a quick sweep of the toilets (if safe to do so);
 - You report to the Emergency Evacuation Co-ordinator at the muster point to advise that your area is clear;
 - If you have any mobility requirements that you have discussed with your line manager and ensured suitable arrangements for evacuation are in place and have been updated in line with Covid arrangements (these arrangements must be agreed by Corporate H&S)
- The most senior manager present will support Facilities Management (if they have a presence in the building) who will act at the Emergency Evacuation Co-ordinator (see building fire evacuation plans for each building).
- All LBN Fire alarms are linked to Central Control who investigate and call Fire Brigade if required.
- If unsure please speak to your line manager or Corporate H&S for advice

First Aid

First Aid

- Please see the board placed in reception for Dockside to identify if any first aiders are on-site.
- First aid boxes are located throughout the building and PPE has been provided should there be a need for any first aid to be administered.
- Facilities Management are in the process of ensuring all their staff have been trained as first aiders, however, that is currently in progress. Therefore, if you are in a building with no first aiders available please ensure that if you have any specific medical conditions that may require the assistance of a trained first aider you have discussed this with your line manager and they have agreed to you being on-site. If no first aider is available please call 111 for a non-emergency or 999 for an emergency.

Time to Talk

What is Time to Talk?

Time to Talk sessions give every staff member access to the opportunity to discuss issues of importance and concern to them confidentially. These talking and listening opportunities allow for a moment of calm reflection and planning which aims to assist individuals to gain some space and clarity in the face of often distressing and unsettling life events.

How do I book a Time to Talk person?

Simply email: wellbeing@newham.gov.uk and you will be referred to a Time to Talk person to support your wellbeing

Gifts and Hospitality

During work, you may encounter situations where individuals or organisations offer you a gift or hospitality. You have a responsibility to be compliant with the [Gifts and Hospitality policy](#), which regulates the acceptance of gifts and hospitality.

In principle, a gift should not be accepted unless it is not practicable to return it (i.e. it is perishable and/or trivial in nature).

If a gift is **over £25.00** and cannot be returned it **must be declared**. The declaration form is found on the intranet in the [HR policy library](#). If you have any doubt it is recommended that you declare it.

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n the case of hospitality, you should only accept offers of hospitality where this will benefit the Council. Any hospitality, **over £25** must be authorised by your line manager prior to acceptance and it **must be** declared.

For more information refer to the [Gifts and Hospitality policy](#).

If you have any queries, please contact: Newham.HRSupport@newham.gov.uk