**Dealing with COVID-19 in HMOs.**

As we move into the recovery stages of COVID-19, the Government guidance has been updated and we want landlords and tenants to have the latest updates and answer a few questions that they may have.

**Guidance for Landlords**

Non-statutory guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities in the private and social rented sectors in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19) has been updated and is available here [COVID-19 and renting: guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-and-renting-guidance-for-landlords-tenants-and-local-authorities?utm_source=93a0a5d4-3f79-42f2-9eaa-68d582e0c2e9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate) (Updated 23 July 2020)

**Working Safely During COVID 19 in your House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)**

It’s important that properties are kept in good repair and free from hazards and landlords should take appropriate action during COVID 19. Government guidance on working safely in people’s homes has been published and [updated on 23 July 2020](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/updates), which sets out in what circumstances it’s advised landlords or contractors can safely visit properties to carry out inspections and repairs. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes>

**What to do if in your House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) one of your tenants thinks they may have the virus.**

If one of your tenants contacts you to advise you they may have the virus you should advise them to get tested and you could send them the below link or copy of the **COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection** - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.

(This guidance is available in a range of languages)

## Testing Advice

Guidance on coronavirus testing, including who is eligible for a test and how to get tested is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Anyone who displays symptoms of COVID-19 (or lives with someone with symptoms) can and should get a test. Essential workers have priority access to testing.

There are different approaches to testing:

* Home testing - any individual with COVID-19 symptoms for 4 days or less is eligible for a home test.  More information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> or by phoning 119.
* Drive-through/walk-through testing – these are the testing sites in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:
	+ Motorpoint Arena in Nottingham City Centre
	+ Bulwell
	+ Mansfield
	+ Worksop and Retford (for those living in Broxtowe)

Testing slots should be booked through the NHS Website at <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>

**What to do if your House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) has one or more tenants who have the virus -**

* Undertake a risk assessment before visiting and follow the Government guidance to keep yourself and your team or workers safe
* Remember nobody can be asked to leave the HMO because of COVID-19
* Landlords are not obliged to provide alternative accommodation for tenants if others in the property contract the virus
* You could help by, for example, closing non-essential communal space where it would not be possible to maintain social distancing (e.g. small shared spaces for use by more than one household)
* You could provide extra cleaning materials
* The Government has issued specific guidance on what to do if someone in your household has contracted the virus, including self-isolating the whole household for 14 days. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-self-isolation-for-patients-undergoing-testing/advice-sheet-for-people-who-live-in-the-same-accommodation-as-the-patient>
* This guidance sets out information for tenants living in shared accommodation. You may also wish to direct your tenants to Government guidance on cleanliness and hygiene for non-medical locations here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

**What to do if your House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is vacant or has a vacant room to let.**

The guidance on moving home during the coronavirus (COVID-19)

period in England can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

**What to do if your House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) needs to be cleaned and decontaminated.**

You can also find Government guidance on cleaning your home to minimise the risk of infection here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

**General COVID 19 Information**

Everyone’s actions help to reduce the transmission of coronavirus in our communities and you may want to share more information with your tenants or just have a read for your own information and safety.

* Staying Safe Outside Your Home

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home>

* Staying Alert and Safe (Social Distancing) guidance for young people

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-guidance-for-young-people>

You can see the full series of Government guidance on coronavirus here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Useful links to find support during the coronavirus pandemic**

* For further information on the steps that the Council are taking in relation to the impacts of Coronavirus please visit <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus/>.
* For advice about measures to protect renters and landlords affected by coronavirus please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/complete-ban-on-evictions-and-additional-protection-for-renters>.
* For help with rent payment if you're unemployed or on a low income please visit <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/benefits/applyforhousingbenefitcounciltaxreduction/>.
* The Council has launched a scheme to help vulnerable people during the Coronavirus outbreak. If you, or somebody you know could do with a helping hand please visit <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/coronavirus/givingforgedling/> or call **0300 500 80 80.**
* To get coronavirus support as a clinically extremely vulnerable person please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>.
* For extra help with rent and council tax please visit <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/benefits/helpwithpayinghousingcosts/>.
* For answers to frequently asked coronavirus outbreak questions please go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>.

If you need information about coronavirus in other languages this has been provided by colleagues as Nottingham City Council and can be located here: <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-materials>