

Infectious Diseases and Office Attendance Guidance

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Author/Owner: Mike Collins

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Security

Key messages

The main objective of this guidance is to provide:

- Staff and line managers guidance about if they need to stay away from attending the ICO's offices if they have contracted an infectious disease.

Does this guidance relate to me?

This guidance is intended to advise all ICO staff and line managers.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	2
2. List of infectious diseases and actions required.....	2
Feedback on this document.....	6

Version history 6

1. Introduction

1.1 At the ICO we want to ensure that our response to managing infectious disease is robust and that colleagues are aware of what they need to do should they test positive for a disease, or suspect that they are positive, but feel well enough to work.

1.2 To help ensure that our offices remain a safe and healthy place for staff, we have developed this guidance to advise you about going into the office if you contract one of the listed common health conditions.

This is intended to help you and your manager decide if you can attend the office, or if you should decide to work at home.

1.3 Of course, if you are not well enough to work then you should report in to your manager as being sick. The purpose of this guidance is not to make people work when they are not well enough, but to provide better understanding about the appropriate actions for working when you experience one of these health conditions.

1.4 We have drawn upon the Government's guidance for managing infectious diseases, extracting the guidance for the conditions which are most likely to be observed in the workplace.

[Back to Top](#)

2. List of symptoms/infectious diseases and actions required

Condition	Action required
Covid-19	If you test positive, stay away from the office for 5 days after you took the initial test. This is the period that the virus is contagious.

	<p>If you test negative before those five days are completed, you may return to the office.</p> <p>Inform HR of your positive test.</p>
Athlete's Foot	<p>No requirement to stay away from the office, but do not use shower facilities.</p>
Chicken Pox and Shingles	<p>Stay away from the office until all blisters have crusted over (usually 5 to 6 days after the start of the rash).</p> <p>Inform HR if you have been in the office within the 2 days before the rash appeared.</p>
Conjunctivitis	<p>No requirement to stay away from the office, but prompt treatment and good hand hygiene is necessary.</p> <p>Working at home may, however, help prevent wider spread.</p>
Diarrhoea and vomiting	<p>May be an indication of norovirus, food poisoning, gastroenteritis, or other infections.</p> <p>Diarrhoea is defined as 3 or more episodes within a 24 hour period, rather than a one-off occurrence.</p> <p>Stay away from the office until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.</p>
E. coli STEC	<p>Characterised as diarrhoea, abdominal pain, sometimes vomiting and fever.</p> <p>Stay away from the office until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.</p>
Food poisoning	<p>Characterised by vomiting and diarrhoea.</p> <p>Diarrhoea is defined as 3 or more episodes within a 24 hour period, rather than a one-off occurrence.</p>

	Stay away from the office until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.
Glandular fever	Symptoms present as fatigue, aching muscles, sore throat, fever, swollen neck glands and occasionally jaundice. No requirement to stay away from the office. Good hand hygiene is necessary.
Hand, foot and mouth disease	No requirement to stay away from the office if you are feeling well. Good hand hygiene is necessary.
Head lice	No requirement to stay away from the office.
Hepatitis A	Stay away from the office for 7 days after the onset of jaundice or from the onset of symptoms if no jaundice is present.
Hepatitis B	No requirement to stay away from the office for those with chronic Hepatitis B. People with acute Hepatitis B will typically be too ill to attend work. Speak with HR/H&S for advice regarding exposure of blood or bodily fluids.
Hepatitis C	No requirement to stay away from the office. Good hand hygiene necessary. Speak with HR/H&S for advice regarding exposure of blood or bodily fluids.
HIV	No requirement to stay away from the office. Speak with HR/H&S for advice regarding risk of exposure to blood or bodily fluids.

Impetigo	Stay away from the office until all sores or blisters are crusted over or until 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment.
Influenza (Flu)	Stay away from the office until you have recovered. However, there is no need to stay away from the office if you have mild respiratory illness, such as a runny nose, sore throat, or mild cough but are otherwise well.
Measles	Stay away from the office until 4 days after the onset of the rash (where the date of the rash onset is day 0).
Meningitis	Stay away from the office until you have recovered. Inform HR – The UK Health Security Agency will need to be informed if 2 cases of meningitis occur within an office within 4 weeks.
Meningococcal meningitis and septicaemia (sepsis)	Immediate medical attention needed. Stay away from the office until treated with antibiotics and recovered. Inform HR – the relevant local health protection team will need to be informed if a case of meningococcal disease has arisen in the office.
Mpox (previously known as Monkeypox)	Stay away from the office until the rash has scabbed, all the scabs have fallen off and a fresh layer of skin has formed underneath. People who have had close contact with people diagnosed with monkeypox are advised to contact their local health protection team.
Mumps	Stay away from the office until 5 days after the onset of swelling and you are well enough to return.

Norovirus	Characterised by nausea, diarrhoea and vomiting. Stay away from the office until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
Rubella (German Measles)	Stay away from the office for 5 days after the appearance of the rash. Avoid people who you know to be pregnant. Avoid coming into the office if a person in your household has rubella.
Scabies	Stay away from the office until after the first treatment has been completed.

Not all health conditions are listed here. A comprehensive [A to Z list of conditions](#) and an [A to Z list of symptoms](#) are available on the NHS website.

Feedback on this document

If you have any feedback on this document, please [click this link](#) to provide it.

Version history

Version	Changes made	Date	Made by
1.0	First edition of document	June 2023	Mike Collins
1.1	Amendment to wording of Covid-19 section	September 2023	Mike Collins
2.0	Scheduled review of document. Change of introduction to reflect the ending of the pandemic. NHS guidance checked. Links to NHS website added.	September 2025	Mike Collins

[Back to Top](#)