

PANDEMIC POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Charity is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its workforce and the following procedure sets out the contingency measures that the Charity will bring into effect in the event of a pandemic outbreak. The following procedure aims to ensure that the Charity will be able to continue its business operations to the best of its abilities in such an event while protecting, as far as is reasonably practicable, our employees and volunteers.

In outlining its procedures however, the Charity expects all of its employees to take reasonable care for themselves and others, to behave responsibly and sensibly, and to act at all times in line with the latest guidance from the Government.

COMMUNICATION

During a pandemic, the Charity will nominate a senior member of staff, or a Trustee who will be responsible for communicating important messages to our workforce, including on the impact of the pandemic on our operations and the Charity's response to it, and to whom all questions from the workforce should be directed.

Communication may be undertaken by group meeting, email or by letter, or by other digital means if it is no longer possible to operate from the workplace.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

The Charity recognises that there may be restrictions placed upon travel so will consider employees travel requirements and identify if alternatives to making the trip can be considered, where possible.

If travel is deemed necessary in respect of the Mini Bus service discussions will be held with the Drivers and in the event the service continues a full risk assessment will take place.

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

During a pandemic, certain countries may be identified as posing a particularly high risk to visitors. The Company accepts that some of its employees may have made plans to travel which may include pre-booked and paid for holidays. If a decision is made to travel, we ask that employees let your Line Manager know of the countries to be visited so that their return can be managed appropriately.

If you would like to cancel any pre-booked annual leave, you should discuss this with your Line Manager, however, please be aware that we are under no obligation to allow you to change or cancel any previously booked holiday.

INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES AND PERIOD OF SELF-ISOLATION

We expect all employees to follow all guidelines issued from the World Health Organisation or as advised by the UK Government or any other authority, in both daily life and whilst at work. This includes any social distancing measures. In addition, depending on the nature of the pandemic, the Government may require people to self-isolate, which means staying at home and not having contact with other people.

In this situation, the following applies:

- All employees and volunteers should keep up to date on Government guidance on who should self-isolate.
- If you are required to self-isolate, you must inform your Line Manager at the earliest opportunity. Your Line Manager will keep in contact with you during this period. You must not attend work during the isolation period.
- Where feasible, we may consider whether you can work from home during this period.
- Details of any payment being made during this time will be advised to you at the start of the self-isolation and will be in accordance with Government guidance at the time.

BECOMING ILL

If you become ill from the threat to health, you should take and follow medical advice on the length of your sickness absence. Prior to returning to work you should ensure you are symptom free. You must not return before you are completely recovered. Your Line Manager will keep in touch during your absence and will confirm your return date with you.

Our normal sickness absence and sick pay procedure will apply for employees. You are required to produce a medical certificate for illnesses lasting more than seven calendar days, however, we appreciate that you may not be in a position to obtain a medical certificate in usual timescales, therefore you should provide it as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Alternative medical certificates may be accepted, where it is confirmed by the UK Government that such are acceptable as evidence.

ATTENDANCE AT WORK

Unless you are sick or are in self-isolation in accordance with Government guidance and have followed our usual reporting procedures in relation to absence, or not attending work under our specific instruction, you are expected to attend work as normal. However, if there is a reason why you think you may have been exposed to a threat to your health, or you begin to feel ill whilst at work, you should let your Line Manager know.

The Charity's leave and absence policies will be continuously reviewed as the status of the pandemic changes.

WORKING AT HOME OR ANOTHER LOCATION

It may be necessary for us to require you to work from an alternative work location. Your flexibility in this regard will be expected, however, all instructions of this nature will be reasonable.

The Charity will consider, as part of its general approach to maintaining normal business operations, whether employees are able to work from home and will take into consideration Government guidance on this issue. Obviously, this may not be possible in every case due to the nature of the business and individual roles. However, where applicable, we will assess the viability of this option. Employees should not assume that they will be permitted to work from home and advance authorisation will be needed in every case.

TEMPORARY BUSINESS CLOSURE

Depending on the impact of the pandemic, it may become clear that the business is temporarily unable to continue its operations as normal. In some cases, we may be advised or required to close the Charity business by the UK Government or other authority. In this scenario, we may be forced to close all, or part, of the business temporarily until such a time as we are able to resume operations. Whilst we will do everything we can to ensure that this does not happen, including the implementation of temporary home working where the nature of the role allows, we may be in a position where we are unable to provide you with work as normal. Where this happens, we may be left with no option but to place you on lay off or provide short time working during which time there will either be a reduction in your hours, or you will cease to do all work for the Charity. Any payments made to employees during lay off will be subject to legislation and Government guidance in place at the relevant time. This is an area that the Charity would need to take guidance from the Government and implement any additional schemes if provided.

RETURNING TO WORK

In the event that our Charity closes, we will closely monitor the situation in order to ascertain a time at which it may re-open, or if it has remained open but we have implemented a period of home or short term working, a time at which we are able to re-open the normal workplace. We will take into consideration guidance from the UK Government or other relevant authorities when making this assessment, including giving utmost priority to whether it is safe to do so and we will keep you updated on the current situation. When the decision has been made to re-open, we will endeavour to give you as much notice of this as possible. You will be kept informed at all times.

Your Line Manager will remain the initial point of contact for any questions that you may have about the delivery of our service on your return.

POLICY STATEMENT

All Policies and Procedures held by Age Concern Petersfield & District are regularly reviewed and may be amended from time to time to reflect any changes in Legislation, regulatory guidance or internal policy decisions, as well as for any other reasons determined by the Board of Trustees. The latest versions will always be reflected on our website.