



## **Message from the Chief Executive Althea Loderick**

I want to extend my ongoing thanks to you all! The current situation is incredibly difficult for people in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing and I know all staff are working above and beyond the call of duty to support residents, particularly the most vulnerable, often while trying to care for friends and family.

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](http://www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo) regularly for updates.

Thank you!

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# 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 2x per week on Tuesday and Thursday, or more frequently as required.
- It can be also be accessed on the new staff information page: [www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo](http://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 continues to grow, as of **4.32pm on 15 June 2020**:

- **296,857 cases** of coronavirus have been confirmed.
- There have been **41,736 deaths** in the UK.
- Newham has **1,009 confirmed cases**.
- We have had to reduce some council services to support social distancing or due to lack of staff.



# Key updates for staff 16/06/2020

- A **limited number of staff** are returning to work this week.
- We are **absolutely committed to providing you with as much protection as we can** whilst ensuring that we deliver vital services for our residents. Our approach will ensure that we are considering things like your ethnicity, your age and other risk factors when considering your possible return to the workplace.
- Our overall approach is still based on the following two principles:
  1. If an employee is able to **effectively undertake their job role at home**, then in line with government guidance, **they will not be asked to attend the workplace.**
  2. If a manager needs to ask an employee to attend the workplace, that **workplace will be “Covid-19 secure”** and all required health and safety measures, including risk assessments and training, will be in place.
- **People who are clinically extremely vulnerable** – often described as “shielding” **are strongly advised by the government to stay at home** as much as possible and to keep time spent outside to a minimum.
- Our approach **has not changed in relation to employees that are shielding**; managers **should not ask employees who are shielding to attend their place of work.**
- Employees **shielding should work from home wherever possible.**



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# Return to work update: 16/06/2020

- As a result of the pandemic, **air quality in Newham has significantly improved**. During lockdown, dramatic reductions in carbon emissions are being achieved as regular commuters have worked from home and traffic on roads has reduced.
- To build on this positive benefit and preserve a long term Newham climate change we are developing a radical new **Council Travel Plan that will secure a fundamental shift in travel by staff towards walking, cycling, public transport, car clubs, car sharing and a reduction in drive alone car usage**.
- To stay safe and reduce the risk of spreading or contracting Covid-19 when travelling to & from work
- **Avoid using public transport if possible** and walk, cycle or scoot instead if you can
- **If you must use public transport, please try** and
  - **Avoid travelling at peak times**, TFL have recommend avoiding 5.45-8.15am and 4-4.30pm. To help you the core hours of 10am-4pm have been relaxed.
  - **Avoid using your car** if possible
  - **Wear a face covering** (mandatory on public transport from 15 June)
  - **Keep 2 metres apart** from others where possible
  - **Wash your hands** before and after your journey
  - Carry an **anti-viral hand sanitiser** or use sanitiser points at stations
  - **Use contactless** or Oyster to pay for your travel
- If you chose to travel to work by car, parking at your destination will be very limited. Priority will be given to vulnerable groups who cannot work from home and must drive to travel to work.

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# Return to work update: 16/06/2020

- If you do have a need to travel in to work on public transport or would like a **face covering at work**, we now have a supply for use by staff.
- **Two face coverings per employee can be picked up in person from Dockside Reception.**
- **For employees not at Dockside**, your manager can work with you and colleagues to agree an approach to collecting these on your behalf.
- The Corporate Management Team are considering an **action plan of 32 exciting and innovative staff travel proposals**. The opportunity is being taken to think very differently about how staff travel to work and move about the Borough.
- Proposals include a **fleet of electric vehicles and e-bikes as well as cycling and walking initiatives**.
- In the interim, now you may want to consider **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](http://www.cyclescheme.co.uk).



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# General updates for staff 16/06/2020

- 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](http://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](mailto:hr@newham.gov.uk) and ask for a chat with a Mental Health First Aider.
- **Testing** for Covid-19 is available in Newham, **with fixed and mobile site options for booking**.
- The **test must be taken within the first 5 days of symptoms**, therefore is unsuitable for people who have self-isolated longer than 5 days.
- **You can book** through the self-service portal : <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> selecting the test site which works best for you. Find out more about testing information on our dedicated webpage [www.newham.gov.uk/staffinfo](http://www.newham.gov.uk/staffinfo).



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# Thanks to Newham staff

- We got this feedback from one of our Care Home Managers about Selma Ghose, our Senior Contracts Officer:

*“I would like to **highlight how supportive Selma has been towards me** for my duration at Westgate House Nursing Home.*

*“The whole team has been great and supportive. However, Selma has been **a really great pillar of support**. I can speak to her at any time and she does not make me feel am a bother and vice versa. I am a workaholic and so is she. **Such work ethics need to be congratulated, recognised and appreciated**. I have worked with different councils and found them to be great. Newham for me is the best! ..... Words cannot express my gratitude.”*



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