



West Suffolk  
Council



Suffolk  
County Council

# OPERATING SAFELY / STAYING OPEN GUIDANCE FOR SUFFOLK BUSINESSES

Version updated: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022

The following guidance is reviewed and updated regularly by Suffolk Growth.  
Please ensure you are referring to the most up-to-date version, via the  
following link: [Economy & Business in Suffolk | Suffolk Growth](#)



# Suffolk helping businesses

Suffolk local authorities are working to ensure we support our businesses in meeting the requirements for reopening and ensuring we work together to minimise the spread of COVID-19. At the same time the Suffolk Resilience Forum had been encouraging residents to shop local and support Suffolk traders during these extraordinary times.

We know there is a wealth of guidance and this can be confusing. We have put together some information, linked to the Government's programmes of support for businesses to operate safely & stay open while being COVID safe.

**For information on business loans / grants / wider financial support for employees (incl. self-employed) - Please contact your local council for more information or go onto the Government's website for guidance [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Business support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support). See *self-employment & business section*.**

**Also be aware guidance will change and evolve so make sure you are using the latest rules and regulations**

This information is based on advice issued by Government and local authorities to help our businesses recover and thrive.

# UK Government Guidance

- General Government Guidance: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-and-support)
- **Guidance COVID-19 Response: Autumn & Winter 2021**  
Updated 9th November 2021

[COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021)



# Summary

- Take steps to ensure your workplace is Covid secure [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) – updated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021
- Remember prevention is easier than dealing with an incident
- Being prepared for an outbreak minimises impact to the business
- Communication is key with your staff, customers and visitors
  - Use policies to build confidence in staff, suppliers, customers and your business, use them to your advantage
  - Communication is a 2 way thing, listen to staff concerns and ensure you are answering their questions and providing them with the reassurance
- Support your staff well to fulfil your moral and legal duties avoiding:
  - Risk of losing staff (both on a temporary and permanent basis)
  - Avoiding negative PR and reputational damage
- Government announced new rules for claiming statutory sick pay: [Public fact sheet SSPRS Dec 2021.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



## Section 1: Preventing Covid in the workplace - 7 steps to staying open (all businesses)

1. **Complete a COVID-19 risk assessment** including consideration of the reasonable adjustments needed for staff and customers with disabilities. Share it with all your staff. [Find out how to do a risk assessment](#).
2. **Clean more often.** Increase how often you clean surfaces, especially those that are being touched a lot. Ask your staff, customers, visitors or contractors to use hand sanitiser and wash their hands frequently.
3. **Remind your visitors and staff to wear face coverings** in any indoor space or where required to do so by law, for instance using signage. This is an important reminder to help mitigate transmission. That is especially important if your visitors and staff are likely to be around people they do not normally meet. Some exemptions apply. [Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) – updated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.
4. **Make sure everyone is social distancing.** Make it easy for everyone to do so by putting up signs or introducing a one-way system that your staff and visitors can follow.
5. **Provide adequate ventilation.** This means supplying fresh air to enclosed spaces where people are present. This can be natural ventilation through windows, doors and vents, mechanical ventilation using fans and ducts, or a combination of both. Read the [Ventilation and air conditioning during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
6. **Take part in NHS Test and Trace** although it is no longer a legal requirement for venues to display an NHS QR code or request that customers, visitors and staff “check-in”, this is still encouraged – see [‘Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace’](#) for further details. See also: [Create a coronavirus NHS QR code for your venue - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
7. **Turn people with coronavirus symptoms away.** If a staff member (or someone in their household) or a visitor has a persistent cough, a high temperature or has lost their sense of taste or smell, they should be isolating. Employers must not require someone who is being required to self-isolate to come to work. Any employer asking a worker to break self-isolation to work is committing an offence.



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# Guidance for Suffolk's businesses / employees

## General Guidance

Overview of all guidance - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | Suffolk County Council](#)

Covid 19 Fact Sheets / Posters & Infographics - [Message Cascaders | Suffolk County Council](#)

Suffolk's economy & business response and recovery: [Economy & Business in Suffolk | Suffolk Growth](#)

## Business support

Redundancy support pack (business – with embedded links to other available support) -

[https://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/uploads/Redundancy\\_Support\\_Pack\\_Final.pdf](https://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/uploads/Redundancy_Support_Pack_Final.pdf)

Business – general wellbeing, debt, bereavement and other support - [COVID 19 Wellbeing Resources for Workplaces - Healthy Suffolk](#)

New Anglia Growth Hub - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - New Anglia](#)



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# Workforce testing & vaccination

- Lateral Flow Devices
  - Use as a key part of your Covid prevention in the workplace –[Keep Suffolk Covid Safe - Suffolk County Council \(yes2test.co.uk\)](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/yes2test)
  - Aimed at people who leave their home during restrictions due to work, caring commitments and essential shopping and are now available for businesses to offer to all staff, to test at home.
  - 30 minutes for results quick turn around
  - Best approach is to test regularly
  - Use before attending the workplace
  - **Keep a record of negative and positive results. Individuals can log both test results.**
  - Free tests are available
  - Further advice and guidance on workplace testing can be found here: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/Workplace-Testing/resources/>
- Vaccinations & continued testing post vaccination
  - All adults in England can now book COVID-19 vaccinations. [Book your vaccinations on the NHS website.](https://www.nhs.uk)
  - Vaccines are the most important tool we have against Covid-19. Evidence shows that vaccines are highly effective against hospitalisation. Please encourage your staff to have their vaccine when they can, not only is it important to stop the spread of infection it will also benefit your business. Please click on the following link for more information for who is currently eligible for the vaccine: [Who can get the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
  - Further advice / support is available here: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine/resources/employer-toolkit/>
  - COVID-19 vaccination will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill if you catch Covid - however, it is not yet known whether the vaccination will stop you from catching and passing on the virus. Indications are that it may only reduce the potential, you can still carry and spread the virus. Hence regular testing is beneficial

# Suffolk Environmental Health: our expectations

- Businesses & services: are open in accordance to the government regulations
- Comply with Government guidance:
  - Have carried out a Risk Assessment ([HSE templates available here](#))
    - To keep employees & members of the public safe
    - Visit on site to check implementation.
- Contact your local Environmental Health Officer for further advice via the your local authority:
  - [Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils](#)
  - [East Suffolk Council](#)
  - [Ipswich Borough Council](#)
  - [West Suffolk Council](#)

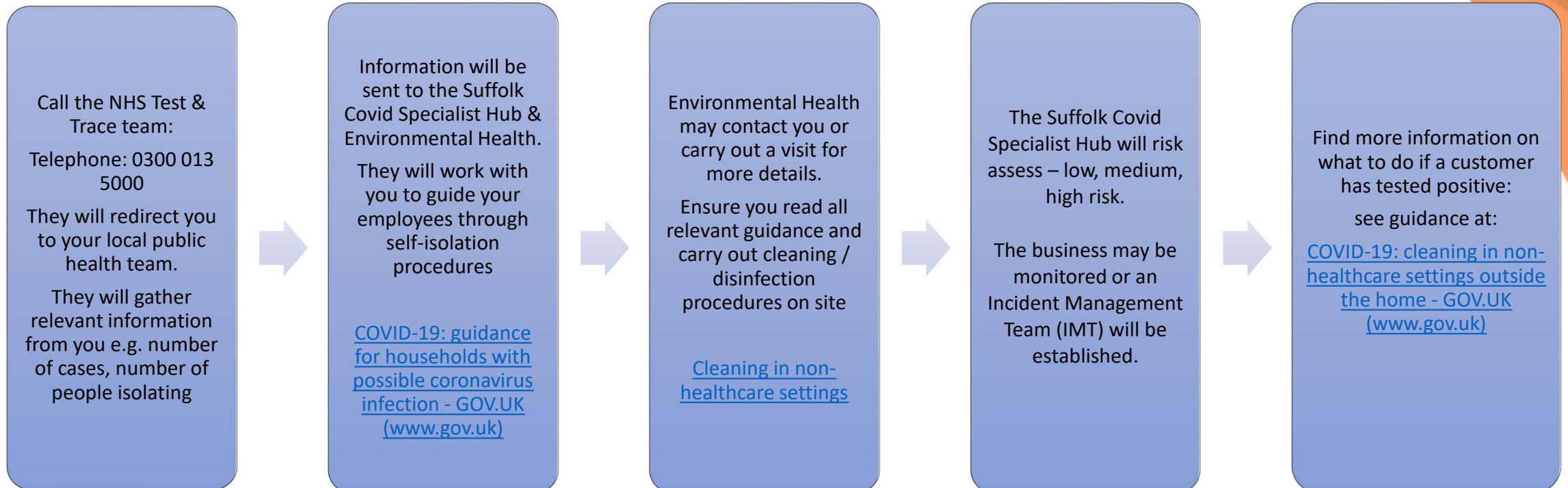
# Environmental Health: Guidance

[Sector specific guides produced by the Government & trade bodies are available through this link:](#) updated 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

These include guides for:

- Accommodation & hospitality & retail
- Construction
- Sports centres
- Offices
- Factories
- Plus many others

# Section 2: What do if there is a case (s) in the workplace?





# Managing Positive cases in the work place

- Be realistic with managing the situation
- Ensure that you encourage staff with symptoms not to attend the workplace
  - a high temperature
  - a new, continuous cough
  - you've lost your sense of smell or taste or it's changed
- Encourage staff with symptoms to get a PCR test: [Getting a COVID test](#)
- Turn away customers with these symptoms
- Be proactive with sending staff home who are symptomatic
  - Isolate any symptomatic individuals
- Utilise lateral flow testing to protect the remainder of staff



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# Health & Safety visits & advice

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), working with all Suffolk agencies and all Suffolk councils, will be speaking to businesses to offer guidance and advice on how they can manage risk and protect workers, customers and visitors from COVID-19.

All of Suffolk's district councils, working together as part of the Suffolk Resilience Forum's Safer Places Group, have agreed to work in partnership with the HSE to enable them to support thousands of businesses more quickly through a targeted approach.

Both the HSE and the councils are also working alongside local public health authorities to support the understanding of any patterns in confirmed coronavirus cases in the area.

Conversations have begun with local businesses and inspecting sites in and around Suffolk to understand how they are managing risks in line with their specific business activity. Many will already have the correct measures in place, but equally others may welcome a bit more help to ensure they are doing all that they can to protect their staff, customers, visitors and ultimately their business.

## We're Good To Go Responsibly (visitbritain.com)

We're Good To Go" is the official UK mark to signal that a tourism and hospitality business has worked hard to follow Government and industry COVID-19 guidelines and has a process in place to maintain cleanliness and aid social distancing.

Confirms the business has taken the necessary measures and is operating in line with the Government guidelines and Public Health guidance clearly set out in a COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

Successful applicants are sent a secure link to download a certificate, mark and a toolkit with practical steps for telling customers that the business is **Good to Go**.

