



Coronavirus – Information for Members

18 March 2020

Please note: as this is a fast-moving and rapidly changing situation, this guidance may change at short notice and it is important to stay up-to-date with the latest advice from [Government](#) and the [NHS](#) on a daily basis. However, agricultural contractors have a dual role in this crisis to keep all staff and customers safe, whilst supporting and providing vital operations to farmers and land managers in the essential provision of food for the nation. The NAAC is therefore issuing this guide to assist its membership.

Keep Everyone Safe and Assess Risk

1. Ensure you and your staff are all fully informed and are taking all necessary precautions to try and avoid risk of catching or spreading the virus, such as:
 - Businesses and workplaces should encourage their employees to work at home, wherever possible – though clearly for contractors this is very difficult. However, office staff may be able to be equipped to work remotely. All access to contracting offices and workshops should be strictly limited to essential staff only and provision must be made for keeping surfaces clean and ensuring staff have access to hand-washing/hand sanitation;
 - If someone becomes unwell in the workplace with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they should be sent home immediately and advised to follow the [advice to stay at home](#);
 - Employees should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues (which should be disposed of);
 - Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products;
 - Make sure all staff have been issued with the latest guidance from Government (can be emailed links);
 - Employees will need your support to adhere to the recommendation to stay at home to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) to others;
 - Those who follow advice to stay at home, and who cannot work as a result, will be eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP) from the first day of their absence from work;
 - Employers should use their discretion and respect the medical need to self-isolate in making decisions about sick pay;
 - Employers should use their discretion concerning the need for medical evidence for certification for employees who are unwell. This will allow GPs to focus on their patients;
 - Employees from [defined vulnerable groups](#) should be strongly advised and supported to stay at home and work from there if possible.

National Association of Agricultural Contractors

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Full information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

2. Be aware that members of staff, family or customers may need to [self-isolate](#). Support and help them where possible.
3. Communicate with all your customers explaining what you will be doing to minimise risk and keep everyone safe (email or telephone call), whilst also keeping essential work going.

For example:

- All staff will be taking extra precautions hand-washing/using sanitiser and have been issued with additional facilities;
 - All staff have been issued with the latest Government/NHS guidance on Coronavirus and how to avoid risk of catching or transmitting the virus;
 - Ask customers to avoid any contact with you and your staff wherever possible – ideally have work established remotely, prior to the job, with all safety risks, locations, mapping and job requirements fully explained by the customer prior to your arrival;
 - Where customer contact is necessary, ask everyone to take account of and respect ‘social distancing’;
 - Ask customers to ensure they too are washing hands and taking the necessary precautions;
 - Ask customers to make you aware of any of their family or staff who have contracted the virus or who are self-isolating due to a risk. This will ensure that all parties respect social distance and do not unwittingly put anyone at unnecessary risk.
4. Review [advice](#) on employment issues to ensure that you are looking after employees going off sick or self-isolating.

Sadly this means that what can be an isolated industry is likely to become even more so over the coming weeks and months, but we can all work together and utilise all forms of remote communication to stay in contact and keep the industry safe, whilst keeping the country fed.

The NAAC will be working with partners to try and keep everyone working but we must all take responsibility and play a part in keeping everyone safe.

As this situation is changing daily, please keep updated on the latest Government guidance and if you have any questions or concerns please contact the NAAC staff and we will try and assist.

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