

Southern Region – COVID-19 response FAQ

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What are our strategic objectives?

Keeping you and your families safe remains our number one priority. Then we have to consider our critical passengers and freight services that will help the UK to get through this crisis.

Social distancing

It remains important that we look after each other at this difficult time. Together with our trade union colleagues, we have developed guidelines for social distancing for our key workers. These are constantly evolving as new good practice from across the country emerges. These national posters provide advice for [working on site](#) and at [operating locations](#) and as a region we have created three hygiene posters – [travel for work](#), [depot and messing](#) and [site access control/site briefing](#). A [new video](#) describes how to social distance in a maintenance context.

Returning to the workplace

The Government is now encouraging people to work from home if you can.

If you need to attend the workplace you may wish to download and print a copy of the [key worker letter](#) in case you are stopped.

If you need to work in the office to do your job effectively or because you believe it will be better for your physical or mental health, then please do continue to do so. This is allowed under the new guidance.

If you do attend the office

We have developed a set of guiding principles focussing on our people, their health and wellbeing, and our 200-plus work locations.

The measures you can expect to see in our locations across the region include:

- Infrared temperature testing in our large essential buildings to monitor colleagues with high temperatures who may be displaying coronavirus symptoms. Colleagues with a high temperature would follow the Government advice and return home before informing their line manager.
- One-way or alternative systems in offices so people can maintain a safe distance when moving around the building.
- The number of people in lifts is likely to be limited to just one person per lift in most cases, unless social distancing can be maintained. Lifts should only be used by people with mobility issues or to avoid heavy lifting and manual handling.
- Colleagues will now have assigned desks, designated in advance of them going into work. The strict clear desk policy continues but we will have extra responsibility to wipe down our desks, communal keyboards and phones before and after we've used them.
- Communal areas like kitchens, mess facilities, toilets and changing areas can be used but clear signage must be displayed to show how many people can be permitted at a time. Where no signage is displayed, it should be assumed only one person is allowed. We must continue to keep our two-metre distance at all times, and you may find two-metre spacing lines mapped out on the floor in some communal areas to help you.
- Where mess facilities are large or have open plan seating, more than one person may be allowed - if adequate measurements and mapping has taken place. In these instances, allocated seats should be clearly identified as available to sit at, and there will be signage

at the entrance to the facility to indicate capacity. If there is no signage at the entrance, it should be assumed that there is a one person at a time policy in place.

- We can continue to use meeting rooms and breakout spaces for meetings, but only where social distancing can be maintained, and there is no other suitable alternative. Video and telephone conference meetings are still the preferred meeting format.
- The capacity for each workplace is determined by size, taking in to account the necessary social distancing guidelines. Contact your building COVID-19 Champion for exact numbers.

What advice is there if an employee is staying away from home for work?

A new guidance has been released to support employees with questions and information on working and staying away from home during coronavirus. The guidance can be found [here](#).

NHS QR Code

Nationally we have not rolled out the NHS QR code at our locations as we have processes in place, like desk allocation booking, to establish who is in the office and when.

COVID-19 Champions

Each location has a COVID-19 Champion to assist you with any queries you have at your location. The full list is available [here](#).

IT when back in the office

As some of you have been working from home, it is worth remembering the following:

- Ensure you have logged off of Remote Connect when in the office
- Zscaler should remain active when in the office, as it will give you access to internet services using a faster internet connection
- Disable Wi-fi calling on your iPhone where this has been enabled

Temperature checks

Thermal imaging cameras are installed across the larger Southern region locations.

The cameras are highly accurate and can measure an individual's temperature with no contact required, when an employee arrives at the entry point of a building.

Two other types of thermometer are now being distributed – digital thermometers for personal use and non-contact infrared thermometers for medium-sized sites – these are in addition to the thermal imaging cameras already installed at entry points of our larger sites.

It is the responsibility of everyone, whether a facilities team is on hand or not, to take action if an elevated temperature is identified.

Using the thermometers

Supplies of both types of thermometers are being distributed to workplaces via workplace managers. When the thermometers are available, colleagues will be notified locally and given guidance on how to use them.

The digital thermometers are for personal use and not to be shared with colleagues. They work by being placed under the tongue, then beep indicating that the temperature has been taken. The reading is then displayed on the screen. As the thermometers are reusable, colleagues are encouraged to use their personal device before their arrival at the workplace or if they begin to feel unwell whilst at work.

The non-contact infrared thermometers will be located at medium-site entry points with a box of disposable gloves, hand sanitiser and a bin. They are held 0 – 3 cm from the forehead while pressing the button for 0 - 3 seconds as the temperature is read. When using the non-contact thermometers, colleagues should wear disposable gloves and wipe them down as they are shared.

Is this a replacement for social distancing?

Thermal imaging is designed as an additional measure to attempt to stop a potentially infected employee from entering their workplace. The equipment is designed to detect an elevated temperature which is a symptom of COVID-19. This equipment does not replace the government guidelines of social distancing it is simply an additional measure to protect our workforce.

How and when is the camera calibrated?

The camera is not calibrated, a “black body” device is installed which is calibrated and certified and this is the only device requiring calibration.

How will the thematic conditions of the test area be monitored/controlled?

The blackbody device provides a “known” temperature which enables us to provide an accurate measurement (0.3c) of people under various environmental conditions.

Will the person operating the system have clinical training to do so?

The equipment conforms to ASTM Designation 1965-98 The Standard for IR Thermometers for Intermittent Measurements of Patient Temperature. As the equipment reads temperature as opposed to the individual managing the equipment, it is not necessary for an individual to have clinical training. In addition, no clinical interventions will be carried out therefore these qualifications would not be deemed necessary.

Will a ‘follow up’ test be done (internal temperature taken i.e. orally, in-ear) as per standard procedure in airports etc?

Due to social distancing we would not advise that a follow up is actioned. Plus the equipment only has an error margin of 0.3 degrees.

Will exercise/walking effect readings from the camera?

If a person has been exercising, such as running immediately prior to the test then it would be possible to display a higher than average temperature, however excessive exercise would be required to reach these levels. If an individual has immediately finished excessive exercise then come straight into the building it would be advisable to wait until he/she has cooled down prior to using the equipment.

Would someone with a high temperature be compelled to self-isolate?

Current WHO and Public Health England recommendations are that anyone displaying a fever is to self-isolate, however this is to be taken with a pragmatic approach. Certain individuals will have “known” other reasons for a higher temperature and these will be taken into account. The system is also very accurate with an install base of approximately 20,000 sites world-wide and the level of false positives is extremely low.

An [updated video](#) has been produced to share the precautions that have been put in place as people begin to return to their normal place of work. The update reflects the latest information on thermal cameras and infrared thermometers. Colleagues can find support, guidance and get questions answered about returning to workplaces in the [return to workplace support Yammer group](#).

Managed stations

Network Rail and train operators have planned a number of ways to help passengers move in and around stations in a controlled way, for example through queuing systems, announcements and signs to guide passengers. Sometimes this may involve closing certain entrances and exits. The precise tools used will vary from station to station. An app has been launched to allow stations staff to report any overcrowding hotspots across the network. This will further help us to build up an accurate picture of crowding concerns and to respond accordingly.

Staff protection

We are working with the unions to take all necessary precautions to keep our employees safe. We have reviewed our ways of working to ensure we are balancing the need to operate critical services for passengers and freight whilst keeping our colleagues safe.

Keeping passengers safe

Managing queues in the station and on the platform

We are urging passengers to stay safe by maintaining social distancing where possible and to plan ahead and check before they travel. We are advising that people should leave plenty of time, avoid peak travel times and buy tickets online, on mobiles or on smartcards to enable social distancing to operate as effectively as possible.

Extensive planning has taken place to ensure that passengers can move into and around stations and get on and off trains in a controlled way, using queuing systems, announcements, signage and other aids to manage passenger flows effectively. This does vary from station to station.

People breaking social distancing rules

While we will be on hand to advise passengers at stations, we are not expected to enforce social distancing requirements as this is the responsibility of passengers. It may not be possible to maintain social distancing at all points on a journey so passengers are advised to avoid peak travel times, maintain social distancing where possible, wear a face covering, wash their hands before and after their journey and carry hand sanitiser with them. While the British Transport Police will continue to support us at stations and on trains, and will be enforcing social distancing requirements in stations.

Limiting the number of passengers (especially in bad weather)

Platforms at some stations will be marked-up with suitable signage to help people maintain social distancing. The signs will advise passengers to act responsibly, maintain social distancing where possible, wear a face covering, wash their hands before and after their journey, carry hand

sanitiser with them and listen to and follow announcements from station and on-board staff.

We are also encouraging passengers to plan ahead for their journey and be prepared for a variety of weather conditions. Waiting rooms may be open where it is safe to do so but the number of people using them at any one time may be restricted. Toilets should be open, but access may be restricted and some parts may be closed off.

Boarding trains deemed full

Where platform staff are present, we will try to ensure that everyone who needs to use public transport is able to do so at the same time as ensuring trains depart at their scheduled time. We will be asking passengers to wait for the next service if a train is full.

Face coverings

All staff and contractors should wear a face covering when they are at work at stations where there is no physical barrier between them and the passengers. This is unless you are exempted from wearing coverings for medical reasons.

All Network Rail staff, contract staff and members of the supply chain when travelling on public transport, whether for business purposes or commuting, in accordance with government guidelines, should wear a face covering for the duration of their journey including passage through the station and any interchange. This is now mandatory.

Employees are now advised to wear face coverings in all social and communal areas, whilst in transit and in canteens when not seated. This is seen as best practice but is not mandatory. Employees are not required to wear a face covering at their desk or workstation, unless explicitly risk assessed to do so.

This advice will be updated in accordance to any published changes to government guidelines.

When should I wear a face covering?

Face coverings **will be** expected to be worn by employees:

- when in a train carriage whether working or travelling to work
- on station platforms
- on stations concourses
- information points/booking offices without a glass or Perspex barrier
- travelling in road transport such as taxis/buses/coaches

General use of face coverings **will not be** expected to be worn by employees:

- when behind glass or Perspex barrier such as in a booking office/ information points where social distancing can be achieved
- in train cabs – front, mid or rear when on your own
- in offices when sat at workstation
- where there is a medical restriction that prevents wearing face coverings such as asthma

What constitutes a face covering?

A face covering is a cloth that should “cover your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. It can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. At its very simplest, you can wear something that covers your mouth and your nose, and that minimises your

ability to touch your face. Remember that face coverings are one more measure to help you keep healthy, along with washing your hands and social distancing.

Advice to disabled people

Passengers who need assistance during their journey can still book ahead but they may be asked extra questions to help us plan how we can assist people safely and we remain committed to help those who cannot book in advance. We need to explain to passengers what we are doing at any point (such as using a sleeve to guide a customer) to give added reassurance that their safety is paramount.

Alerting passengers to which stations and what services are busy and at what times

The National Rail Enquiries website provides real time information for passengers.

NHS Test and Trace Service

The Government has launched an NHS Test and Trace service to help identify, contain and control coronavirus in order to reduce the spread and save lives.

Anyone that tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and be asked to share information about their recent interactions.

If you are contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service

Please follow their instructions. We recognise that you may be concerned if you receive a notification while at work. If this happens, please inform your line manager who will make necessary arrangements for you to leave as soon as possible and when it is safe to do so.

How NHS Test and Trace service works

- **Alert:** You will be alerted by the NHS Test and Trace service if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus. The alert will usually come by text, email or phone call. You should then log on to the **NHS Test and Trace website**, which is normally the easiest way to communicate. If not, a trained call handler will talk you through what you must do. You must inform the service if you were wearing protective equipment i.e. face masks, visors etc. at the time of contact, as this may affect the decision.
- **Isolate:** You must begin self-isolation for 14 days from your last contact with the person who has tested positive. You must do this even if you don't feel unwell because if you have been infected, you could become infectious to others at any point up to 14 days. The rest of the household doesn't need to self-isolate if you do not have any symptoms, but the household must take extra care to follow the guidance on social distancing and handwashing. Other members of the household must also avoid contact with you. Your colleagues also do not need to self-isolate, unless they have been contacted by Test and Trace themselves.
- **Test if needed:** If you develop symptoms of coronavirus, other members of your household must self-isolate immediately at home for 14 days. The person with symptoms must book a test at **www.nhs.uk/coronavirus** or call 119 if you have no internet access. For colleagues, tests can also be arranged via **HR direct**. If the test is positive, you must continue to stay at home for at least 10 days and NHS Test and Trace will get in touch to ask about your contacts. If the test is negative, as the symptomatic person, you must still complete a 14-day self-isolation

period because the virus may not be detectable yet. This is crucial to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus.

What is close contact?

Face to face within 2m and for longer than 15 minutes, or less than 1m distance for more than 1 minute, or in the same vehicle.

Downloading the app

As we thoroughly support this health initiative, employees are able to download the new test and trace app on to work mobile phones. If you download the app you are advised to: (1) switch on Bluetooth and keep this on at all times; and (2) ensure you carry this phone with you at all times when you leave your house, including on rest days; (3) turn off the app functionality when in a COVID-Secure location. The normal rules regarding the use of work phones continue to apply.

If you would prefer to download the app on your personal mobile device, then you should equally keep the phone with you at all times, including whilst at work.

The use of mobiles phones for certain roles and certain activities is restricted for the safety of the individual and others, these restrictions must still be adhered too and if clarification is needed please speak to your line manager.

Coronavirus Testing

If you or someone in your household are symptomatic with coronavirus, alert your line manager, so that a test referral can be arranged. Testing is available for colleagues, their household and/or their support bubble household if they have coronavirus symptoms. Line managers can request a test via HR Direct. HR Direct will request that a test link is sent from the government portal directly to the employee. The testing process itself is entirely confidential and is arranged by the employee.

Can I be tested for coronavirus?

The government advice is now that you 'must' test if you are symptomatic, however, this is a personal matter for individuals.

Testing is now available for symptomatic colleagues, and/or their symptomatic household or support household bubble members. This testing will enable those infected with coronavirus to continue their self-isolation and take measures to avoid spread of the virus. Tests are most effective in the first five days of symptoms so line managers of symptomatic colleagues or those self-isolating due to symptomatic household or household support bubble members should encourage their teams to let them know immediately if they or their household, or household support bubble members are unwell so that a referral for a test can be arranged. Line managers should contact **HR Direct** quickly so that they receive the information about testing to discuss with their line report. For more information, please find the [Voluntary Testing FAQs](#)

A guide to home testing for adults and children can be [found here](#)

If you have symptoms of coronavirus and book a test, you should self-isolate and not attend work prior to the test result. If your result is negative you can return to work unless you have been told to complete a self-isolation period by test and trace services or the app.

You could be fined if you do not stay at home and self-isolate following a positive test result for COVID-19, or if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and instructed to self-isolate because you are a contact of someone who has had a positive test result. If you test positive for COVID-19, it will also be an offence to knowingly provide false information about your close contacts to NHS Test and Trace.

Do you live within an area of mass testing and want to attend for a test if you are asymptomatic?

Testing is normally for symptomatic (high temperature, persistent new cough, loss of sense of taste or smell) people only using a 'swab test'.

However, in areas of mass testing, a new type of test 'lateral flow antigen testing' of asymptomatic (with no signs of coronavirus) people may be offered. This is the test that delivers a result in approximately 30 minutes.

Mass testing is normally offered over a period of weeks and so planning for asymptomatic testing can be undertaken by managers and employees.

Appointments for 'lateral flow testing' should be made outside of work time where possible and consideration as to whether any home testing options should be explored. However, if neither are possible then attendance for a 'lateral flow test' should be supported by paid special leave, subject to, prior approval for the absence from their manager. Managers may need to discuss with teams a phasing of time off for appointments across the team to ensure business continuity and ensuring that all team members have the opportunity to take the test.

Should a positive result be received from asymptomatic 'lateral flow testing' the employee must self-isolate for 10 days from the date the test was taken. The employee should work from home where possible but if not, then the absence should be recorded on oracle or timesheets as COVID-19 paid special leave with payment of published base roster payments. Where the employee cannot work from home, a case must be recorded with HR Direct.

Should a re-test be required due to an inconclusive test result from asymptomatic testing, it is likely that a 'swab test' will be required. The employee should self-isolate until a definite negative result is received.

Should an exercise of mass testing encourage asymptomatic people to take two 'lateral flow tests' with days in between, then there is no need to self-isolate between tests if the first test returns negative.

If someone is tested positive with COVID-19 in your team

As a line manager, if a team member receives a positive test result for COVID-19 please follow the actions in this [flow chart](#) and use this [conversation guide](#) to have a discussion with that team member.

If a team member is currently off sick due to testing positive for COVID-19 please retrospectively fill in the form.

If someone has been tested positive but feels well enough to work, you do not need to log them as sick on eBusiness.

Mind the Gap app

Using inaudible, ultra-high frequency sounds and Bluetooth, this app calculates the distance between mobile phones to trigger an alert when users get too close to each other. Complete with the option to adjust alerts, the technology doesn't collect sensitive data or allow the tracking of people's movements. This optional app is available to download now from the Network Rail app catalogue.

Cycle to work scheme

The Cycle to work scheme provided by Cycle Solutions provides employees with a tax-free bike and accessories. By covering the cost of the bike through a salary sacrifice, most people save about 39 % of the cost. Employees who pay higher-rate tax could save even more.





The total value of the bike package you choose is reclaimed through salary sacrifice from your gross pay over a 12-month period.

Simply browse the bike and accessories available through the scheme from either the online store or one of the many partnered local bike shops. Then simply order online or request a letter of collection to collect your bike from the nominated shop. The system automatically generates a hire agreement, which includes the length of agreement and all monthly salary sacrifice deductions. The scheme administrator then approves this.

The scheme is limited to a £1,000 cap on packages per employee. Terms and conditions apply.

More information is available on MyBenefits website.

Isolating guidance for households with someone suffering COVID symptoms

	If	You	have	tested positive for COVID-19	then	You should isolate and seek medical advice You will be marked as sick and should keep your Line Manager up to date.
		Any Members of Your Household				You should self-isolate for 14 days. You will be marked as Paid Special Leave.
	If	You	have	symptoms of COVID-19	then	You should isolate for 7 days. You will be marked as sick and should keep your Line Manager up to date.
		Any Members of Your Household				You should self-isolate for 14 days. You will be marked as Paid Special Leave.
	If	You	have	received an NHS letter about being at "high risk of contracting COVID-19"	then	You should isolate for 12 weeks. You will be marked as sick and should keep your Line Manager up to date.
		Any Members of Your Household				You can still come to work / work from home subject to following social distancing and shielding protocols. If you chose not to work and do not / cannot work from home, you will be marked as Paid Special Leave.
	If	You	have	an underlying medical condition (asthma, pregnancy, diabetes)	then	You can still come to work. Take precautions around social distancing, and keep your Line Manager informed
		Any Members of Your Household				You can still come to work subject to them following social distancing and shielding protocols.

This guidance is created from the latest available information and this will be constantly updated from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Clinically vulnerable

The PM said in his announcement, that "If you are **clinically vulnerable**, or over the age of 60, you should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contact with others. Those who are **clinically extremely vulnerable** should minimise their contact with others, and not go to work if they are unable to work from home."

Clinically vulnerable (CV)

Clinically vulnerable people are those who could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. If you are clinically vulnerable, then you should work from home. If you can't work from home then you can continue to travel to your workplace (the office, operational centre or maintenance site) as additional measures such as face coverings and COVID-secure assessments are in place. However, you should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contact with others.

Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)

People who are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus. If you are clinically extremely vulnerable, you should work from home. If you cannot work from home, you are advised not to go to work.

The Government will write to everybody who is clinically extremely vulnerable to set out detailed advice while the new restrictions are in place. If you receive [one of these letters](#), please share with your line manager (you don't need to share the content). If you live with someone that is CEV please speak to your line manager to assess how or if you can attend the workplace.

During this second lockdown (5 November – 2 December), the government advice is for the CEV to work from home. If you cannot work from home, you are advised not to go to work. You are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, but are encouraged to go outside for exercise.

[For examples of CV and CEV visit MyConnect.](#)

If an employee states that they are CEV but have not received a letter, managers can suggest the employee consults with their GP and can request a COVID consultation via Optima at www.myohportal.co.uk. Occupational clinicians will conduct assessments to determine vulnerable employees (increased risk from coronavirus) and any need to self-isolate.

If an employee advises their manager that they have received this letter and the employee is in a role where working from home is not effective, then this should be recorded as paid special leave. A case must be created with HR Direct. Pay will include any planned base roster payments.

If an employee is able to work from home, they can if it is effective and they should do so. This will not need to be recorded with HR Direct.

Anyone with a CEV notification that wishes to return to work during the national lockdown should consult their GP and provide evidence accordingly since the CEV letter should be treated in a similar way to a fit note in that it acts as an authorisation for the absence.

The advice to CEV is different to the requirement to shield that was introduced earlier in the year. The government have not advised other household members to refrain from attending work and so they can continue to come to a COVID-secure workplace as before.

A new information [pack](#) to support clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) employees and their line managers is now available.

To assist those returning to the workplace that are CEV, a [checklist is available](#).

Advice and resources for supporting wellbeing are available via Validium.

Working from home

Setting up to work from home

Setting up a good working environment is really important for your health and wellbeing. As we are likely to be in this situation for a long period of time, it is important for us to be working in a safe and healthy way.

[A useful video](#) can help with setting up your work area at home as can this [guidance document](#).

New DSE assessment review process

Back on Friday 5 June we closed the Southern region DSE assessment survey which nearly 2,000 of you completed. As the option of working from home is likely to continue for some time still, if you feel you could now benefit from a review you can take advantage of the national scheme being run by Vita clinicians.

It's important that you think about how you're working now, and how you can improve this and your own wellbeing while working from home. Vita clinicians are now ready to review and, where necessary, carry out virtual DSE (Display Screen Equipment) reviews, which will make sure you have a safe and healthy working set up. If you require a review please fill out this [Network Rail Homeworking Workstation Self-Review questionnaire](#). Please use region code NR004 when prompted.

If it looks as though you need additional support or equipment to maintain a healthy and safe home working environment, you will be contacted to arrange a video review. Vita can also offer help and information on equipment set-up, exercise and health advice that you may need.

If you have taken any equipment home from offices, please ensure that this is returned when we come back to work.

IT

Accessing the Network and emails

New software (Zscaler) has now been deployed to laptops across the company, allowing all Network Rail colleagues access to the corporate network. Additionally, the new remote access service will allow you to access Teams video conferencing without having to disconnect from the network, delivering a more seamless experience. An installation guide and FAQs can be [found here](#).

Remote connect is no longer restricted, however capacity is limited to 8,000 connections so where you can, ZScaler should be used to access the Network.

NB if you receive the ZScaler error message "Warning, your access to internal applications has expired" this is normal and as designed. Your Zscaler login lasts for 7 days. To re-authenticate open the Zscaler App from the bottom right corner of your screen > Private Access > Re-authenticate.

You can use [webmail](#) to access your emails, which doesn't require VPN access. If you use webmail on google chrome, IT have said to clear your browser history to improve connectivity. Instructions on how to do this can be found [here](#). We don't have permission to clear the browser history for internet explorer at this stage.

Support

Now we are returning to more business as usual activities, there are no longer any restrictions to the IT Helpdesk telephone support service. You can now access IT support in the following ways:

- Call the IT Helpdesk on 01270 721600
- [IT Support Hub on MyConnect](#) which is packed with hints and tips to help you solve some of the more common IT problems
- Log a fault using the online system [click here to log a fault](#)
- Post a query on the [IT Helpdesk Yammer](#) pages and someone will respond to you as soon as they can

As the team continue to work through the backlog of incidents the usual levels of service may still be impacted, so response times may still be a little slower.

If you are having log on or email issues, there is a self-reset for passwords or blocked accounts.

- Open the browser and type in: [Passwordreset.microsoftonline.com](https://passwordreset.microsoftonline.com)

- Then enter your User name @networkrail.co.uk – for example: Jsmith3@networkrail.co.uk
- Follow the instructions to reset your computer

Obtaining laptops

We are now in a position to gradually lift some of the restrictions we had in place for supplying new iDevices and laptops, offering devices to colleagues who need one. iDevice requests should be requested using the [mobile device request](#) form on MyConnect.

We have introduced a new process for laptops which does not relate to the normal upgrade of devices through the MyIT programme. The new form is to address the needs of ONLY those colleagues who currently don't have access to a device they can use for work purposes. Colleagues should not complete this form if:

- they have a personal device that can be used. If they are using a personal device there is further guidance on the IT Helpdesk page on MyConnect.
- their current NR device has a fault, including poor performance. Faults should be logged with the IT Helpdesk: [click here to log a fault](#) or contact the IT Helpdesk by telephone if you are business-critical.
- For their new Windows 10 device selection (part of the MyIT programme) which is currently on hold.

We'll process and validate requests as quickly as we can, however please consider that our delivery partners also support the NHS and other critical public services who may need to be prioritised. The new form can be [accessed from here](#).

If there is an urgent requirement for a new device, these should be submitted via the BC Lead to the IT-COVID19 mailbox.

Printing at Home

We have received a number of requests for people to be able to use their personal printers whilst at home. We will support this on a reasonable endeavours basis and if colleagues need to install extra print drivers for their printer to work, they should [click here to log a fault](#).

Passwords

Passwords have been extended to 182-day expiry.

You can now reset passwords and unlock your account by following the steps [in this guide](#).

If a colleagues account needs to be re-enabled, i.e. returning from maternity leave, contract extension etc, the usual process should be followed, where the line manager completes this [form](#).

Technology

If colleagues can do meetings by teleconference, then please make the most of these facilities. There's technology to help us, [please read the latest advice on how to work from home effectively](#).

Use of Zoom

Zoom is unauthorised by Network Rail and the use of any software and online services that have not been assessed, configured and managed carries risks. We urge you to use Teams – a guide can be [found here](#) and there are also 101 Teams sessions held live on the [MyIT Yammer group](#).

If you must use Zoom, please ensure the below guidelines are followed to mitigate these risks as far as possible.

DON'T use your personal meeting ID (PMI) as your meeting ID, the risk is that once someone has your PMI, basically they have access to a never-ending meeting in your private room. Create a new meeting ID for each recurring meeting - you will then have a Communion meeting ID (which you can share with potential new people) and a Midweek meeting ID, but the benefit is you can control when those meetings start and end, and when they can be accessed.

There are several settings that must be set to allow you to maintain total control of your meeting. In the Settings menu of your profile, as an absolute minimum, check the following settings:

- User personal meeting ID (PMI) when scheduling a meeting - off (greyed out)
- Mute participants upon entry - on (switch turns blue)
- Private chat - off (greyed out)
- File transfer – off
- Allow host to put attendee on hold – on
- Screen sharing - who can share - Host ONLY
- Annotation - off
- Whiteboard – off
- Remote control – off
- Allow removed participants to re-join – off
- Far end camera control – off
- Virtual background – off
- Waiting Room – on
- Choose which participants to place in the waiting room - All participants
- Show a join from your browser link - off

These settings (as a minimum) should remove most security issues.

BAME colleagues

We are actively monitoring the Government's advice on how COVID-19 affects the BAME population and will implement all appropriate advice as soon as it is published. For guidance please [click here](#). To view Loraine Martin's guidance video, please [click here](#).

Carers

We acknowledge that during COVID-19, with the Government and public health advice on social distancing and good hygiene, unpaid carers may be under increasing strain. We recognise the additional challenges faced by unpaid carers at this time and we want to offer essential guidance that supports workforce wellbeing and business continuity. Please view the guidelines [here](#).

Keeping the railway running

Engineering work and possessions

Clearly, we have a key role in keeping food, fuel, medicine and key workers moving through this difficult time, that's why it's so important for us to keep the railway running safely and reliably.

But we do need to strike the balance between keeping the railway running and keeping people safe. Essential work must continue but we must look at every job and consider whether it is essential, deliverable and safe. Southern region guidelines for essential work can be found [here](#).

Questions have been raised around whether we will close part of the railway. We have done the contingency planning for each of our key routes, our railway is currently categorised at Level 4 (see essential work guidelines for explanations of the levels). We are monitoring daily, but there is currently no need to close any parts of the railway.

CP6 funding

While nothing is set in stone, investing in construction and engineering is an excellent way of stimulating growth in the economy, so any reduction in our funding would have ramifications for the wider recovery. Investments in enhancements might be more challenging in the future, but at the moment we are fully progressing our CP6 plans. We will most certainly be challenged to be more efficient in the future.

Work Vehicles

Taking your work vehicles home – you have asked if it will be possible to take your work vehicles home to avoid having to go into depots first. For the duration of this crisis, the short answer is yes. There are no tax implications as there is no personal use element. However, staff must ensure they continue to complete the logbook for all journeys and don't use the vehicle for personal use as this would be taxable. We will also be hiring additional vehicles. Please check with your line manager for clarity.

NB MOTs on vehicles have been extended by the government for 6 months for cars and vans and 3 months for heavy duty vehicles. Usual checks and audits will continue to ensure they remain roadworthy.

Deep cleaning of vehicle if Coronavirus is suspected:

1. Call 0845 600 6767
2. Select option 3
3. The responder will take your details and forward them to the correct company
4. You will then be contacted to arrange for the clean

Please note that you should only book a vehicle in if the driver of the vehicle is suspected of having Coronavirus or has presented symptoms. You should also note that the vehicles will require a 7-day quarantine prior to the clean where possible. This can be discussed on a case-by-case basis, where the vehicle is absolutely essential and critical to operations.

If you have any queries about this, please contact southeastroadfleet@networkrail.co.uk

Personal Vehicles

The extension of the [motor insurance certificate](#), to cover the use of personal vehicles, as per the existing arrangements during the coronavirus period, has been extended by three months to 31 December in the following situations:

- Where a reasonable adjustment is applicable such as; employees who have had to shield and will not be using public transport
- Where there is a requirement and it is still necessary for maintenance and other critical front line employees to use a private vehicle such as; circumstances where social distancing cannot be maintained by using the existing NR vehicles and where this means we can reduce the use of hire vehicles.
- Where a local lockdown restricts shared travel in cases or prohibits use of public transport. Please contact the relevant [RVCM team](#) if proof of this insurance is required.

The following points should be considered along with the motor insurance certificate as reliance on the certificate alone will not suffice:

- The Network Rail insurance is provided on a contingency basis only, which means it will only be utilised if no other cover is available. If the end user has business use insurance on their personal insurance policy, then Network Rail's insurance will not cover the end user and they should revert to their own policy if the need arises;
- End users will need to provide information before using their vehicle. Please contact the Road Vehicle Compliance manager for your route.
- The vehicle needs to be taxed, insured and have a valid MOT (with current extensions taken into account)
- End users will need authorisation from the budget holder;
- Only non-fault costs will be covered by the insurance. At fault costs will be covered by the cost centre the end user sits under
- Breakdown, windscreen and tyre damage is covered when sustained whilst on genuine company business. General wear and tear is not as this is covered in the mileage payment;
- End users will need to have a valid licence check.

The insurance certificate is only third cover insurance, however, if an employee had an accident, they would contact Road Fleet and NR would pick up the cost of any damages done to their personal vehicle.

Detonators/fog signals cannot be carried in personal vehicles as they need to be stored in a metal box attached to the vehicle in a separate compartment to the driver. Carrying these will not only invalidate your insurance but is also a huge safety risk.

Business mileage should be claimed in the normal way through Oracle expenses, however if you don't have access to Oracle the [business mileage form](#) should be completed. Due to the current situation, it would be preferable to email the completed form to expensereceipts@networkrail.co.uk rather than post it.

The congestion charge has now been reinstated and increased. If you are using your car to travel to work so as to avoid public transport you can reclaim the charge through expenses.

Motorbikes

The use of motorbikes for business travel is **prohibited** under the NR vehicle policy and therefore **not** covered by our vehicle insurance policy. The use of motorbikes to commute from home to work is a personal choice but you would need to check this is covered on your personal motor insurance.

Costs for commuting

Where you are travelling into work the following revised arrangements will be in place:

- In order to maintain operational resilience in key locations and worksites, specific roles* will continue to be paid any additional, reasonably incurred travel expenses to ensure social distancing is maintained and reduce the chance of infecting a critical location. (*These roles are ECRO, incident controller, train running controller, shift signalling manager, route control manager and signaller in a Control Centre).
- For all other staff, if you used to get the train to your place of work then, as a result of the increase in train services, you can now return to using the train. To allow people time to

arrange their new season ticket purchases through Abellio, we will no longer pay these expenses with effect from **Monday 30 September**.

- If you currently travel to work in the same way as before COVID-19 then this will continue to be unpaid.
- If you are travelling from home in your own vehicle direct to a different, critical-work site then while the social distancing guidance remains in place, you will continue to be able to claim for any additional travel expenses and will be covered by Network Rail's vehicle insurance policy.

Good hygiene and cleanliness

Personal Hygiene

- Practice regular, good hand hygiene using soap and water, ensuring hands are thoroughly dried. If hand washing facilities are not available, then apply an alcohol-based hand sanitiser solution – particularly important when travelling or working in heavily populated areas.
- Use all forms of fit-for-purpose, undamaged PPE, specified and provided for the work you are required to perform – do not share PPE
- Ensure cuts and abrasions are kept clean, treated and covered with waterproof dressings

Handwashing

To avoid the spread of coronavirus, it is important to wash your hands with soap often and for at least 20 seconds at a time. If soap and water is unavailable, then hand sanitiser should be used.

This also applies to gloves as the virus will live on them too.

If you don't wash gloves, they become contaminated in the same way as hands do and the germs are then spread across everything you touch while wearing those gloves, such as tools and shared surfaces. If you touch your face while wearing gloves, the germs on the gloves will still affect you, the same as if they were on your hands. In fact, wearing gloves may make you less aware of having become contaminated by something, when you would normally notice and wash your hands. **Wearing dirty gloves is the same as not washing your hands.**

[A poster](#) has been produced to remind colleagues and can be found here and Traffi glove have produced this [helpful guide](#) to washing your LXT style gloves pictured below.



Supplies

- As well as our Managed Stations, the Zoono cleaning product has been deployed at all key operational sites and at Singlewell, Paddock Wood, JF and LBDU, Lewisham, Sunley House, Cover House and Basingstoke.
- Wipes remain an issue for the supply chain. Any cloth or paper towel, when used with a detergent or cleaner, is as effective as wipes. Please see [poster on cleaning shared surfaces](#).

- Return to work will put more pressure upon the limited resources – we should note that cleaning regimes in all our offices are fit for purpose ready for BAU.
- Over 40,000 hand sanitiser bottles have been distributed. You should continue to wash your hands with soap and water where possible rather than use hand sanitiser.
- We encourage staff to use their initiative – if you see hand sanitiser or cleaning products you wish to use at your office location, please purchase it and expense it. Help yourselves to help others. If you start to bombard iProc and our supply chain with orders, you are, in effect, doing the same as buying all the toilet roll. If you find local supplies of the right products go and use your purchasing card or expense it.
- There is an emergency kit located across locations in the region which is only to be used in emergencies. We have implemented an increased focus on high contact surface areas and ensured all products used by the cleaning teams align to the latest Public Health England (PHE) guidelines.
- Where it has unfortunately been required, we have delivered further cleans where a colleague has been sent home after feeling unwell at work. The standards of cleaning we receive today conform with all guidance that has been issued by PHE. For further information on 'cause for concern' cleans this [useful fact sheet](#) has been produced.
- We have established a regional control over many products. This is due to their shortages nationally and on iStore. To date, we have been distributing what we have evenly across the region to make sure everyone has access to what we can obtain. These are being distributed through the DUs but for all workstreams, not just maintenance.
- Masks – Masks are only required when our teams have to break social distancing. To be clear these are not for constant use. Each Route receives regular restocks of these.
- Disposable gloves – these are only required if stated on the work task risk management sheet. We are not issuing these for COVID-19 protection. These have been provided to the Routes if required.
- Visors – as with masks these are not for everyday use. They are only to be worn when the team have to break social distancing. In addition, safety goggles will still be required to be worn with the masks.
- Infra-red thermometers are on order and some are making their way to locations now

What is Zoono and how does it work?

Zoono is colourless, odourless, non-leaching, environmentally safe and non-corrosive. While it is completely gentle for humans and animals, it is deadly for a wide range of bacteria and mould. When used on a surface, Zoono provides a barrier that attracts bacteria and then ruptures the cell walls, destroying it.



Vehicle hygiene

- Supplies of plastic sheet and rolls of tape have been delivered to each DU to facilitate temporary partitions in vehicles. These partitions are an additional mitigation measure that prevents the spread of small droplets from one person to another in an enclosed space.
- When cleaning down vehicles, please use wipes diligently and try to use water, liquid soap and paper cloths at depots.
- Vehicles should be cleaned down before and after every shift.
-

Hand sanitiser in vehicles

Do not leave hand sanitiser in unattended vehicles. Alcohol-based sanitisers are a potential fire risk in vehicles during hot weather. As the alcohol hand sanitiser heats up in its container it releases flammable vapours. These vapours are reaching their flashpoint and then ignite in normal air conditions, which can set fire to flammable components within the vehicle.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Full compliance with PPE guidance will help prevent infection.
- PPE ordered through iStore during COVID-19 may be delivered to home addresses - this is done by adding your PPE items to the Shopping Cart, and then go into Edit the details. From there follow the link Deliver - To Location field for 'One Time Address'. Click on there and enter a one-off address, it can be an NR Office, Site location or home address.
- Goggles and PPE are probably better to prevent infection than masks.

Masks

Masks are being provided for use when colleagues are required to work **within** two metres of each other. They should not be used for any other purpose.

The primary controls to protect against COVID-19 are social distancing and good hand hygiene, however we recognise that there are tasks our colleagues undertake that do require them to be within two metres of each other, and for these short tasks, a surgical mask should be worn.

When used properly, a surgical face mask may prevent the spread of coronavirus before sufferers start to display symptoms. Masks must be used in addition to regular handwashing/hand sanitiser use. Wherever possible, social distancing guidelines of staying 2 metres from others **must** be observed.

We have provided surgical masks to our teams for use when social distancing restrictions have to be waived for a particular task. The mask is there to provide a degree of protection for other people from the individual wearing it. We know from the NR CMO guidance a surgical mask does not guarantee protection, either with a beard or not. We have also provided helmet mounted visors to our trackside teams. These can be worn by an individual if they do not want to wear a surgical mask.

If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus - a new, continuous, dry cough or high temperature - do not come into work, inform your line manager and seek medical advice if required. All absences relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) must be reported to HR Direct as soon as possible. Cases need to be kept updated with the latest status and must be closed when the employee returns to work. This is essential for both Network Rail's internal and regulatory reporting responsibilities. Opening hours will be 09:00 - 16:30. The contact number for line managers is 0800 0546547.

[A video featuring Rupert Lown](#), chief quality, safety, health and environment (QSHE) officer, explains clearly when to wear a face mask, as well as how to put it on and remove it correctly.

There are clear guidelines to using face masks correctly which can be found on this [poster](#). An [information sheet](#) has also been produced and some [FAQs](#). You can also find industry guidance on face masks [here](#).

Visors

In addition to providing surgical face masks for colleagues when carrying out a task that requires them to be within two metres of each other, plastic face visors are being made available for some frontline teams. When used properly, wearing a visor or a surgical face mask may prevent the spread of coronavirus, before the sufferer starts to display symptoms. Like surgical masks, visors can be used when a task requires colleagues to be within two metres of others. If a task requires a safety visor for protection from impacts or sparks, the correct PPE for the task must be used. Read more on [MyConnect](#), where you can also find the [FAQs](#) and an [information sheet](#).

How do I choose between a visor and a surgical face mask?

Network Rail has made a quantity of surgical face masks available to employees for use when they are carrying out a task that requires them to be within 2 metres of others. These are recommended when carrying out tasks that can be completed in up to an hour, for example a 4-person lift. If you have to wear PPE issue goggles to complete a task, it may be more comfortable to wear a surgical mask. Where a task may take longer (for example, overhead line work in a MEWP) a visor may be preferable.

Visors can be used multiple times. After each use they should be washed in soapy water or wiped with antibacterial wipes and checked to ensure they are still intact. The idea is that colleagues will retain their visor and use it when they are required to work within 2 metres. At all other times, maintain social distancing.

Gloves

The following step by step guide provides the recommended way to remove gloves:

1-Pinch and hold the **outside** of the glove near the wrist area. 2-Peel downwards, away from the wrist, turning the glove inside out. 3-Pull the glove away until it is removed from the hand and **hold the inside-out glove with the gloved hand**. 4-With your un-gloved hand, slide your finger/s **under the wrist** of the remaining glove, **taking care not to touch the outside of the glove**. 5-Again, peel downwards, away from the wrist, turning the glove inside out. 6-Continue to pull the glove down and over the inside-out glove being held in your gloved hand. 7-This will ensure that both gloves are inside out, one glove enveloped inside the other, with no contaminant on the bare hands. 8-Wash hands thoroughly.

Disposal of masks and other COVID-19 related waste

Waste which relates to COVID-19, such as facemasks, gloves, and cleaning wipes, should be double bagged. These bags should be externally marked with the date, time, and individual who sealed the bag then placed in an isolated area for 72 hours. It is only once all the bags within the designated receptacle have passed the 72-hour mark, should the waste be collected by contractors, as general waste. Do not mark the bags as medical waste. The waste has not been classified as medical waste, however care should still be taken when disposing of it. Please also remember not to leave it lineside as littering, as well as impacting the environment, can upset our lineside neighbours and damage our reputation.

Please remember to contact Mark Waple or your route representatives with any COVID procurement queries.

Respect

- Please be respectful to all colleagues no matter what location you are in.
- All our cleaners are working within Public Health England guidelines and following social distancing.
- If you have concerns around the level of cleanliness, please report it through the correct channels – do not confront our cleaning teams – raise it through the hotline and it will be addressed. We are taking no chances with our people's health and wellbeing. For Mitie, their 24/7 Hotline number 0845 0265992 or contact your local Soft Services Manager (SSM). For Interserve this is direct to their SSM. These will then be dealt with jointly by the supplier and our regional facilities management team.
- Please let us know what we can do differently – if you have an idea, share it.

Air conditioning

Current industry advice is that heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems do not contribute to the spread of the virus. We are continuing with best practice of cleaning and maintenance of systems. With systems that use internal air circulation, where 100 % fresh air intake cannot be achieved while maintaining building temperature, these are being adjusted to provide a minimum 50 % fresh air intake to provide additional mitigation.

We will continue to monitor industry guidance on best practice for these systems as well as feedback from building users on temperature control.

Training

We have transformed the majority of our existing courses for delivery through virtual classrooms and blended learning. With a more accessible catalogue of courses at our fingertips, we can ensure that colleagues feel empowered to learn and can continue to operate a safe and reliable railway. We are constantly reviewing the current COVID-19 situation, the government advice regarding social distancing and Network Rail policies. However, at this time we have total confidence in the quality of our virtual and blended offerings, therefore, we are not currently planning face-to-face courses unless absolutely necessary.

When and where our Network Rail delegates require face-to-face training delivery for the safe and efficient running of the railway, we will work with you to ensure it is safe and compliant to do so. At this time, we must take each requirement on a case by case basis and will provide more information regarding the wider return to face-to-face L&PD training as soon as possible.

For further information and to view a full list of courses available for virtual/online delivery, please visit our new [‘Virtual, Online and Distance Learning’](#) page on the Course Catalogue.

If you are scheduled to participate in training that requires travel and overnight stays, this is allowed, but you are advised to follow government guidance and advise and social distance.

The new [COVID-19 web page](#), hosted on the Network Rail Training website, should be the first port of call for all colleagues due to attend training. The page lists the safeguards being implemented at training centres to mitigate risk and the measures being taken to adhere to guidance on social distancing.

Sentinel competence and medical certification

In order to mitigate the risks of not having enough, skilled people to maintain the network safely for vital freight and key worker services, Network Rail has temporarily extended by four months all Sentinel railway competences and medical certificates due to expire between 23 March and 30 July 2020. **Medicals or competences which expired before 23 March 2020 will remain expired.**

For Network Rail staff, Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) health surveillance dates and Annual Capability Conversation (ACC) requirements have also been extended.

While the mandatory requirement for re-training, formal assessment, and the ACC will be suspended during this period, managers have an important role to diligently observe the other requirements of competence management. If a manager or individual doubts continued competence or becomes aware of any change in health status or behaviour, they must stop work using that competence and engage with the relevant service for advice. If there is any suspicion about someone being unfit through drugs or alcohol, there is no relaxation to existing controls.

Medicals

Currently there are no means of undertaking Level 1 medicals where a hearing test is a mandatory requirement (i.e. working trackside) and the ORR will not permit NWR to derogate or amend the standard around this. The blocker to this is the booths and headphones used for these tests by our medical provider and the COVID-19 transmission risk. A solution of disposable headsets and means of undertaking tests in is being worked on with Optima Health. Medicals for new starters (not requiring Level 1), those returning to NWR (e.g. ex Signallers), new Signallers and Controllers can be booked and these will be undertaken partly by video conference and partly face-to-face at Optima centres (if there are difficulties getting a referral arranged this can be escalated to the Central OH team).

Face to face medicals

Optima are now able to carry out competence specific medicals and pre-placement medicals face-to-face; drug and alcohol tests, blood pressure and vision checks after medicals are also being made available. Line managers are asked to support the release of team members at short notice, which will allow for all clinic spaces to be utilised. Further information on medicals can be found [here](#).

Physiotherapy

Vita Health Group, the new name for RehabWorks offers a free self-referral physiotherapy service via video link, with the option of face-to-face from 1 August. For more information call 0800 0833324 (option 5).

Annual leave

Recognising the exceptional nature of the current crisis, employees are entitled to carry forward up to 20 days of 2020 accrued annual leave, where it has not been reasonable or practicable to have been taken. Anyone who wants to carry over annual leave into next year should put in a request to their line manager, saying how much leave they wish to carry over.

Annual leave accrued in 2020 can carry forward into 2021 and 2022 leave years.

We do encourage taking annual leave and breaks from work for your own wellbeing.

If you wish to cancel booked annual leave, you should inform your line manager and provide an alternate date for the annual leave to be taken. The granting of the alternate dates for annual leave

must take into account operational needs and the requirement to balance leave requests throughout the year.

Booking a last-minute holiday abroad

You should consider any implications of any government quarantine restrictions. If you knowingly travel to a country that requires a quarantine period when you return to the UK then we would expect you to work from home on your return, use additional leave or arrange with your manager when you will make up the time. Otherwise the period will be counted as unpaid special leave.

If a quarantine period is imposed on a country after you have left the UK then you should comply with the quarantine and work from home, if you can, for the required quarantine period. This starts from the last day you were abroad. If you can't work from home, and you can't undertake any e-training/learning to update your competencies or skills, you will be put on paid special leave.

You can travel to an 'airbridge' or 'travel corridor' country without having to quarantine from work on return. The government is set to announce travel to 'airbridge' countries or 'travel corridors' without the need to quarantine on return. Government details are not yet published, but an anticipated traffic light system may allow travel to 'green countries' without the need to quarantine. You should follow the usual authorisation process for booking annual leave.

Please note that government advice on travel is changeable and Network Rail will continue to review it. This may result in short notice changes to travel guidance. Additionally, you should note that overseas governments may impose their own quarantine requirements at short notice

Annual Leave for volunteering

Network Rail's volunteer leave policy will now allow for volunteer leave to be taken to support groups responding to the COVID-19 situation. Any amount of your allocated volunteer leave from 1/4 of a day up to five days (or the number of volunteer leave days currently available to you for the remainder of the calendar year) should be booked as community engagement volunteer leave under the category 'Volunteering Other' on Oracle E-Business. For this type of volunteering, no registered charity number is required. To view the policy [please click here](#).

Discipline and Grievance cases

Deferred cases can now resume remotely through teams or conference calls. To support managers who are involved with formal processes, a guideline is provided to give practical steps to follow. You can find the guidelines on [MyConnect](#).

Pay

We have been very clear with everyone that you will not lose out if you are placed on Paid Special Leave or sick pay.

This means that if you are on a roster, you will be paid the same as if you had come into work, whether this is night pay, Bank Holiday supplement or anything else. You should note the details of what you would have been paid in your timesheets if you're concerned or unsure and raise any questions with your Line Manager. No overtime is payable, and if an employee has a concern they should talk to local management.

Our payroll colleagues will be working from home wherever possible, so any payroll questions should be e-mailed to PayrollHelpdesk@networkrail.co.uk. Questions about the Railway Pension Scheme should be directed to Pensions@networkrail.co.uk

Performance related pay

We've taken into account the uncertain economic outlook, the very strong pressure on public finances and feedback from some senior leaders who have said the most important thing is that their teams get an award. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has taken the decision – which has been approved by the Remuneration Committee – to make some payments.

- An award will be made to band 5-8, operations and maintenance employees in the General Performance-Related Pay Scheme (GPRP). This will be based on national/regional dashboard outturns and will be capped at £1,000.
- An award will be also made to band 3 and band 4 employees. This will be based on the same maximum potential as those employees in the GPRP. It will be based on national/regional dashboard outturns and capped at £1,000. Payment will made in line with Annual Performance Related Pay scheme rules.
- There will be no award made to senior managers including executive leadership team, executive band, band 1 and band 2.
- If you don't know which scheme you are in, you can find out on MyConnect.

Car parking

Normal parking charges now apply.

Tax Relief for working from home

Paying employees allowances for working from home does not form part of Network Rail's expenses policy. However, in Southern region, we have agreed to pay certain incremental expenses incurred by individuals having to work from home, such as allowances for IT Hardware and certain associated workstation furniture. Over and above this, employees may be able to claim tax relief for some of the bills they have to pay because they have to work at home on a regular basis. Tax relief cannot be claimed if you choose to work from home.

There are two avenues for making such a claim:

Through the annual self-assessment process if you complete a self-assessment tax return online through <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home> if you do not complete an annual self-assessment tax return

All individuals' tax situations will be different and so individuals should refer to guidance contained on the above link and at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/tax/income-tax> for further information.

General Bonus Scheme

In previous years we have paid the general bonus scheme into pay packets in June or July. Further to Andrew Haines's message the decision on all of the bonus schemes is still under review. Once we have any more information this will be communicated later in the year.

What should I do if I am told to self-isolate after visiting a close relative in hospital?

During coronavirus, visiting seriously ill or end of life patients has been restricted. Where employees visit patients in hospital in these circumstances, the employee may be asked to self-isolate for 14 days following the visit by the hospital. In these circumstances, the employee should

inform their line manager and adhere to the advice they have been given and self-isolate. Where possible, employees should work from home but for some roles where this is not possible then they should be recorded as paid special leave with published base roster payments. A case must be recorded with HR Direct. Should they develop symptoms they should get a test. In all circumstances, the line manager should be kept informed to enable the Company to support the employee.

Bereavement

We've set up a bereavement team and they've been mobilised to go to Anglia, where tragically two colleagues died of the virus in early April. We also have Validium, our employee assistance programme that is available 24/7 and confidential. We've published amendments to compassionate leave and increased paid compassionate leave if there is a bereavement in the family or if a person is taken into hospital. We'll support employees in a compassionate and sensitive manner, in line with our first strategic objective.

In January, the Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations 2020 were introduced. It has been agreed that Network Rail will enhance the provisions within these Regulations and enable all employees who suffer the loss of a child or a stillbirth after 24 weeks pregnancy, to be paid two weeks leave and to top up parental bereavement leave pay from £152 per week to the employee's basic pay. The entitlement to parental bereavement leave will be in addition to the entitlements to bereavement leave as set out in the Special Leave Policy. A new section has been developed and added to our [Family Friendly Policy](#) covering Parental Bereavement Leave which you can find on MyConnect.

Furloughing

It is not anticipated that Government bodies would furlough staff.

Season tickets

It is not possible to suspend your ticket. However, you might be able to refund it if you are not going to be travelling for a while. If your ticket started before 2 January 2020 that would have been at the 2019 fare. When you renew, it will be at the current 2020 fare. If you have not used your ticket for longer than 10 months and 13 days, you can apply for a refund. You will be able to back date your refund claim to the last day you travelled.

We understand some refunds are taking a long time to process, and some colleagues are still having money deducted from their salaries. Due to the unprecedented number of refunds having to be processed, we know some colleagues will be frustrated by the delay and would urge them to contact Shared Services if they still haven't received a refund after two months of the original submission.

[Full guidance can be found here.](#)

[Guidelines for previously displaced employees – additional travel support](#)

Expenses policy

Expenses for meals

During the lockdown in England, there is a temporary reinstatement of the increased meal limits for breakfast, lunches and evening meals for all colleagues. This will be from today (5 November)

until 2 December. Further information can be found in the [Guidance for all employees – Business Expenses](#).

Payroll giving

You can make regular donations to any UK registered charity through payroll giving. The donation is taken prior to tax deduction on your payslip, meaning that to donate £1 would cost you 80p if you are a basic rate tax payer and 60p if you are a higher rate tax payer. To find out more and set up or amend payroll giving, you need a mybenefits account. Go to <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/Mybenefits> and click sign up (it can take up to 10 working days to activate). Once on the site, you will find payroll giving on the salary sacrifice tab. The window to set up or amend payroll giving is open 3 weeks out of 4.

Building access passes

Normally door passes lapse after a period of inactivity and there was a concern about this causing congestion if and when we are allowed back into the office. Mitie have been instructed to regularly review each respective building access control system to ensure passes do not auto expire to the current set 90-day period to ensure business continuity.

Keeping your details up to date in Oracle

It is important your details are up to date in Oracle E-Business Suite for a number of reasons, including being able to contact your next of kin if necessary and so we have a work mobile number if we want to send out bulk text messages and current address to distribute important communications. To check/update your details, login to E-Business, go to Employee Self-Service (incl. LOA) NR and My Personal Information.

Support available

Please note, Optima Health's COVID-19 helpline number is no longer in use. If you trigger a temperature in the workplace, you should contact the main Optima Health medical helpline on 0800 0833 324 and you will then be routed to a clinician. The Optima team will also be able to provide guidance for colleagues who have concerns relating to temperature testing due to pre-existing medical conditions or medications.

Why not join the [Talking Mental Health Yammer group](#) - the group has been created to encourage people to talk openly and share information, resources and tips with others to help promote mental wellbeing.

Public Health England Every Mind Matters service has developed [a new suite of tips and advice](#) to look after people's wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak.

A list of other support services [can be found here](#).

Welfare and wellbeing hub

The Welfare and Wellbeing Taskforce has been formed to ensure Network Rail is providing care and support to colleagues. A dedicated [Welfare and Wellbeing MyConnect page](#) has been launched to host all useful guidance and tools that have been produced. This includes a crib sheet which can be used as a guide for line managers during conversations with team members around their physical and mental wellbeing during the coronavirus pandemic.

Additional information

[Download the latest National FAQ here](#)