



Covid-19 Policy

Background

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses common to animals and humans; certain types cause illnesses in people. For example, some coronaviruses cause the common cold; others cause diseases such as MERS and SARS, both of which can lead to pneumonia. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus not previously seen in humans.

As coronaviruses have a lipid envelope, a wide range of disinfectants are effective. PPE and good infection prevention and control precautions are effective at minimising risk but can never eliminate it.

As COVID-19 has only been recently identified, there is currently limited information about the precise routes of transmission.

On 30th January 2020 the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern”. The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection.

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. The current data seem to show that we are all susceptible to catching this disease and thus it likely that the UK will be significantly affected. Among those who become infected, some will exhibit no symptoms.

Early data suggest that of those who develop the condition, the great majority will have a self-limiting illness – like seasonal flu. A minority of people who get COVID-19 will develop complications severe enough to require hospital care. Illness is usually less severe in younger adults. Given that the data is still emerging, Browns Health and Safety are uncertain of the impact of an outbreak on our business.

We are advised that up to one fifth of employees may be absent from work during peak weeks. Given that there is currently neither a vaccine against COVID-19 nor any specific, proven, antiviral medication, most treatment will therefore be towards managing symptoms and providing support to employees with complications.

Office Procedures

These procedures should apply immediately and during the whole of the duration of the Coronavirus outbreak and until further notice.



All employees, when entering the offices should take their temperature and record it. If the temperature is 37.8 or above, employees will be asked to follow Government stay at home guidance. Before touching or handling anything should proceed to the toilets and wash their hands thoroughly with soap and/or anti-septic handwash. This procedure should apply when first arriving at work and at any time during the day when returning to the office. Visitors will similarly be requested to do likewise.

Staff should be particularly vigilant with regard to coffee and tea making processes and ensure that crockery/cutlery is not left randomly around the office but is returned to the kitchen and washed immediately after use.

Along with standard health and hygiene procedures, Browns will increase how often surfaces throughout the offices are cleaned and disinfected, this includes door handles, handrails and light switches. Antibacterial hand gel will be available to staff and visitors, and regular handwashing will be further encouraged.

To help reduce the spread of infection through the supply chain, Browns will contact all suppliers to ensure they have robust procedures in place.

Working from Home

Office-based workers may be asked to work from home should an employee become infected or a more general lockdown be enforced by the authorities.

Office-based staff will be able to continue to work from home as usual using their internet connection to access day-to-day processing of work and our MS Office Cloud-based space to access any other files. Login details have been provided to all by our IT consultants. In these circumstances the management team will set-up the phones lines to redirect to their work mobile numbers.

With regard to the severity of the risk, we may decide to:

- stagger start and finish times so that fewer people are together at once
- cancel non-essential overseas travel
- cancel non-essential training sessions
- deal with clients/customers by phone and email
- if face-to-face meetings must take place, ensure that facilities are suitable to minimise the spread of infection e.g. allowing a distance of more than one metre between participants.

Working on-site

Browns Health and Safety employees should take all appropriate precautions when visiting sites. This should include regular hand washing and application of antiseptic gel.



The employee should then carry out their work at the property and, upon returning to the vehicle, immediately apply antiseptic gel to their hands before operating the controls of the vehicle and travelling to the next appointment.

Illness/Self-isolation

Employees that experience any of the symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, should inform a member of the management team immediately, and remain in their home for 7 days from the start of symptoms.

If employees are well enough and are able to work from home, they should do this. If you are unable to work then the company's sickness policy will come into force. Employees are entitled to time off work to help someone who depends on them in an unexpected event or emergency. This will apply to situations arising from a coronavirus epidemic. There are no statutory rights to pay for this time off, but Browns Health and Safety will consider any such instances on an individual basis.

Some employees might feel they do not want to go to work since they are afraid of catching coronavirus in which case the Company will listen to any concerns employees may have and try to resolve them to protect the health and safety of all staff. If an employee still does not want to work, they may be invited to arrange to take time off as holiday or unpaid leave. If an employee simply refuses to attend work, it could result in disciplinary action. Staff recovering from coronavirus will be requested to self-isolate for a period after their recovery and work from home if possible. Employees have a role to play in ensuring that the risk of infection is kept at an absolute minimum, and must themselves stick to Government guidance in relation to overseas travel etc.

At all times, Government advice will be taken on managing our employees in relation to infection control, overseas travel, isolation periods and other relevant matters and this policy will be reviewed in line with any changes.

Karen Poole

Managing Director

16 March 2020