

# Corona Virus Fact Sheet for Employers and Personal Assistants

Here at Vibrance we understand that the current situation with Corona Virus (Covid-19) is very concerning for us all, and for Individual Employers and Personal Assistants (PAs) it has been raising lots of new questions. We are here to support you through this difficult time, and have produced this factsheet and frequently asked questions, which we hope you will find useful.

We strongly recommend that you urgently review your contingency plans for unplanned PA leave, in case your employee(s) fall ill or have to self-isolate. If you have a number of PAs that work separately, they may be able to provide cover. Also think about any family or friends that may be able to assist.

If you do not have anyone that can support you, please contact our team and they can discuss other options with you, including agencies and local voluntary and community groups that are providing support during this time. Please note that we are following Government advice and our offices are currently closed to the public.

Area	Vibrance Telephone	Vibrance Email	Local Authority Telephone
Barking & Dagenham	01702 214 540	bdsds@vibrance.org.uk	020 8227 2915
Bexley CCG	0208 290 6639	phb@vibrance.org.uk	020 8298 6065 (All)
Bromley	0208 290 6639	bdp@vibrance.org.uk	0208 461 7777 (Adults) 0208 461 7373 (Children)
East Sussex	01273 025 687	eastsussexsds@vibrance.org.uk	0345 60 80 191 (Adults) 0345 608 0192 (Children)
Greenwich CCG	0208 290 6639	phb@vibrance.org.uk	020 3049 9000
Southend	01702 214 540	sdp@vibrance.org.uk	01702 215 008 (Adults) 01702 215 007 (Children)
Southend CCG	01702 214 540	sdp@vibrance.org.uk	01702 212500
Wandsworth	0203 960 9493	wandsworthsds@vibrance.org.uk	0208 871 7707

If you live outside these areas and Vibrance process your payroll and/or manage your Direct Payment on your behalf, and you have concerns regarding the continuity of your care and support, please contact our Payroll & Finance Team on 01702 214 540 or email [sdp@vibrance.org.uk](mailto:sdp@vibrance.org.uk)

We will continue to run our payroll and finance services (including payment processing for agencies and self-employed PAs) as usual. Please ensure that timesheets and invoices are submitted by the standard deadlines. If you have new PAs, please complete the New Employee and Starter Checklist and send to our team ([sdp@vibrance.org.uk](mailto:sdp@vibrance.org.uk)) as early as possible.

## Further Information

The Government guidance around Corona Virus is being updated regularly, you can keep up to date through the news and online [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

You can find general employer guidance on the ACAS website [www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus](http://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus)

We will also be sharing information via our website [www.linkmeup.org.uk](http://www.linkmeup.org.uk) and our social media channels:

- Facebook /linkmeupuk
- Instagram @linkmeup\_uk
- Twitter @LinkMeUp\_UK

## Frequently Asked Questions for Employers

### 1) What should I do if my PA is unwell or in self-isolation and unable to support me?

If your PA is unwell or self-isolating then you will need to put in place your contingency plans, as discussed when your Direct Payment was set-up. If these plans are no longer possible, is there someone else who can support you, maybe a relative, friend or neighbour.

### 2) Who should I contact if my PA is unable to work and there is no one else who can provide support?

Please contact your local Vibrance Team who can discuss options with you, we may need to refer you to your local authority in some circumstances. Please contact as soon as possible to allow time for contingency planning.

### 3) Do I have to pay my PA if they are unwell or a member of their household is unwell?

Yes, if your PA is unwell then they should self-isolate for 7 days, if a member of their household is unwell, they should all self-isolate for 14 days. If your PA has been identified in the extremely high-risk category, then they should self-isolate for 12 weeks. If eligible, your PA can claim Statutory Sick Pay by completing an online form to get an [Isolation Note](#) and sharing a copy with you. This will be needed when processing payroll.

### 4) What should I do if I am self-isolating?

If you are considering self-isolating because you are reducing your contact with others, please discuss this with your PA; there may be other ways that your PA can support you during this time with minimal contact, for example buying shopping, or even just calling for a chat. You must be sure that your assessed care needs are met, although this may be by a family member or someone that you live with.

### 5) Will I have to pay my PA if I am self-isolating?

If you choose to cancel your PA due to self-isolating, you will still be required to pay them as per contract. To protect people from potential redundancy, the Government has introduced the Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme, which will fund 80% of staff normal salaries. You must discuss with your employee that you believe their services are not currently required and that you are asking that they take Furlough Leave. You will need to issue a letter to your PA, stating the date that this will be effective from. If Vibrance process your payroll, please share a copy of the letter and ensure that you continue to submit timesheets for your worker, clearly marking that they are a Furlough Worker.

**6) Can I ask my PA to take paid leave whilst I am self-isolating?**

As an employer, you have the right to tell your employees when to take holiday if you need to and you may wish to ask them to do so, whilst you self-isolate. You should give your employees twice as much notice as the time they will need to take, for example if you are asking them to take 5 days holiday, you should give them 10 days' notice prior to this.

**7) Do I have to pay my PA if they have children and their school has closed due to Corona Virus?**

There is the possibility that schools may close as a result of Corona Virus. If your PA has dependents there is no statutory right to paid parental leave, if they have accrued annual leave, they may wish to consider taking this.

**8) What do I do if my PA decides to self-isolate and does not want to come to work?**

Speak to your PA to find out what their concerns are and if these can be minimised. If they still do not want to come to work, and it does not leave you at risk, they could potentially take unpaid or annual leave, however you do not have to agree to this.

**9) Should my PA wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when supporting me?**

If you do not have any symptoms and have not been informed to shield by the NHS, then it is advised that PPE is not required above normal good hygiene practices. If you do have requirements for PPE, please contact your local Vibrance Office and they can support you to access essential PPE via your local authority.

## Frequently Asked Questions for Personal Assistants

**1) What do I do if I, or a member of my household, has symptoms of Corona Virus?**

Please follow Government guidance if you have symptoms of Corona Virus; if you live alone you should self-isolate for 7 days, if you live with others the whole household should self-isolate for 14 days. Please give as much notice to your employer as possible if you're unable to support them.

**2) If I am ill or have to self-isolate, will I be entitled to sick pay?**

If you are eligible for sick pay (i.e. if you earn at least £118 per week from your employer, before tax) you will be paid sick pay from the first day of self-isolation. If you are not eligible for sick pay or are self-employed you may be able to apply for Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) by completing the [SSP1 form](#).

You will need to complete an online form to get an [Isolation Note](#) and share a copy with your employer. This will be needed when processing payroll.

**3) What should I do if my employer decides to self-isolate?**

If your employer decides they do not want you to support them during this time due to self-isolation, they will still be required to pay you as per contract. If they are self-isolating, there may be other ways that you can support them during this time with minimal contact, for example buying shopping, or even just calling for a chat. Please do make sure that their needs are being met, and if you have any concerns please contact your local Vibrance Team or Local Authority.

**4) Will I still get paid if my employer decides to self-isolate?**

If your employer decides to cancel your services due to self-isolating, they will still be required to pay you as per contract. To protect people from potential redundancy, the Government has introduced the Corona Virus Job Retention Scheme, which will fund 80% of staff normal salaries. Your employer must discuss with you that they believe your services are not currently required and that they are asking you to take Furlough Leave. They will need to issue you with a letter, stating the date that this will be effective from.

**5) Can I take leave if my child's school is closed due to the Corona Virus?**

Yes, you can take leave however there is no statutory right to paid parental leave. You may wish to speak to your employer about taking any accrued annual leave or alternatively unpaid leave. Again, please try to give your employer as much notice as possible to allow them to make contingency arrangements.

**6) Should I wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when supporting my employer?**

If your employer does not have any symptoms, and they have not been informed to shield by the NHS, then it is advised that PPE is not required above normal good hygiene practices. If you do have requirements for PPE, please contact your local Vibrance Office and they can support you to access essential PPE via your local authority.