



# Guidance for staff in the transport sector on coronavirus (COVID-19)

## What you need to know

- Advise passengers they should **not travel if they are feeling unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)**. This will also help to protect others from infection.
- **Symptoms** of coronavirus (COVID-19) are **cough, fatigue, fever, headache and muscle aches**
- **Passengers should wash their hands** for 20 seconds using soap and hot water or use hand sanitiser **before and after** they have been on public transport.
- **If a passenger becomes unwell with suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) during a journey, staff should move themselves and other passengers to be at least 2 metres away** from the passenger and visit NHS 111 online or call 111 for advice.
- **Use announcements in transport hubs to reinforce key messages**, such as washing hands before and after travel, and what to do if unwell

## Background

This guidance will assist transport settings in addressing coronavirus (COVID-19).

This guidance may be updated in line with the changing situation.

## What to do if you have a confirmed person with coronavirus (COVID-19) in the transport sector

The relevant transport hub will be contacted by the local Public Health England Health Protection Team who will undertake a risk assessment and advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken.

In most cases, the transport hub should remain open but this will be a local decision made in conjunction with the HPT based on various factors such as establishment size and risk of further spread.

For those who are identified as a **close** contact of the person with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- they should self-isolate at home, for a period of 14 days from the last time they had close contact with the person with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they should note the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are cough, fatigue, fever, headache or muscle aches
- they should visit NHS 111 online <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> or call 111 for reassessment if they develop symptoms or their existing symptoms worsen within their 14-day self-isolation period and they will be tested if they become unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- they will be eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP)

Staff in the transport hub who have not had close contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) do not need to take any additional precautions and normal routines should continue. They should continue to follow advice on washing their hands regularly.

A close contact is defined as:

- living in the same household or
- direct contact with their body fluids or
- face-to-face contact, for example talking or
- being within 2 metres of the person for more than 15 minutes or
- being advised by a public health agency that they are a close contact

### **What to do if someone becomes unwell in a transport hub and believes they have been exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

If someone **becomes unwell** in a transport hub

- **and** has arrived from any specified countries or areas (full list available [here](#))
- **or** has been in close contact with a confirmed case (see above)

the unwell person should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them then move them to an area which is at least two metres away from other people.

Visit NHS 111 online <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> or call 111 for further advice and keep them isolated until advised otherwise or call 999 in an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk). Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

There is no need to close the transport setting or send staff home if they've been in close contact with an unwell person who is awaiting laboratory test results.

## **Cleaning and waste**

You can find guidance on cleaning and waste disposal [here](#).

## **General behaviour in transport hubs**

Transport hubs should use posters and announcements to remind travellers and staff to wash their hands often and follow general hygiene advice.

## **Handling baggage, post or freight**

There is no known increase in risk for handling baggage, post or freight from specified countries. Staff should continue to follow existing risk assessments and safe systems of work.

## **Staff who think they have been exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

If staff think they have been exposed to or develop symptoms consistent with coronavirus (COVID-19) self-isolate and visit NHS 111 online or call 111 for advice. If overseas, follow the transport company's arrangements for seeking medical advice.

## **Arrivals into the UK**

### **Maritime**

Maritime Declarations of Health are already required for all ships arriving from a foreign port. If the Maritime Declaration of Health reports any instances of illness, the usual procedures for infectious diseases will be followed.

For vessels that arrive with potential cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), PHE's local Health Protection Team will deliver enhanced port health monitoring in line with that in place at airports for the passengers and crew on board.

Enhanced monitoring arrangements involve assessing a person's recent travel history, who they have been in contact with and where they are going next, as well as a possible medical assessment. Medical assessments will be carried out by trained medical staff and not by Border Force or other staff. Passengers and crew will also be given advice on what to do should they develop symptoms later, again consistent with enhanced monitoring arrangements at airports.

### **Aviation**

Direct flights to the UK from specified areas [link](#) are required to:

- Provide health announcements to passengers relating to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- Provide information leaflets to passengers (in flight) to enable and encourage reporting of illness

- It is the responsibility of the Commander of an aircraft in transit to advise the destination airport of any ill passenger as soon as possible
- Provide a General Aircraft Declaration (GAD) as per the relevant airport SOP and to the PHE Health Control Unit at LHR, in the event that there is an unwell passenger
- Airlines may use their own GAD or a generic form can be found [here](#)
- If a passenger is confirmed as a suspected coronavirus case, passengers and crew will be required to complete a Passenger Locator Form (PLF) prior to disembarkation
- In the event of an unwell passenger or suspected case on board, disembarkation can only follow clearance by PHE or local health responder in accordance with the COVID19 NOTAM issued by airports, and the Public Health (Aircraft) Regulations 1979

These steps are also being set out in a supporting NOTAM action.

### **International rail**

Eurostar runs trains between the UK, France, the Netherlands and Belgium and has no direct links with specified areas. Visitors may fly into Europe from specified areas and then travel around by other modes of transport including Eurostar, however there is no assessment of Eurostar passengers' recent travel history.

### **Performing body or bag searches**

PHE recommend that passengers be asked if they have travelled to (or passed through) any of the specified areas in the last 14 days. If they have and feel unwell, then the passenger should be immediately assessed by Port Health staff prior to the search. PHE recommend that staff use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser after each search.

### **What to do if a passenger becomes symptomatic on-board a vessel, train or aircraft**

Staff should cooperate with the emergency medical service or public health officials at the relevant port/airport.

Keep your transport company operations centre informed of any requests by the public health officials e.g. requests for passenger information (except where provided by the passengers themselves), crew details, etc.

If the emergency medical services or public health officials are concerned that the unwell person may have coronavirus (COVID-19), they are likely to request specific information to assist with the clinical and public health risk assessment, such as:

- What are the main symptoms of the person with coronavirus (COVID-19)?
- Were they unwell during the journey? If so:
  - were there any episodes of contamination with bodily fluids (vomit, diarrhoea, blood etc.) of the crew/passengers during the journey or during disembarkation?

- are there any co-passengers? – clarify with them, about both the case and themselves and whether they experienced any symptoms
- how long has the person been unwell?
- where exactly have they come from?

### **Close contacts of a person with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Any close contacts of a person with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) need to be isolated. In practice, for passengers who have travelled via plane, this will include all passengers in the two rows around where the person sat.

### **Useful links**

Public information materials can be found here:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101-coronavirus-resources>