

Coronavirus - COVID-19 Housing Frequently Asked Questions

Updated – 31 July 2020

The safety and wellbeing of our residents and colleagues is our main priority. We are taking every possible step to safeguard this while continuing to support our residents.

We are continuously monitoring the situation and official advice and sharing updates with colleagues when guidance changes.

We hope that this document will help answer some of the most common questions that residents and families have asked. We will continue to regularly update them as and when the guidance changes.

- **NEW – The government has announced restrictions in my local area. What should I do?**

Please refer to the guidance for any local restrictions published by the government on their website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-restrictions-areas-with-an-outbreak-of-coronavirus-covid-19>.

Your local manager may also provide additional guidance for you to follow.

- **UPDATED - Are there any restrictions in place around friends and relatives visiting my sheltered housing scheme?**

To help protect the health and safety of our residents and in line with government guidance we are continuing to limit the number of visitors to your building.

If you are expecting any visitors, please let them know we recommend visitors (but not residents or staff members) wear a face-covering when passing through communal areas and observe social distancing wherever possible.

Visitors are:

- Family or friends from one household at a time (those in your support bubble count as your own household)
- Carers (including family and friends if they are providing essential care for you)
- Anchor Hanover managers
- Health professionals
- Scheme cleaners
- Private cleaners
- Hairdressers
- Caterers where a meal is normally provided
- Contractors undertaking repairs
- Contractors/managers undertaking essential Health & Safety checks or servicing
- Tradespeople (carrying out jobs that you may have arranged privately)
- Window cleaners and gardeners (providing they do not access the building)
- Non-residents viewing properties for sale or to let

- **UPDATED Can I meet a friend or family member in the communal garden of my building?**

To protect everyone's wellbeing, if at all possible, we strongly encourage you to meet your friends or family away from your estate/scheme, where you can meet up to six people from different households outside, or meet indoors with people from one other household.

Under government guidance, you can meet one person from a different household in a communal garden as long as you maintain social distancing.

We are working with our housing managers to enable them to return to site more regularly with a view to being able to open more of the communal areas in the coming weeks. Contact your local manager for more details.

- **I have created a support bubble with my family/friend, can they now come and visit me?**

So that we can continue to limit the number of visitors to our locations, where possible, please meet at your family/friend's house rather than them visiting you.

If they do visit you, please remain inside your property and do not go into in the communal areas including the gardens.

- **Do visitors need to wear a face-covering?**

Yes. We recommend all visitors should wear a face-covering when passing through communal areas.

- **NEW - I'm thinking about going abroad, would I have to self-isolate when I return?**

It depends on the country you've been to, as the government has updated their advice on countries you can travel to that do not require a quarantine or self-isolation period of 14 days when you return.

They have defined these countries as 'travel corridors' – please refer to the list of them on the gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>

- **What can I do to minimise the risk of infection?**

Please refer to the most current NHS advice

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

In addition to above, the government strongly advises everyone to practice social distancing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

- **UPDATED - The manager is working off site for some of the time, how can I get help and support during this time?**

The health and safety of our residents remains paramount. You can contact your local manager by emailing them or ringing their office number, (which will then be diverted to their mobile phone) or mobile number if provided. You will be able to speak to them directly or leave a message and they will return your call.

When your local manager is on site please call them before visiting their office as, if their office does not have enough room to allow for social distancing, they will arrange to meet you in a more suitable place.

Our Customer Centre is also open to support you 8.00am – 6.00pm, Monday to Friday and 8.00am – 4.00pm on Saturday. Please note, that due to these unprecedented circumstances we may take longer than usual to answer, so please bear with us. In an absolute emergency please pull your cord, and our On-Call team will assist you. Please do not pull your cord for routine matters.

- **Will my carer still be able to come to the property?**

Yes. If you have a carer, they should continue their visits as normal. If your normal carer fails to arrive, please contact your local manager who can alert the care agency and the local authority safeguarding team.

We recommend they wear a face-covering when passing through communal areas to get to your home.

- **Can my hairdresser come into my own home to do my hair?**

From 4 July hairdressers will be allowed to carry out appointments for individual residents in their home. We recommend you wear a face-covering for your appointment and your hairdresser should follow guidance the government has issued to hairdressers to ensure safe practice during the pandemic.

- **Can I use the communal areas, such as the lounge, gardens, salon and any on-site catering facilities during this period of social distancing?**

We are currently assessing the risk of opening some communal lounges and we will only do so where we can maintain social distancing and minimise the risk of infection, our communal kitchens remain temporarily closed (unless they are used regularly by catering companies).

Other communal areas such as laundries remain open. As laundries are small spaces, we are asking residents to ensure that only one person at a time is in the laundry. In other communal areas we are asking residents to respect social distancing guidelines and keep two metres apart.

Local managers are assessing whether on-site hairdressing services can take place again after Saturday 4 July. For the time being we will be unable to reopen hairdressing salons which use communal lounges.

Please contact your local manager for further details.

If you have any Covid-19 symptoms, please do not use the communal areas.

- **UPDATED - I have developed Covid-19 symptoms, what should I do?**

If you or another member of your household develops any of the symptoms, (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste) please tell your local manager.

If your symptoms are mild you must not to leave your home. This is called

self-isolation. If you live alone, this will be for a period of 10 days. In line with government guidance, if you live alone in one of our extra care locations we ask that you remain in your property for 14 days.

Anyone you live with (or anyone in your support bubble) who does not have symptoms must self-isolate for 14 days from when the first person started having symptoms.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you can ask for a test to check if you have the virus. Find out more on the NHS website - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

- **Is there any support available to help me with shopping, supplies, collecting medication, dog walking etc. as I do not have any local friends or family to support?**

Your manager will be able to signpost you to local solutions such as voluntary groups, community hubs etc. Our managers can offer support where no other options are available.

- **What happens if I run out of food?**

Wherever possible, please try to make arrangements with family and friends to support you during this time. However, our managers will support residents without any local family or if there are no other local solutions available by helping to order food online (if available) or carrying out a limited shopping service.

- **Will communal areas still be cleaned as normal?**

We will endeavour to continue with cleaning services wherever we can, however the level of service may drop due to the availability of cleaning contractors/colleagues. Gardening and external window cleaning will continue as long as contractors are able to attend.

- **If there is a confirmed case of Coronavirus at my location, what will happen?**

To reduce the risk of transmission, we will arrange for all communal areas to be deep cleaned in addition to the normal cleaning schedule if the diagnosed resident has been in the location within the last 72 hours.

- **Will emergency repairs still take place?**

Yes – we are continuing to provide an emergency repairs service, in addition we are working with our repairs contractors to mobilise our normal

repairs service as quickly as we can. If you have a repair please report this to your local manager or to the repairs desk.

- **If my local manager has to self-isolate or goes off sick, who will support us?**

We have buddy arrangements in place to ensure our residents are supported, however our service to you may differ from the norm over the next few weeks. We will keep you informed as far as is reasonably possible about any changes.

- **Will we still see our regional/district/area manager on location during this time?**

All non-essential visits to our locations have been cancelled. Your regional/district/area manager will be working from home, supporting local staff remotely. Your district/area manager may visit your location to carry out an essential Health and Safety audit.

- **I am in good health and under the age of 70. I would like to be able to help or support some of the older residents. How can I do this?**

You can help in various ways:

- shopping and/or carrying shopping from the front door delivery to their front door
- support with on-line ordering
- remotely checking on neighbours and friends each day to ensure they are ok
- register for the NHS volunteers programme - <https://www.goodsamapp.org/nhs>