

IMPORTANT NOTICE – TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE HMO PREMISES

Coronavirus (Covid 19) – Guidance for Tenants

We are sending out information to all HMO's tenants in line with government guidance, to advise what they should do if they or other occupiers have possible coronavirus (Covid 19) infection.

Tenants with symptoms of coronavirus, must self isolate for at least 10 days. Symptoms of coronavirus include, (high temperature, a new or continuous cough or loss or change to sense of smell or taste. They must stay at home and make arrangements to have a test. All persons must isolate if they have tested positive for coronavirus or live with someone who has tested positive. Or if a person in their support bubble has symptoms or has tested positive. After 10 days if a person still has a fever they must continue to self-isolate. Any persons testing positive with no symptoms must self isolate for 10 days, if they develop symptoms during the 10 day period they must restart their 10 day isolation period from that point.

All household members who remain well may end household-isolation after 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day illness began in the first person to become ill. Fourteen days is the incubation period for coronavirus; people who remain well after 14 days are unlikely to be infectious. Further information is available from the Public Health England website, which will be updated as further information becomes available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

If any tenants are vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) they should move temporarily to stay with friends or family (if possible) for the **duration of the Coronavirus lockdown period**. For vulnerable individuals that do not have anywhere else to go during this period the local authority may be able to assist with temporary accommodation **for these individuals only**. Please contact the licensing team if you require further information.

If you have to self-isolate, this will obviously be a difficult and stressful time so you should plan ahead to help make it easier, this should include:

- Considering what you are going to need in order to be able to stay at home for the full 14 days
- talking to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need to make your stay at home a success
- think about and plan how to get access to food and other supplies such as medications required during this period
- create a contact list with phone numbers of neighbours, schools, employer, chemist, NHS 111
- set up an online shopping account if possible
- ask friends or family to drop off anything needed or order supplies online, but make sure these are left outside the home for you to collect
- make sure that you keep in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media
- think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films
- many people find it helpful to plan out the full 14 days, such as on a make-shift calendar. This could be useful for tenants to create cleaning or cooking rotas. (see below section on use of shared spaces)

If you are unable to pay rent during this time because you cannot work and are not furloughed or in receipt of regular income, you must contact your Landlord and agree a plan to either pay a lower rent during the lockdown period or to pay off arrears at a later date. Landlords will not be able to start possession proceedings during this period without giving three months' notice. A lawful eviction can only be carried out under warrant by a court appointed Bailiff. If you experience any

threats of eviction or harassment during this time, you must contact the local authority either by phone (+441708 432006) or email at landlordlicensing@havering.gov.uk

Further advice on managing debt and rent issues can be found here.

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/money_problems_and_energy_costs/where_to_get_help_with_debts

Landlords still have an obligation to keep properties in good repair free from hazards. You should inform your landlord of any deterioration to the condition of the property. For the purposes of inspection or remedying urgent health and safety issues, landlords and contractors should work together with tenants to arrange access to the property in accord with government guidance on social distancing, and working safely. This could include (but not limited to) leaking roofs, boiler break downs (no heating or hot water) plumbing (affecting washing and toilet facilities) broken windows or damage to external doors. Electrical break downs, broken fridges or washing machines or breakdown or repairs required to equipment relied upon by a disabled person.

If the work is non-urgent where possible any repairs should be delayed until the end of the lockdown period.

During the lockdown period, occupiers should be encouraged to plan in advance what they will do if, for example, someone in the household were to feel much worse, such as having difficulties breathing.

If you need clinical advice, you should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if you don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if you are seriously ill or injured or your life is at risk. You must not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Use of shared spaces when individuals who live with others in HMO's are required to stay in their room

If someone is unwell, they should minimise visiting shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas as much as possible, and keep shared spaces well ventilated if possible. They should aim to keep 2 metres from other people and not share a bed with another person.

If toilet or bathroom facilities are shared, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using regular cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

If a separate bathroom is not available, consideration should be given to drawing up a rota for washing or bathing, with the person who is unwell using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves (if they are able or it is appropriate).

A person who is unwell should use separate body and hand towels from other people. They should avoid using shared kitchens whilst others are present. They should take their meals back to their room to eat and use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry crockery and cutlery.

If you require any further advice or information please visit our website or contact the Property Licensing Team.

Website https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20060/information_for_landlords
Email landlordlicensing@havering.gov.uk
Telephone +441708 432006