

Visiting people's homes during the Covid-19 pandemic

Who is this guide for?

Anyone who is visiting a person's home for work, unless they are providing home care or personal care to people. (If you are providing home care or personal care please see [the guidance issued by the Government](#).)

This guidance is to help keep you and our residents safe while being consistent with national guidance.

You **must not** visit a resident's home if you have [symptoms of Covid-19](#). You must follow the Government's [stay at home guidance](#).

You **must not** visit a resident's home if you have underlying health problems that increase your risk of severe illness from Covid-19 (see [Government guidance](#) for full list). As soon as you can you must let your manager know so they can make appropriate arrangements in accordance with the government advice. You must work from home (where possible) or where you need to self-isolate.

How should I decide if I should visit someone's home?

At the moment you should only be visiting someone's home if it is really important to do so.

As a Council our priority is protecting the lives of our residents and staff

Examples of jobs that you might be doing that are a high priority are:

- repairing gas leaks
- electrical faults
- child protection visits
- cleaning debris from dwellings after fatalities

Lower priority visits should be postponed for the time being. We will update this guidance to reflect further information from the Government and Public Health England.

When deciding whether or not to visit someone's home it is essential that you consider:

- [Government advice](#)
- the reason for the visit
- whether the visit is categorised as lone working,
- the level of priority and urgency of the visit,
- whether the visit can be deferred and if so for how long,
- whether the premises are occupied.

If you have any questions about whether the visit should take place ask your manager.

Preparing for a safe visit

Before you visit someone's home you should give them a call and ask them the following questions to find out certain key pieces of information:

- is anyone currently occupying the property?
- are the people who occupy the property aware of the reason why you're visiting and what work will be done during the visit?
- do any of the people living there have [symptoms of Covid-19](#)?
- is anyone in the home [extremely vulnerable](#) to Covid-19?

You can follow the questions on the [Script guidance for visits](#).

If the person is concerned about you entering their home, reassure them that you are:

- following strict hygiene standards
- will not be in the house longer than is necessary
- that the work will be confined to a certain area
- that they should keep a distance of 2 metres from you to avoid the spread of Covid-19

Before entering the premises, wash your hands, for 20 seconds, using soap and hot water. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to.

Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.

What do I do if a person in the property has symptoms of Covid-19?

If anyone in the household has symptoms and the work is non-urgent, then no visits should take place until the entire household is no longer self-isolating.

If the visit is urgent and a person has symptoms of Covid-19 you will still need to visit the home to carry out the visit.

If you are able to keep 2 meters separation from the people in the property at all times while you are in the property, then the advice from Public Health is that no protective equipment is required. You should ask everyone in the property, especially if they have symptoms of Covid-19, to keep separate from you, ideally staying in another room.

If this is not possible due to the size of the property then you must wear a mask.

If possible, open windows to ventilate the work area, air movement will disperse airborne droplets

To reduce the spread of germs if you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or if you don't have a tissue use your sleeve (not your hands). Throw any tissues in a bin immediately. After coughing or sneezing wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitising gel.

There should be no physical contact with occupants. If a child tries to approach you (for example, to hug you) then you should ask them to stay the required distance away. If a child manages to make physical contact, then follow guidance to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.

If the visit is for the purposes of cleaning after someone with suspected Covid-19 has left, then please refer to the [national guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings](#).

What do I do if I only discover a person has symptoms of Covid-19 when I arrive at a property?

If the visit is high priority and urgent then if you should follow the advice on what to do if a person in the property has symptoms of Covid-19 as above. If it is possible to postpone the visit, then the visit should be postponed.

What do I do if no one in the property has symptoms of Covid-19?

If no one in the household has the symptoms, then no personal protective equipment is required. You must still follow good hygiene practices as above.

After the visit is complete

Remove all tools used and wipe with an alcohol based wipe. If the tools have stayed in the bag and not been used then they do not need cleaning. Dispose of waste in the usual way.

After leaving the premises use soap and hot water to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

This guidance

This new illness requires us to adapt some of our working practices to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to residents and staff.

We wrote this guidance so that you are aware of the latest official national guidance on how to reduce the risk of contracting or transmitting the virus that causes Covid-19 when entering someone's home.

This guidance is derived from the best available information from Public Health England as of 26 March 2020.