

17th September 2020

Dear Employers,

Re: COVID-19 and requests for Med3 ('Fit Notes')

If your employee has recently contacted the GP surgery to request a Med3 Fit Note or 'Sick note' for periods of absence due to COVID-19 Coronavirus, although we appreciate that these are challenging times, it is not normal practice for a GP to issue 'fit notes' under such circumstances.

The NHS website (link below) explains that employees do not need to ask their GP for a fit note if they are off work because of coronavirus. Instead, they can get an isolation note to send to their employer as proof they need to stay at home.

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/caring-carers-and-long-term-conditions/can-i-get-a-fit-note-without-seeing-my-gp/>

Guidance on specific circumstances

Below is a breakdown of potential requests for fit notes, advice and outcome which you might find helpful to determine the right course of action for your employee. This is taken directly from the national guidance in relation to COVID 19.

Issue	Advice	Outcome
1. Symptomatic so isolating for at least 10 days - used NHS website/111 online/been told by health care professional that they have symptoms.	Follow guidance https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate/ https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/ Use isolation note 111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/	Your employee does not need to contact their GP
2. Symptomatic and remaining unwell for over 7 days .	If they remain unwell and unfit to work after 7 days, the current advice is to visit 111.nhs.uk/covid-19/ where there is an online self-assessment tool. The patient may be invited to call NHS111 and given further advice. Patients/employees can use isolation note 111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/	Your employee does not need to contact their GP
3. If household members, support bubble members, NHS Track & Trace informing of a positive contact have symptoms, employee will isolate for 14 days as per government advice.	Follow guidance https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/ Patients/employees can use isolation note 111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/	Your employee does not need to contact their GP

<p>4. Employees within the “at-risk” groups during COVID-19.</p> <p>https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/</p>	<p>Patients/employees that are at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable) from coronavirus (COVID-19) we advised to shield until 1st August 2020.</p> <p>Clinically vulnerable are to continue to take extra care in observing social distancing but can form a ‘support bubble’ as per guidance. If they do become unwell during or after this time, point 1 and 2 applies and they can get an isolation note.</p>	<p>Your employee does not need to contact their GP</p>
<p>5. If employee lives with someone who is shielding or identified at high risk from coronavirus (clinically extremely vulnerable)</p> <p>www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/if-you-live-with-someone-at-very-high-risk-from-coronavirus/</p>	<p>People who are at high risk from coronavirus should have received a letter from the NHS saying they are at high risk. Recent change in Government guidance on 6th July 2020 stated there is no need for those within the ‘at-risk’ categories to social distance with household members. Employees are not required to shield themselves. Further details can be found on fourth link below.</p>	<p>Your employee does not need to contact their GP</p>

Further information for employers is available here:

- www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19
- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support>
- www.hse.gov.uk/news/working-safely-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#work-and-employment>

General practices will continue to ensure that the healthcare needs of their patients are at the forefront of their efforts during this period.

I am grateful for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

On Behalf of:

DERBY ROAD HEALTH CENTRE