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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Royal Mail Group – Coronavirus Latest Questions & Answers Guidance (V16) Dated 21 March 2020

Royal Mail Questions & Answers Guidance:

Royal Mail Group has established a 'Business Pandemic Team' which includes all heads of department and this team meets daily to review the situation across Royal Mail Group and update communications to Managers and Questions and Answers information which is cascaded out to the business.

Attached for the information, reference and use of CWU Health and Safety and Branch IR Reps is the latest version of Royal Mail Group's 'questions and answers' communication version 16 (21 March 2020). These are normally circulated to all RMG managers and are also available to access through a link in the 'Managers Update Messages'.

Main Topics covered:

- Coronavirus Guidance - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, a) Prevention, b) Self-isolation, testing and reporting, c) Cleaning and consumables, d) Travel, e) Support and advice
- Coronavirus Sick Absence and Pay
- Post and Parcels; General Ops Advice, Operational Processes and Reporting Changes, Delivering and collecting from customers.
- There is guidance in there on use of water fountains and water dispensers.
- Gym Closures.

Positive Coronavirus Covid-19 Cases in Royal Mail:

Positive Cases in Royal Mail now stand at 9 – Manchester NWDO, Portabello DO (Edinburgh), Edinburgh MC, Abingdon DO, NDC, Mount Pleasant MC (W1 Collections), Eastleigh DO, Romford MC and Atherstone RMI.

Important Useful Links:

Check if you have coronavirus symptoms: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>.

My Royalmail.Com site includes the latest Q&A and general detail:
<https://www.myroyalmail.com/Coronavirus>

Public Health England latest advice and guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

NHS common questions and answers: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Reporting a Positive Coronavirus Case:

If a member has a positive Coronavirus diagnosis, the line manager must contact Royal Mail Central Postal Control (CPC) on: 0345 266 1060.

Good Hygiene:

It is important that everyone follows basic good hygiene techniques. Wash hands regularly particularly before eating. Regularly clean with antiseptic wipes any shared equipment such as keyboards, PDA's and scanners. Cough and sneeze into tissues. Dispose of any tissues immediately. 'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It'.

PPE Supplies

There is a Global shortage of 'disinfectant wipes' and Royal Mail Assets and Procurement have been endeavouring to secure replenishment supplies from a large number of suppliers. The priority by the industry has been to direct supplies to the NHS first. Some supplies have been secured by Royal Mail which have been despatched but a substantial order of 6 million wipes in packs of 300 should arrive in at the end of next month followed by monthly deliveries of 10,000 wipes.

Royal Mail First Class Support:

First Class Support is available to all Royal Mail Group Employees free 24/7 providing a confidential support helpline 0800 6888 777 as well as a range of support services including health, counselling, debt and legal advice and practical help.

The attached is for the information, reference and assistance of Health and Safety Reps, Branch Officers and Reps and Divisional and Regional Officers for reference in any local discussions. The Q&A's cover off a number of issues raised by CWU Reps.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer

Coronavirus Guidance - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

This is a 'live' document that will be updated as and when circumstances, policies or processes need to be changed.

Click here to visit the [Royal Mail Coronavirus Information page](#)

1. Health

- a) Prevention
- b) Self-isolation, testing and reporting
- c) Cleaning and consumables
- d) Travel
- e) Support and advice

Any employee with concerns should visit the NHS 111 Website - <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>. This site provides a portal for those who think they have symptoms, or may have been exposed to the virus and are unsure what to do. It covers England, Scotland and Wales.

The advice for Northern Ireland is to call 111.

a) Prevention

What is the key preventative advice to reduce the risk of coronavirus?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. You can access the latest NHS guidance to help avoid catching or spreading coronavirus [here](#). Please [click link](#) to access a poster for more information about promoting good hygiene.

What is defined as "close contact" with someone with a confirmed case of coronavirus mean?

NHS guidance on what "close contact" with someone with a confirmed case of coronavirus means is available on their Q&A site: [click here](#).

Can you catch Coronavirus from parcels and letters?

Public Health England (PHE) has advised that people receiving parcels are not at risk of contracting the coronavirus. This complements the highly publicised guidance from PHE for people to wash their hands more often than usual using soap and hot water.

The Government published advice to businesses on gov.uk on Tuesday 25th February, available [here](#). It states that "there is no perceived increase in risk for handling post".

The World Health Organisation has also advised that coronaviruses do not survive long on objects, such as letters or packages.

Will Royal Mail be providing face masks?

We would not be issuing masks as PPE against coronavirus. The World Health Organization guidance on when to use a mask says states that it is only beneficial to stop the spread of the virus for:

- People who are ill, coughing and sneezing to reduce them from spreading the virus to others.
- People who are caring for, or in close contact with someone who is infected. People who are healthy only need to wear a mask if they are taking care of a person with suspected 2019-nCoV infection.

Further information on the use of face masks can be found on the [WHO website](#).

Is it safe to use shared water fountains and water dispensers at this time?

There is a risk of contracting coronavirus from shared water dispensers via cross contamination. Good hygiene practices need to be followed at all time in communal rest facilities. You should never allow your mouth to come into contact with the dispensing tap of a water fountain, so in this current pandemic we are requesting all units cordon off the use of these drinking fountain facilities.

We encourage all employees to stay hydrated and advise they purchase or bring in from home enough bottled water/drinks to last the length of their delivery rather than refilling at work. For unit based employees we recommend that sites purchase disposable cups to use in conjunction with water coolers. Plastic cups should be disposed of as general waste and are not recyclable. Re-useable bottles should not be refilled using any water dispensers.

What advice is available for first aider's who may need to respond to a patient with coronavirus symptoms?

As advice may change based on increasing experience in the care of patients with coronavirus, first aiders should consult the [latest Public Health England guidance](#) for support when responding to first aid incidents related to the coronavirus.

What is the key preventative advice for 'vulnerable' employees?

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. You can access the latest NHS guidance to help avoid catching or spreading coronavirus [here](#). Please [click link](#) to access a poster for more information about promoting good hygiene.

Be aware of what close contact is - NHS guidance on what "close contact" with someone with a confirmed case of coronavirus means is available on their Q&A site: [click here](#).

New advice for the public and those who may be more at risk than others is being shared regularly. Look out for changes to advice that may affect you. Current guidance on the NHS website, available [here](#)

Employees should continue to be disciplined with hand hygiene advice and contact their own GP with concerns. An employee's GP will have the medical information on which to advise the employee on any recommendations specific to them.

Can we get head thermometers to units?

No, these are used by clinically trained people who can then advise and signpost the person accordingly.

Do we need to take any different approaches to the Public Health England advice in [Scotland / Wales / Northern Ireland]?

No, we will continue to be led by the Government and Public Health England.

b) Self-isolation, testing and reporting

What is the latest government advice re self-isolation for employees?

The situation is constantly changing and you should check [this guidance](#) for the latest advice on this area.

Our understanding of the current position is that employees could be isolating for between 7 and 14 days and this could be extended by around a week if they develop symptoms during self-isolation.

All absences should be treated as sickness absence. Managers should choose “Coronavirus with Symptoms” if the employee has symptoms and “Coronavirus Self Isolation” if they do not have symptoms. Please update the absence if the reason for absence changes.

You can access up to date guidance on what steps to take whilst self-isolating on the NHS website, available [here](#).

What should I do if an employee receives a positive coronavirus test result?

Should an employee receive a positive test result then the manager will immediately notify Central Postal Control (as usual for a notifiable infectious disease) and the Safety, Health and Environment Business Partner who will immediately notify the Health & Wellbeing Team. The Safety, Health and Environment Business Partner will support and guide the manager through required processes in line with Public Health guidelines.

The Local Public Health Protection Teams, are responsible for controlling infectious diseases. They will trace contacts, instruct, advise and provide communications on what action needs to be taken to prevent further spread. RMG will need to follow the instructions provided by the Local Public Health Protection Team in the same way as we would if there was an employee who had been affected by another notifiable infectious disease like TB.

If we have an employee who tests positive but has *not* been into work for some time (Public Health would advise re timescales) and not been in contact with any colleagues there would not be a risk of infection and so no action would need to be taken and we would not hear from the infection control teams.

c) Cleaning and consumables

How can I order gloves and antiseptic wipes?

Disposable gloves are available to order, please speak to you line manager.

Royal Mail is working hard to try and secure stock of hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes, however there is a global shortage of product and the chemicals to make them. Where available, bulk supplies in the UK are being prioritised for the NHS.

As Royal Mail suppliers are no longer able to fulfil orders, existing supplies of antiseptic wipes should be used only where essential.

Regular hand washing is the most effective way to reduce the chance of contracting and spreading any virus. There are practical solutions to handwashing on delivery and collection which should be considered:

- Washing hands before leaving the office to start your duty and on return

- Request to use facilities of a business customer (they are legally required to provide toilet facilities)
- Make use of any public toilets
- If there is an urgent requirement to wash hands e.g. first aid incident, consider stopping your delivery/collection and visit the nearest public convenience or drive back to your office.

The hand wash in our dispensers does not contain alcohol, will it be powerful enough to kill any virus? If not, can we get hand sanitiser gel?

The hand soap that we provide is effective for hand washing and good hand hygiene. We are not currently providing hand sanitiser or gel through our stores order system.

What new cleaning processes have Royal Mail put in place?

RMG PFS have enhanced the normal cleaning regimes through increased frequencies and additional cleaning of high contact touchpoints. Two new cleaning responsive standards on top of the normal workplace cleans have also been implemented:-

- a) Precautionary Clean – this is a responsive disinfection standard that is carried out at the request of the CPC Team and is an enhanced service to the normal standard clean.
- b) Intense Clean – this is a further enhanced and intense disinfection standard that is carried out at the request of the CPC Team

Are we likely to run out of cleaning products e.g. soap, toilet rolls etc?

Cleaning stock (soap, toilet rolls, cleaning chemicals etc) is in high demand not just in the UK but across the World by Governments and Industry. PFS FM Teams have taken some supportive measures to try and ensure cleaning standards are maintained:-

- a) Local Cleaning Stock – all local FM Cleaning Managers have been requested to order two months of stock at a time to ensure there is always a supply of stock held on site. This stock may well be locked away in a secure location on site. If additional stock is required to replenish specific areas, the Site Manager can contact the PFS Cleaning Manager for replenishment
- b) National Cleaning Stock – in addition to the above local site stock provisions PFS have managed to secure two months of bulk stock from the RMG national supplier. This is being delivered to specific locations in the UK and a logistics plan is being developed to support distribution to local sites.

** Please note that cleaning consumable stock levels (soaps, toilet rolls etc) at sites may fall below normal levels due to increased hygiene controls implemented at sites. If stock has run out before the normal replenishment timescale please contact the PFS Helpdesk who can coordinate a replenishment service via the local Cleaning Team.

Will our normal cleaning routine continue as usual?

In the event of reduced internal cleaning staff levels our management team will update site managers with local contingency plans. These may include cleaning at different times to the normal clean, cleaners attending from other sites, relief cleaner attendance and focusing on key areas/tasks. Priorities will be discussed and agreed with the PIC/Mgrs. on site.

How do we request for a vehicle to be cleaned in the event of a confirmed case of coronavirus?

Where a confirmed case of Coronavirus has been made, Public Health England will provide advice on that affected employees case and the need for cleaning of specific areas within their workplace inc equipment and any vehicle use.

- Where vehicle cleaning is identified (this will not be undertaken until a positive Coronavirus diagnosis (following testing) has been confirmed), RM Fleet will provide instructions and arrange for the vehicles in which the affected colleagues who have driven / was a passenger within the vehicle to be cleaned. The booking can be made via RM Fleet on 0345 2660005.
- The vehicle must be left in quarantine for a period of 72 hours from the time the vehicle was last used by the diagnosed employee.

d) Travel

What is the current advice for returning travellers?

Please see [Advice for returning travellers](#)

What do we do if an employee has attended work after returning from a high risk affected areas?

If an employee has been advised to self-isolate for any reason, colleagues in the workplace should continue with business as usual, maintaining good hand hygiene.

Should anyone have concerns they should visit the NHS 111 website - <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>. The advice for Northern Ireland is to call 111.

e) Support and advice

If I have any questions relating to an employee absence, leave or other policy question where do I go for advice?

Please contact Advice and Support on 0345 604 3657.

Where do managers or employees go for First Class Support?

We understand there is concern and anxiety about coronavirus. If you or a member of your team would like to speak to a counsellor they can contact First Class Support available 24/7 to provide emotional (not medical) support on 0800 6888 777.

Any enquiries relating to self-isolation and absence should contact Advice and Support on 0345 604 3657.

Click here to visit the [Royal Mail Coronavirus Information page](#) for latest information and guidance.

2. POLICY

- **Sick pay**
- **Absence**
- **Attendance procedure**
- **Annual Leave**

Managers with any enquiries relating to self-isolation and absence should contact Advice and Support on 0345 604 3657

I need to change my shift times to be able to accommodate the care of a dependant. Will my shift payment change?

We all need to work flexibly at this time to support the overall approach. Managers will work with people to try and accommodate requests to work flexibly and we want to support this approach. We don't envisage these requests would result in a change in shift payment. We will keep this under review depending on how long the changes remain in place.

Can you provide more clarity on who will be considered to be vulnerable from an underlying health condition perspective?

We understand that early next week the NHS will be sending a letter to individuals who they categorise as vulnerable due to an underlying condition. This will provide specific advice about what the individual should do and cover people who are at a particularly high risk of getting seriously ill with coronavirus. The medical conditions which we understand are covered include people who:

- have had an organ transplant and are taking immunosuppressant medicine
- are having chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- have blood or bone marrow cancer, such as leukaemia
- have a severe chest condition, such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma
- have another serious health condition

If an employee believes that they are vulnerable due to an underlying health condition then they should have a communication / certificate from their GP.

To summarise this would we say those who usually get the annual flu jab for free – a good guide but NHS will be in touch.

A colleague has less than a year's service and is worried about losing pay if they go off with symptoms of coronavirus.

Exceptionally, to support employees who should not be attending work, Royal Mail has temporarily changed the sick pay for employees with less than a year's service.

Where the absence is related to coronavirus, these employees will receive the same sick pay as employees with over a year's service. This will be in place until the end of March 2020, although we will continue to monitor the situation and may change this.

A colleague has a child whose school is closed and needs to be at home to look after them – how do I support the individual?

Where a colleague has to look after a dependant, such as a child, our normal approach applies. Colleagues can take holiday, unpaid time off or work flexibly. They should agree this with their line manager.

Will absences due to coronavirus be counted within the attendance procedure?

We would expect the vast majority of coronavirus absences to be discounted from the normal attendance procedure. However, in the event coronavirus absences are for an excessive duration or repeat in nature further investigation may be required.

An employee in my office has had their holiday cancelled and wants to carry forward the time. What should I do?

The expectation is that employee's will still take the time off for their holiday. Employee's should only carry forward 5 days holiday at the end of the year. If due to operational reasons the local manager needs the employee to attend work then in exceptional circumstances they can agree for employee to return to work earlier and take their holiday at another time.

I have an employee who is unable to get back to the UK because their flights have been cancelled. What should I do?

Discuss the situation with the employee. If additional time off is required this should be provided through agreeing holiday or other time off unpaid.

I have an employee who does not want to attend work because they are concerned about a family member at home. They or anyone within their household do not have symptoms of coronavirus. What should I do?

Find out the employees concerns and reaffirm the processes that we have in place to ensure the protection of our employees. If the employee continues to have concerns and wants to stay away from the office work with them to agree how they can take time away from work. There are a range of options which can be considered including annual holiday, flexible working and Special Leave. If any time is provided as unpaid special leave, the manager should record this through "Other time Off – Special Leave unpaid". When entering the absence, the manager should select 'Special Leave unpaid' and then choose 'Personal Commitments'.

I have a pregnant employee in my team and they want to socially distance themselves following the latest Public Health England (PHE) advice. How should I respond?

The current PHE advice is that individuals who are pregnant should limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home where possible and considering not going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and bars. They are also being strongly advised to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family (social distancing) if possible.

The approach below will be in place until the end of March 2020, when it will be reviewed and may be extended or changed.

The employee should provide you with evidence of their pregnancy. This could be a MAT B1 form or a medical letter/certificate from their GP or Midwife. If they are not able to provide this immediately please give them time to provide this at a later date.

If they can, the employee can work from home following the advice and guidance on working from home.

If an employee is not able to work from home the absence will be treated as a pregnancy related sickness absence and you should choose Coronavirus self-isolation as the absence reason.

If an employee is absent from work due to her pregnancy (including as a result of social distancing due to her being pregnant) after the beginning of the fourth week before her Expected Week of Childbirth then her maternity leave will begin automatically on the first day of the absence.

I have an employee who is over 70 in my team and they want to socially distance themselves following the latest Public Health England (PHE) advice. How should I respond?

The current PHE advice is that individuals who are over 70 should limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home where possible and considering not going to pubs,

restaurants, theatres and bars, They are also being strongly advised to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family (social distancing) if possible.

The approach below will be in place until the end of March 2020, when it will be reviewed and may be extended or changed,

Managers will need to check that the employee is over 70. They can do this through PSP.

If they can the employee can work from home following the advice and guidance on working from home.

If an employee is not able to work from home the absence will be treated as a sickness absence and you should choose Coronavirus self-isolation as the absence reason.

I have an employee who has an underlying health condition in my team and they want to socially distance themselves following the latest Public Health England (PHE) advice. How should I respond?

The current PHE advice is that individuals who have an underlying health condition should limit their social contact where possible, including using less public transport, working at home where possible and considering not going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and bars. They are also being strongly advised to significantly limit face-to-face interaction with friends and family (social distancing) if possible.

The approach below will be in place until the end of March 2020, when it will be reviewed and may be extended or changed.

The employee should provide you a medical certificate to cover the absence. If they are not able to provide this immediately please give them time to provide this at a later date.

The employee can work from home following the advice and guidance on working from home.

If an employee is not able to work from home the absence will be treated as a sickness absence and you should choose Coronavirus self-isolation as the absence reason.

I have an employee in my team who is in a vulnerable group and they have stated that they want to come to work? What should I do?

Currently the advice from PHE is to strongly advise that individuals who are pregnant, over 70 or with an underlying health condition should consider social distancing. If an employee decides that they want to come to work you should discuss the reasons and encourage the employee to read the advice on Public Health England, however it is their decision if they wish to attend work. Please note that the advice could change so always check the Public Health website for the very latest position.

I have an employee who has had a lot of absence in the last year and if they are absent again will be on half-pay. Will there be any different arrangements for them if they have to self-isolate?

Royal Mail's Sick Pay and Sick Pay Conditions policy will continue to apply. The sick pay an employee will receive will be determined by the sick pay and sick pay policy conditions. Exceptionally, Royal Mail has temporarily changed the sick pay for employees with less than a year's service. We will pay Royal Mail sick pay to employees who have less than a year's service and who do not qualify for Royal Mail Sick Pay when their absence is due to coronavirus. This will be in place until the end of March 2020, when it will be reviewed and may be extended. We will continue to monitor the situation and may change this.

I am concerned that our agency employees are different every day. Can we try and have a group of employees who support us?

We are working with our agency suppliers to provide the support that we need. If you have any particular concerns or issues in this area then please contact coronavirus.support@royalmail.com or Advice and Support on 0345 604 2787.

Will this year's Performance Review Process continue in the current climate?

We recognise that it may be difficult for colleagues and line managers to complete the Performance Review process. We are looking to revise the process and relax such timelines. We will communicate further what this means. However, we ask that you recognise that it is important that we do take time to reflect on your performance over the last year and continue to check in with your people on a personal level over this challenging time.

3. POST & PARCELS

a) General Ops Advice

b) Operational Processes and Reporting Changes

c) Delivering and collecting from customers

a) General Ops Advice

Is it safe to deliver a package from China or any other place where the virus has been Identified?

The Public Health Authorities have advised people delivering or receiving packages are not at risk of contracting the new coronavirus. From experience with other coronaviruses, we know that these types of viruses don't survive long on objects, such as letters or packages.

Staff in my unit are sick with symptoms of Covid-19 / self-isolating which has created a resourcing shortfall and I have failed service. How should I report this?

- Delivery USO - If as a direct result of staff being unable to attend due to sick/self-isolation the Route Report in DODR should be recorded with **"Emergency - Other"**.
- Delivery Workplan - If as a direct result of staff being unable to attend due to sick/self-isolation the End of Day Report in DODR should be recorded with **"Code 6B "Emergency"**.
- Mail Centres - If as a direct result of staff being unable to attend due to sick/self-isolation the End of Shift Report in MCDR should be recorded with **"Code 10 "Emergency"**.
- RDCs - If as a direct result of staff being unable to attend due to sick/self-isolation the End of Shift Report in PPMS should be recorded as **'8Q - Emergency Other'**

Please note that this should only be for the volume/collections failed as a direct result of any sick or self-isolation absence directly related to COVID-19. If there are other failures they should be reported with their appropriate reason.

A colleague went home today mid delivery, colleagues are questioning if it's safe to touch the mail he left, and if they should be using the van the colleague was using.

The Public Health Authorities have advised people delivering or receiving packages are not at risk of contracting the coronavirus from the letters, parcels or vehicle. Remember regular hand washing is the most effective way to reduce the chance of contracting and spreading any virus, and try to not touch your face (mouth, nose and eyes) or eat before washing your hands.

A customer is blocking their letterbox until the threat is over. What is the guidance on delivering mail?

Where we are physically unable to access a customer's property and/or they have blocked up their letterbox to prevent delivery then this should be treated as a Delivery USO suspension. In this circumstance, the Delivery Office Manager should create a case for the addressee(s) on the USO Sharepoint to request the suspension. The manager can then download the standard letter from the Sharepoint site that explains that we will hold all mail (for up to 18 days) for someone to collect (with the appropriate identification) or we can deliver to an alternative address in the Delivery Office catchment area. If this letter cannot be handed to the customer and there are no other contact details available for the customer (e.g. telephone number, email address) then the letter should be left on the customer premises in a place where the occupier can clearly see it.

Once the Manager has logged the address point as a Delivery USO suspension then they are not required to report this as either a workplan or delivery USO part walk failure in DODR. Use this link to access the USO Sharepoint Site: [USO Delivery Exceptions SharePoint site](#)

Contractor is due on site, should they still be allowed on site?

We are in touch with our contractors and ensuring they are following Public Health Authority advice too, on this basis contractors should be allowed to continue working on Royal Mail sites.

b) Delivery, Collection & Customer Service Points - Operational Processes & Reporting instructions

What are the changes made to the Special Delivery Guarantees?

For our 9am product the service remains unchanged. We should still deliver by 9am. For other Special Delivery Guaranteed items, we no longer guarantee deliveries by 1pm the next working day, but we should still prioritise Special Delivery parcels and letters and try to deliver by 1pm. If that's not possible we should deliver before the end of day.

Royal Mail is changing Operational Delivery processes for the delivery of any parcels which cannot be posted through a letter box or that requires a signature, what do I need to do differently?

For non-signature parcels that aren't letterboxable (1C/2C, RM24/48, T24/48, International import)

1. Scan the parcel as delivered but do not press submit.
2. Leave the parcel on the doorstep, knock on the door and step back 2 meters
3. When the customer comes to the door tell them they have a parcel there.
4. Witness the customer taking the parcel inside.
5. If the customer takes the parcel inside the Delivery Officer should press submit.
6. If the Customer refuses to take the parcel inside, then the Delivery Officer should retrieve the parcel, update the PDA status to "Undelivered - No Answer" and leave a "Something For You" card so that the parcel can be collected at a later point. Do not show the parcel as "Refused".

For signature parcels, including letter formats (Signed For, T24/48 with signature, International with signature)

1. Scan the parcel as delivered and press continue but do not enter the customer's name yet.
2. Leave the parcel on the doorstep, knock on the door and step back 2 meters
3. When the customer comes to the door tell them they have a parcel there and inform them that we will not be collecting the usual signature, but we will require the customer's name and must witness the customer taking the parcel in.

4. Input the customer's name as normal and press proceed. When the signature box appears, input "XP1" but do not press done until the customer picks up the parcel.
5. If the customer takes the parcel inside the Delivery Officer should press done.
6. If the Customer refuses to take the parcel inside, then the Delivery Officer should retrieve the parcel, update the PDA status to "Not Delivered - No Answer" and leave a "Something For You" card so that the parcel can be collected at a later point. Do not show the parcel as "Refused".

For Special Delivery Guaranteed parcels, including letter formats

1. Scan the parcel as delivered and press continue but do not enter the customer's name yet.
2. Leave the parcel on the doorstep, knock on the door and step back 2 meters
3. When the customer comes to the door tell them they have a parcel there and inform them that we will not be collecting the usual signature, but we will require the customer's name and must witness the customer taking the parcel in.
4. Input the customer's name as normal and press proceed. When the signature box appears, input "XP1" but do not press done until the customer picks up the parcel.
5. If the customer takes the parcel inside the Delivery Officer should press done.
6. If the Customer refuses to take the parcel inside, then the Delivery Officer should retrieve the parcel, update the PDA status to "Not Delivered - No Answer" and leave a "Something For You" card so that the parcel can be collected at a later point. Do not show the parcel as "Refused".

For Age Verification Tracked parcels

1. Knock on the customers door and walk back 2 meters and scan the parcel
2. Advise the customer that they have an "Age Verification" parcel that we can leave on the doorstep without the usual signature, but must still verify the persons age and witness them taking the parcel inside.
3. Ask the customer to open the door or stand in a window and undertake the "Challenge 25" check.
4. If the customer does not look over 25 the Delivery Officer should ask the customer to provide ID that proves their age. The customer can either show this to the Delivery Officer at a safe but visible distance or as an alternative through a window.
5. If the customer looks over 25 or produces the relevant ID, the Delivery Officer should ask the customer for their name and advise them to step back.
6. They should then input the customer's name into the PDA, when the signature box appears the Delivery Officer should input "XP1" without pressing done and should place the parcel on the doorstep.
7. When the customer takes the parcel indoors the Delivery Officer should press done.

If the customer does not provide the relevant ID/proof of age then the OPG should refuse to deliver the parcel, update the PDA status to "Undelivered - Failure to Produce ID" and leave a "Something For You Card" so that the parcel can be collected at a later point.

What about the process for Customer Service Points?

Handing over "Non- Signed For" Parcels (1c/2c, RM24/48, TR24/48) to customers.

1. Ask the customer to show their P739/E739 without the CSP team member having to handle it. If necessary, they should ask the customer for any information that is hard to read.
2. The CSP team member should make a note of the customer's address and any other details that they will need to locate the parcel.

3. Having located the Parcel, they should ask the customer to show the relevant ID without the need for the CSP team member having to handle it (ID requirements remain in line with current procedures – i.e. they should show the ID of the person to whom the parcel is addressed).
4. If the customer has provided the appropriate ID the CSP team member should ask the customer to place their P739 card into the bin (if provided) or if it is not possible to provide a bin, they should ask the customer to dispose of the card when they leave the CSP.
5. The CSP team member should then scan the barcode on the parcel and follow the Item Collected process on the PDA (and SPS process in an SPS enabled office) before placing the parcel onto the service counter for the customer to retrieve.

Handing over “Signed For” Parcels (Special Delivery, Recorded, International, T24/48, Age Verification) to customers

1. Ask the customer to show their P739/E739 without the CSP team member having to handle it. If necessary they should ask the customer for any information that is hard to read.
2. The CSP team member should make a note of the customer’s address and any other details that they will need to locate the parcel.
3. Having located the Parcel, they should ask the customer to show the relevant ID without the need for the CSP team member having to handle it (ID requirements remain in line with current procedures – i.e. they should show the ID of the person to whom the parcel is addressed and, for Age Verification only, also their own ID proving they are over 18 if they fail the Challenge 25 check).
4. If the customer has provided the relevant ID the CSP team member should inform the customer that they will hand over the parcel without collecting the normal signature. In addition, they will ask the customer to place their P739 card into the bin if provided or if it is not possible to provide a bin, they should ask the customer to dispose of the card when they leave the CSP.
5. The CSP team member should then scan the barcode on the parcel and follow the Item Collected process on the PDA (and SPS process in an SPS enabled office). When the CSP team member gets to the relevant screens they should input the customer’s name into the PDA as normal but when the signature screen is displayed they should input “XP1” themselves and press Done.

They should then place the customer’s parcel onto the service counter so that the customer can then take their parcel.

How can I safely uplift from a collection point?

Ask the customer to leave the items for collection and the mandatory paperwork in a convenient place, and then to step back 2 meters. When the customer retreats pick up the collection, scan the paperwork and return the collection to the vehicle in the normal way.

c) Delivering and Collecting from customers

Deliveries to Concierge / Halls of Residence – I am being told that they will only accept letters and not parcels, what should I do?

If the residence has individual delivery points, ask if you are allowed access to deliver individually. If this is permissible then proceed to do so and follow normal delivery procedures, taking into account the special instructions around signature items.

If we have no access to deliver to individual addresses, or permission is refused then on the first instance leave a P739 “Something for You Card” for each address you have a parcel for and scan as you would normally when there is no answer.

On return to the office, using the USO SharePoint create a single USO exception case for the whole building selecting the reason "COVID 19" and letter type "COVID 19 - concierge/reception refusal to accept attendance items". Once approved, print a copy for each resident, and deliver to the pigeon holes/lockers. (You may also consider displaying a copy of the letter somewhere near to the boxes at the site).

For future deliveries you no longer need to take the parcels, just leave a P739 for each address that has a parcel so customers know we have an item for them, until such time the concierge/reception accept parcels or the customer arranges an alternative delivery point.

Should I be changing meal relief arrangements to reduce the number of colleagues taking their meal relief at the same time?

Where it is operationally possible, reducing the number of people on break at the same time is sensible and can be considered.

Should I be running WTLL sessions as normal?

Keeping good communication at this time is vital, print off the WTLL and share within the office. Give people the opportunity to ask questions and confirm their understanding of what is happening.

A Post Office where P739 items are left for collection is closed, what do we do with P739 items?

Where a Post Office is closed, use the parent delivery office "When You Were Out" cards until the Post Office re-opens. Items should be returned to the main office Customer Service Point for collection

If when I got to a collection point such as a Post Offices/Businesses and it is closed upon arrival (many with notices up stating due to Coronavirus), how do I report this on my collection scanner?

Use Code 20 – Emergency for all cases where the premises are advising they are closed due to Coronavirus – for other collections use normal business as usual codes.

What is the advice on delivering to care homes?

Where the current practice is to deliver to each door in a care home, the DOM should contact those care homes to agree to leave the mail at a central point. If the care home does not agree, then deliveries should be made in the normal way.

What is the advice for delivering to shops and businesses?

There is no current change to advice – the key health preventative measures include washing hands before leaving the office to start your duty and on return, and prior to eating. Continue with the changes to process for signatures.

What is guidance on use of card payment terminals in enquiry offices?

Payment cards are used across all businesses now – there is no current change to advice – but frequently washing hands is good practice, especially prior to eating.

Many schools will be closed across UK from Friday, do we record them as USO Exceptions to notify them we are holding their mail?

No. Since the announcement yesterday, we have been receiving an increasing number call from schools to make applications for either our Business Keepsafe or Business Redirection service depending on their requirements. Therefore, you will receive the walkcard and labels in the daily Redirection pouch in the next few days. You may also have received a CRT instruction from our Customer Experience teams that setup

both services, asking you to hold mail for the school pending the receipt of the walkcard and labels instructions.

If a school;

- remains open for children of key workers, or the school is open and staffed in some way e.g. caretaker, office open then continue to deliver mail as normal.
- is closed but there is a letterbox we can use – use it, and P739 attendance items
- completely closed, no one on site and no letterbox, log on USO SharePoint and a letter to notify them we have their mail held for the next 5 days pending our receipt of their application for a Business Keepsafe or Business Redirection service.

If DOMs have already been contacted by schools directly, requesting alternative arrangements for them to access their mail, create cases on USO SharePoint to confirm we can put those arrangements in place.

Advice for customers

You can access the latest advice for customers on the Royal Mail website here:

www.royalmail.com/coronavirus

To check the latest international advice, check here:

https://personal.help.royalmail.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/5317/~/-international-incident-bulletin

All

Yesterday the UK Government announced new social distancing measures in the fight against the coronavirus, including the order to close all gyms and leisure centres from today Saturday 21st March.

We are aware that earlier this week some RMG gyms took the local decision to close to minimise the risk of spreading the virus.

PLEASE NOW CLOSE ANY RMG GYM WHICH IS CURRENTLY OPEN WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT.

PLEASE COULD EACH SITE EMAIL OR TEXT CONFIRMATION OF ITS GYM CLOSURE TO DAN.CLARKE@ROYALMAIL.COM / 07718098179.

Many thanks in advance for your prompt action to this urgent request.

Many Thanks

Dan

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Classified: RMG – Internal