

Public Health and Housing COVID-19 – Advice for tenants



This information leaflet is for tenants living in shared accommodation or houses in multiple occupation (HMO), and is in line with Government guidance, to advise what they should do if they or other occupiers have possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

If a tenant has symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house in accordance with current guidance on self-isolation. Find out more:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877678/coronavirus-leaflet.pdf

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 home isolation period. For vulnerable individuals that do not have anywhere else to go whilst they self-isolate, the local authority may be able to assist with temporary accommodation for these individuals only. Please contact Housing Options and Homelessness team – phone: 01284757178.

If you must self-isolate, this will obviously be a difficult and stressful time so you should plan ahead to help make it easier. You may wish to:

- consider what you are going to need in order to be able to stay at home for the full required isolation period
- talk 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).

Occupiers should be encouraged to plan 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.

You may wish to consider the 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. Occupiers should aim to keep two metres from other people and not share a bed with another person.

If toilet or bathroom facilities are shared, isolating occupiers 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 information or advice, please don't hesitate to contact:

Public Health and Housing

Phone: 01284 757053

Email: customer.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk