

Ashdown Hurrey

Covid-19 Risk Assessment

Updated 04/02/2022

The purpose of this document is to assess the risk to the firm's staff and visitors presented by attendance at the firm's premises during the Covid-19 pandemic. This risk assessment seeks to achieve a mutual benefit for staff, visitors and Ashdown Hurrey alike.

It is recorded at the outset that the firm's policy is to:

- Protect the welfare of the firm's staff and clients above all other considerations;
- Follow the regulation and advice of HM Government and NHS/PHE as published directly on their respective websites;
- Keep this risk assessment under constant review.

The main areas of risk of infection or transmission by attending the firm's premises are identified below and for convenience are considered separately as they affect members of staff and visitors. Appropriate action to remove or minimise risk is identified and in some cases, this goes above and beyond the minimum requirements set out by the Government guidance.

Research has suggested that transmission of Covid-19 is far more likely to occur through close contact and airborne means rather than through touch. Therefore, those instructions within this risk assessment in relation to airborne transmission (such as the wearing of face masks and opening of windows) are considered compulsory while those in relation to transmission via touch are advisory.

Ashdown Hurrey continue to encourage staff to take the Covid-19 vaccine when offered as well as regular lateral flow testing.

This assessment will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as required. Throughout this document the terms 'Social Distance' and 'Social Distancing' are abbreviated to 'SD'. Throughout the document, the use of the term "staff" or "staff member" is to include all staff, directors and consultants

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Transmission of infection by those who test positive for Covid-19 or are Covid-symptomatic, post-symptomatic or co-symptomatic	No member of staff who should be self-isolating in line with the latest information published on the GovUK website may enter our premises. If a member of staff develops symptoms while in the office they should leave immediately and should follow Government guidance to obtain an appropriate PCR test. Staff should continue to work from home if possible until either their self-isolation period has ended or they receive a negative PCR test result. Any staff member who tests positive via a PCR test has a legal duty to inform their employer (i.e. a director of Ashdown Hurrey) that this is the case.	No visitor who should be self-isolating in line with the latest information published on the GovUK website may enter our premises. Visitors must leave upon the on-set of any symptoms.	<p>S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.</p> <p>V: Visitors to be directed to the AH website and instructed to familiarise themselves with the Covid-19 policy and RA before attending our premises. Drop in visits to be discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions.</p>
Transmission of infection by those who have been exposed to Covid in their household or during any other close contact	Government guidance does not require those fully vaccinated to self-isolate if a household contact has tested positive. AH require these people not to attend the office for the required isolation period of their contact. They are advised to take daily lateral flow tests and may return to the office providing these are negative. If not fully vaccinated the staff member should follow this approach anyway as required by government guidance. In cases of doubt, people should not enter the office until the position is clarified.	Visitors who have been exposed to Covid-19 via close contact with an individual who has tested positive are asked not to attend our premises unless they have received a negative PCR test result since the contact or the required days have elapsed since the contact.	<p>S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.</p> <p>V: To be directed to the AH website and instructed to familiarise themselves with the Covid-19 policy and RA before attending our premises. Drop in visits to be discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions.</p>

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Shielding clinically extremely vulnerable	Compliance with NHS/PHE guidelines is required, as set out in the Government's publication 'Working Safely During Covid-19 in Office' or following updates.	N/A	S: Notification to HR required by email.
Clinically vulnerable	Employees at higher risk of severe illness must be considered on a case by case basis.	N/A	S: Notification to HR required by email.
Transmission of infection by contact with or proximity to others: Meetings	<p>Meetings should take place remotely where appropriate, either by phone or video-conference. Where a physical meeting is unavoidable it must be pre-booked in a meeting room and SD guidance for that room must be observed. Each member of staff will be supplied with hand-sanitiser to be used regularly when entering, leaving or at the firm's premises. No physical contact between staff or with visitors is permitted. Only one member of AH staff should attend any meeting unless there are exceptional reasons. Offsite meetings should be avoided where possible. If they take place the same safety approach should be taken. The client/contact should be asked to provide a copy of their risk assessment and to confirm they can provide a compliant safe environment.</p>	<p>Client meetings will only take place where the purpose of the meeting cannot take place remotely, by phone or video-conference. Meetings must be pre-booked in a meeting room and SD guidance must be observed. Visitors will be required to use hand-sanitiser on entering the firm's premises, and this will be included in meeting instructions. Clients should be advised to keep meetings to individuals only unless there are exceptional reasons. Visitors are requested to avoid any form of physical greeting.</p>	<p>S: Video-conferencing for meetings will take place using the staff member's allocated IT equipment and screen sharing will not be permitted.</p> <p>V: Visitors to be directed to the AH website and instructed to familiarise themselves with the Covid-19 policy and RA before attending our premises. Drop in visits to be discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions. The client should be advised that future meetings should be booked and also be referred to the RA on the website.</p> <p>Cleaning: Meeting room tables and chairs will be wiped down by the staff member holding the meeting after each meeting.</p>

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Enhanced risk of transmission of infection at reception, entrances and doorways	Each office has been assessed to identify an office-specific protocol for arrival and departure, covering doorways and direction of movement within the building where appropriate.	Visitors should follow the specific guidance outlined in the 'Meeting instructions for clients and staff' documents.	<p>S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 Section of Virtual Cabinet.</p> <p>V: Visitors to be directed to the AH website and instructed to familiarise themselves with the Covid-19 policy and RA before attending our premises. Drop in visits to be discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions.</p>
Rooms	<p>All rooms have been reviewed and reconfigured as necessary, including the relocation of individual members of staff, to ensure that no two members of staff are expected to sit within 2m of each other in any direction. If this is not possible, a screen will be placed between staff.</p> <p>During working hours, all internal doors should be propped open and where possible all windows kept open. Members of staff are invited to raise any concerns regarding their workspace with a Covid rep, and where possible such concerns will be accommodated including by considering the provision of additional barrier screens or relocation.</p>	Clients must not be permitted to enter the firm's premises beyond reception and meeting room areas. Other visitors such as service engineers, those making deliveries, etc. must enter and leave only via reception and must be escorted while on the firm's premises. Direction will be given to receptionists on the process for arranging escorts.	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Stairs and corridors	SD cannot be guaranteed by the firm and it is the responsibility of all members of staff to avoid encroaching within the indicated distance of each other wherever possible. Measures include checking that a corridor or staircase is clear before embarking upon it, and waiting at 'passing points' if a colleague is approaching. Rules to promote SD are 'Keep Left' and 'Going Up has Right of Way', and staff are encouraged to be vocal in alerting colleagues who may not have seen them. Specific instruction for each office is included in the notes published to staff on working in each office. These arrangements will be reviewed periodically and adapted as necessary and staff are encouraged to raise concerns or make suggestions about their implementation, including through staff-appointed safety representatives.	N/A for clients. Other visitors should be escorted following the same measures and routes as members of staff.	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.
Office equipment	Hand-sanitiser must be used before and after touching any item of office equipment away from the personal workstation of the member of staff in question, including printer-copiers, franking machines, binding equipment, etc. Where possible office equipment should not be shared and if unavoidable, each user is required to clean off the equipment after using the materials provided.	N/A	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Kitchens	Visits to kitchens should be kept to a minimum both in number and duration. Hand-sanitiser should be used before and after touching any equipment within the kitchen, including taps, kettles, cutlery and crockery. Only single-use paper towels may be used for any drying purpose in the kitchen. Dirty crockery or cutlery of any kind must NOT be left in your room.	N/A	S: Instructions for working in each office will be published to each member of staff by email, website and on kitchen notice-boards.
Toilets	"Free/Engaged" sliding signs have been installed outside each multi-use toilet (Bexhill) to ensure that it can be seen from outside the toilet whether or not it is vacant.	Visitors should not be invited to use the toilets but where they request to do so their attention should be drawn to the staff instructions.	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet. V: Visitors to be directed to the AH website and instructed to familiarise themselves with the Covid-19 policy and RA before attending our premises. Drop in visits to be discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions.
In-coming and out-going post and client records	Hand-sanitiser must be used before and after handling all in-coming and out-going post and client records. When clients deliver books and records, etc. for booking in, they should be collected from reception as soon as delivered and booked in by the section in the normal way.	N/A	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.
Off-site meetings	No member of staff should place themselves in danger by attending a meeting away from the office where there is any reason to suspect that appropriate steps to mitigate the transmission of Covid-19 will not be observed. Meetings should be conducted via phone or video-conference where possible, but where this is impossible due to the nature of the client or the purpose of the meeting, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure in advance of the meeting that SD will be observed, in the absence of which the meeting should not proceed.	N/A	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.

Risk	Staff	Visitors	Action
Car sharing	Where possible staff should travel separately to client premises, etc. However, if car sharing is unavoidable, staff should ensure that they wear masks throughout the journey and that windows are open for ventilation.	N/A	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.
Disregard of process by any member of staff	<p>All members of staff should feel confident that the processes put in place for their safety will be observed and enforced. A reporting process will be publicised whereby any non-compliance should be dealt with in the following way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the member of staff is comfortable doing so they should raise the non-compliance with the relevant person; • Where not comfortable or the person repeatedly infringes, a report should be made to a Covid rep; • The Covid rep will deal privately with the infringer but will involve the Board in the event of serious or repeated infringement. 	N/A	S: Relevant information to be included within the Covid-19 section of Virtual Cabinet.
Effect on mental health and wellbeing of reintegration	Any member of staff experiencing difficulties must seek help and guidance.	N/A	To be monitored by line managers. Open communication promoted and confidentiality assured. If necessary escalation to HR.

Meeting Instructions for Clients and Staff

Remote Meetings

Meetings should be conducted remotely where possible, either by phone or video-conference. Where a physical meeting is unavoidable the following process must be strictly followed.

Self-isolation Periods

No visitor who should be self-isolating in line with the latest information published on the GovUK website may enter our premises. Visitors must leave upon the on-set of any symptoms. Visitors who have been exposed to Covid-19 via close contact with an individual who has tested positive are asked not to attend our premises unless they have received a negative PCR test result since the contact or the required days have elapsed since the contact.

Pre-arranged Meetings

The date and time for the meeting should be fixed directly between the AH staff member and client to ensure that the meeting is strictly necessary, to discuss the agenda to ensure brevity, to agree the length of the meeting and to agree who is to attend. When booking a meeting room, the staff member will need to know how many people are attending and whether visitors live together or are observing social-distancing.

Unplanned/drop in meetings are discouraged but if unavoidable the staff member must ensure compliance with the normal RA conditions. The client should be advised that future meetings should be booked and also be referred to the RA on the website.

Preparation for Meetings

Please note that no-one may attend our premises if they should be carrying out self-isolation in line with the latest information published on the GovUK website. Everyone accessing the public areas of our premises is required to use hand-sanitiser before entering, which is available at the entrance to our reception areas.

Follow the Receptionist's Directions

If you are attending a meeting you will be directed to a meeting room. Visitors should please proceed directly to the room and sit in the seat(s) furthest from the door. The host staff member will be the last person to join the meeting and will sit in the seat nearest the door. If the allocated meeting room availability is delayed for any reason, or if you do not have an appointment you may be asked to sit in the waiting area until you receive further direction. No physical form of greeting will be permitted at any time during the meeting.

At the Meeting

Please do not move any chairs, which have been positioned to comply with social distancing. If your seat is not immediately adjacent to a table and you require assistance to be able to make notes, please ask the AH staff member who will enable this by providing suitable stationery.

At the End of the Meeting

The AH staff member should leave the room first and will direct the visitor(s) when it is clear for them to leave, observing any floor-tape or other markings.

Apologies for Temporary Measures

Please accept our apologies that while current restrictions apply we will be unable to offer refreshments during meetings, no physical greeting of any description will be appropriate and we request that our toilet facilities are used only if unavoidable. Your understanding is appreciated.

Instructions for Working at 20 Havelock Road

1. **Arrival:** Staff may enter the office via either the staff or main entrance. If using the staff door, the external door should be left unlocked (unless you are the last person leaving at the end of the day) and the internal keypad door should be kept shut and locked at all times. Social distancing must be maintained at all times when entering and moving around the office and face masks should be worn when navigating to your desk.
2. **Staircases:** The staircase is not wide enough for sharing and you must therefore apply Line of Sight judgement before ascending or descending any flight of stairs only when you can see that it is clear. Whether ascending or descending you must pause at each landing to ensure that the next flight is clear. If it isn't, the person ascending has right of way, and it is for the person descending to back-track to a place where the person ascending can safely pass.
3. **Moving around:** Please use Line of Sight judgement when moving around your floor. On entering your floor please stay on the side of the floor where you sit, and communicate with anyone approaching to maintain social distancing. Social distancing should be maintained at all times when moving around the office and face masks should be worn unless seated at your desk.
4. **Visitors:** Please read and observe the Meeting Instructions for Clients and Staff. Please deter any potential visitor from attending our premises if you reasonably can, by dealing with the client by phone or video-conference, or by email or post. If a physical meeting is unavoidable for technical or operational reasons, you should liaise with reception to establish that the visitors are in the meeting room before you join the meeting as last in and first out. At the end of the meeting check that the route to exit is clear and guide your visitors to the door, complying with social-distancing at all times. Please do not under any circumstances shake hands with any visitor or make physical contact in any other way.
5. **After the Meeting:** The host staff member should wipe down the table and chair-arms ready for the next meeting. Similarly, any reception chair should be wiped down by the receptionist after each use.
6. **Kitchen:** Please use hand-sanitiser before and after each visit and use only paper towels for drying, to be disposed of in the bin provided. Use of the kitchen should be kept to a minimum and you may not make drinks or handle food for anyone else. You should wash your allocated mug before preparing a drink and keep this with you. At the end of the day, place your mug in the dishwasher for an overnight wash. The last member of staff is responsible for putting the dishwasher on. Next morning only remove your mug for use during the new day. Wipe down all items handled in the kitchen.

Instructions for Working at 28 Wilton Road

1. **Arrival:** Please use hand-sanitiser on entering the building. Specific guidance is given below on kitchens and toilets, but broadly the rule is that unless at your desk you should use hand-sanitiser before and after touching any piece of office or kitchen equipment. Social distancing should be maintained at all times when entering and moving around the office and face masks should be worn when navigating to your desk.
2. **Staircases:** The staircase is not wide enough for sharing and you must therefore apply Line of Sight judgement before ascending or descending any flight of stairs only when you can see that it is clear. Whether ascending or descending you must pause at each landing to ensure that the next flight is clear. If it isn't, the person ascending has right of way, and it is for the person descending to back-track to a place where the person ascending can safely pass.
3. **Moving around:** Please use Line of Sight judgement when moving around your floor. On entering your floor please stay on the side of the floor where you sit, and communicate with anyone approaching to maintain social distancing. Social distancing should be maintained at all times when moving around the office and face masks should be worn unless seated at your desk.
4. **Visitors:** Please read and observe the Meeting Instructions for Clients and Staff. Please deter any potential visitor from attending our premises if you reasonably can, by dealing with the client by phone or video-conference, or by email or post. If a physical meeting is unavoidable for technical or operational reasons, you should liaise with reception to establish that the visitors are in the meeting room before you join the meeting as last in and first out. At the end of the meeting check that the route to exit is clear and guide your visitors to the door, complying with social-distancing at all times. Please do not under any circumstances shake hands with any visitor or make physical contact in any other way.
5. **After the Meeting:** The host staff member should wipe down the table and chair-arms ready for the next meeting. Similarly, any reception chair should be wiped down by the receptionist after each use.
6. **Kitchens and Toilets:** Please use hand-sanitiser before and after each visit and use only paper towels for drying, to be disposed of in the bin provided. Use of the kitchen should be kept to a minimum and you may not make drinks or handle food for anyone else. You should wash your allocated mug before preparing a drink and keep this with you. At the end of the day, place your mug in the dishwasher for an overnight wash. The last member of staff is responsible for putting the dishwasher on. Next morning only remove your mug for use during the new day. Wipe down all items handled in the kitchen. Exit the kitchen and observe the one way system in operation by following signs and arrows.

Instructions for Accessing Archived Files

Accessing the file archives should be kept to a minimum but if essential, you should place the selected files in an archive box for delivery to the relevant staff member. After handling files, you should ensure that you thoroughly wash and disinfect your hands before returning to your desk.

Please Read Before Entering

Visitor Instructions

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT

**AN APPOINTMENT CAN BE MADE BY CALLING
01424 720222 for Hastings or 01424 730300 for Bexhill**

Please do not enter our premises for any purpose if any of the following apply to you:

- you have tested positive for Covid-19;
- you have any Covid-19 and have been instructed to self-isolate;
- someone you live with has tested positive for Covid-19, or suffered symptoms; or
- you have been contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service and notified to self-isolate.

Please use hand-sanitiser on entry to our premises, irrespective of whether you are wearing gloves.

Please wear a face covering when possible.

Please follow the floor-markings, remaining behind each line until the next line is clear, until you reach the final floor-marking in front of the reception desk.

Please follow the instructions given by our receptionist who will direct you to a meeting room.

Please sit in the chair(s) furthest from the door, do not move the chairs and remain in the room until directed to leave by your host.

Thank you for your co-operation.

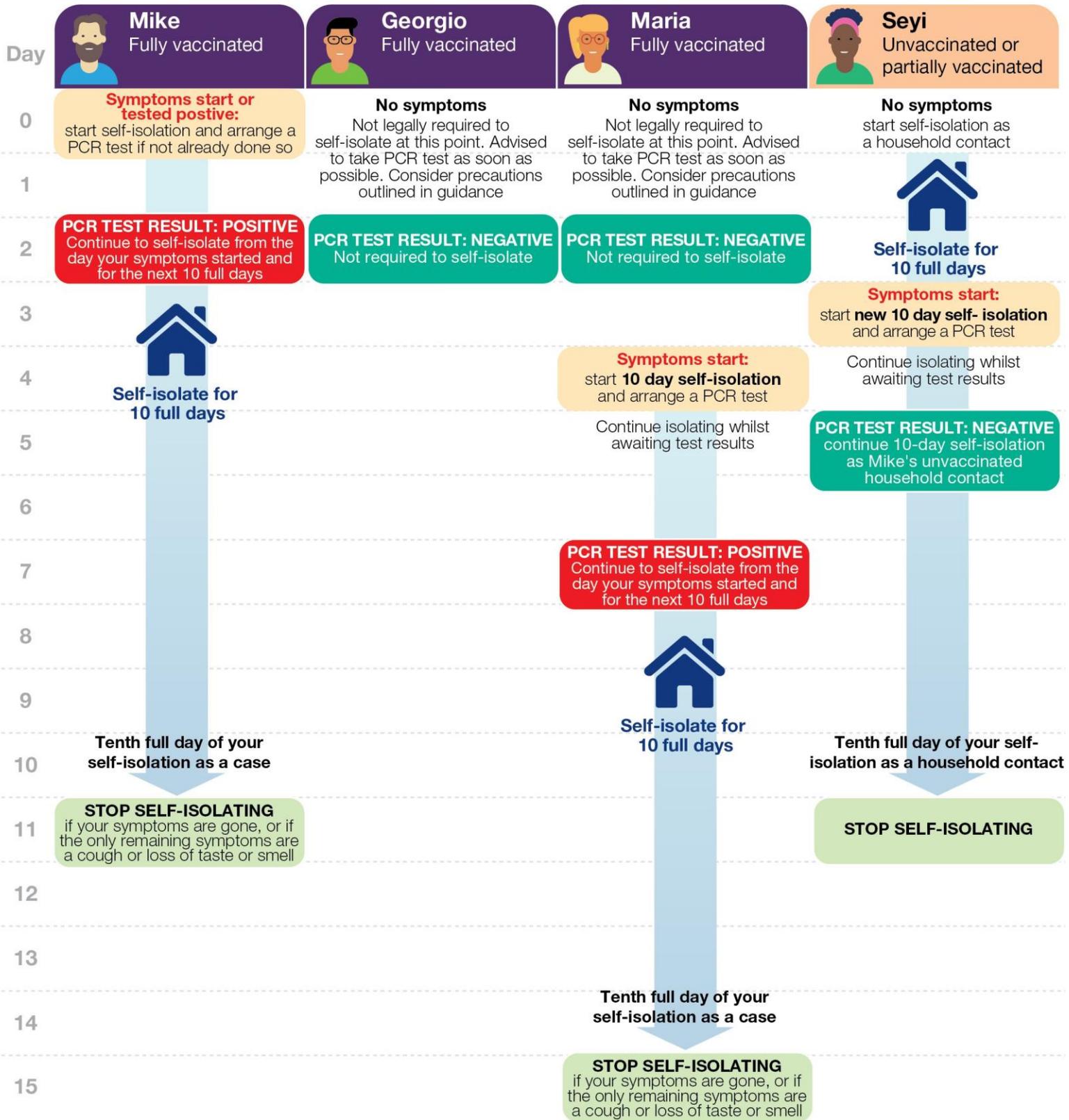
Ashdown Hurrey Chartered Accountants



Stay at home and self-isolate.

Please see [detailed guidance online](#).

In this household, Mike lives with Georgio, Maria and Seyi. Mike is the first case of COVID-19 in this household and is required to self-isolate. This illustration provides examples of when other household members would, or would not need to self-isolate.



Self-isolate for 10 full days.

You need to self-isolate from the day the first person in your household started symptoms and for the next 10 full days. If they did not have symptoms, self-isolate from the day of their test and for the next 10 full days.

To self-isolate means:

Do not go to work, school, or public areas and do not use public transport or taxis. Only leave your home to get to your test if you need to, observe strict social distancing advice and return immediately afterwards.

See

[detailed guidance online](#) for contacts that are not required to self-isolate.