- THE POWER HIVE -

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is dominating headlines around the world and we are receiving a high volume of calls from employers who are having to think carefully about how to deal with the very unusual circumstances arising out of the global health crisis. This information sheet is designed to give you our advice and tips on what to consider when dealing with coronavirus in your business.

It is good practice to:

- Keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure in the workplace
- Promote regular handwashing, use of antibacterial gels/sprays on key touch points, coughing into the crease of the arm, no face touching and regularly sipping on water
- Make sure everyone's contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date
- Make sure managers know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus and are clear on the relevant processes
- Make sure there are clean places to wash hands with hot water and soap and provide hand sanitisers and tissues for staff, while encouraging them to use them
- Consider if protective face masks might help for people working in particularly vulnerable situations
- If possible, spread out your workforce amongst the office space and keep the area well ventilated

Pay – Company Sick Pay, SSP, Self-Isolation:

- Self-isolation requires an individual to remain at home for a period of 14 days to limit their contact with others
- The government has made it clear that if NHS 111 or a doctor advises an employee or worker to self-isolate, they are entitled to statutory sick pay. In addition, as of the 13th March 2020, employees who are "isolating themselves from other people in such a manner as to prevent infection or contamination with coronavirus disease" can also claim SSP
- If the employer offers contractual sick pay, it is good practice to provide this
- As of 4th March 2020, emergency legislation has come into force that requires employers to pay statutory sick pay from day one as to not penalise those who are self-isolating and helping to contain the spread of coronavirus
- Employers might need to be flexible if they require evidence of incapacity to work, such as a fit note, if they have been told to self-isolate
- In some cases, employees may be able to work from home while in self-isolation. This would be dependent on the type of job they do and having no contact with others as part of their job. Trust is essential when managing a working from home situation and your employees may want to consider creating a process around regular catchups at key intervals during the day

Dependent Care, School Closures:

- An employee is entitled to take time off work to help someone who is dependent on them, there is no statutory right to pay for this time off, but some employers may wish to pay dependant on the contract or workplace policy and to discourage an employee, who may have potentially come into contact with coronavirus, to come into work and risk spreading the disease – in this case SSP may be appropriate
- The amount of time off an employee takes to look after someone must be reasonable for the situation. For example, if there are school closures and an employee needs to stay home to look after their child, you may allow them 2 or 3 days to find alternative childcare, and if more time is needed, they can book holiday

Lay-Offs, Short Time Working, Redundancy:

- In order to protect businesses, it is important to explore each of these areas to establish what can be done in the event that workload decreases, or it becomes necessary to suspend business activities for a temporary period of time
- Businesses should understand what their contracts and policies allow in relation to lay-offs, short term working and as a last resort, redundancies.

HOW CAN GATEWAY HR HELP?	
ADHOC SUPPORT / ADVICE	**PEACE OF MIND MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION**
Support / Advice, per hour: £100 (charged in 15min increments) Single Document / Policy: £150	From £99 per month Further information can be found here
All prices exclude VAT	