



COVID -19 (Coronavirus) Lead Employer FAQs 31st March 2020

The Lead Employer continues to work closely with national colleagues to put plans in place for business continuity. We appreciate your flexibility and support during this difficult time.

What is the single source of advice to follow?

The guidance provided by Public Health England is provided by clinical experts and should be the single source of advice followed:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Please refer to the following links for further information

- [GOV.UK: coronavirus action plan](#)
- [GOV.UK: information on coronavirus and the situation in the UK](#)
- [NHS England: coronavirus information for health professionals](#)

Contents

[Pregnancy](#)

[Self-isolation, Absence, Sickness and Pay](#)

[Rotation](#)

[Other](#)

Pregnancy

Guidance for those trainees who are pregnant can be found by [clicking here](#)

Health Education England have been issuing communications via the Heads of School relating to specialities and the approach adopted in response to the guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists. Please refer to your host in the first instance and TPD if not clear.

- 1. I am a pregnant GP trainee, if I have to self-isolate for 12 weeks as per government advice - will I be paid?**

Please report your absence as normal. Your practice will have now received information from the Lead Employer on how to record your absence. You will be paid for this period of absence.

- 2. What is the advice for the partners of pregnant trainees? Are they entitled to the same adjustments?**

Please follow PHE guidance [Click here](#)



- 3. I am a trainee on maternity leave who has not started accrued leave but is happy to come back early. Could I take the accrued leave back a few days per week/ as pay/ at a later date?**

Maternity leave would need to cease in order to return to work, please do not feel obliged to curtail your maternity leave. [Contact Employment Services](#); with regards to accrued annual leave.

This could be taken at a later time or used for some days each week so please contact Employment Services to discuss your options.

Unfortunately we would not be able to pay you for this leave as it needs to be taken as compensatory rest.

- 4. Will the current situation mean that there is an option for me to increase the KIT days I can take in order to support with COVID-19?**

The maximum number of KIT days is set to 10 as per legislation and therefore we are unable to waiver this at this stage.

- 5. I am currently 28 weeks pregnant and fall within a vulnerable category. Is it possible to work from home in primary care?**

Please follow [the RCOG guidance](#). Self-isolate and work from home where possible. Speak to your local practice regarding this.

Pay, Sickness, Absence and Self-Isolation

- 6. My practice/host has cancelled my annual leave, what will happen to it?**

We are currently awaiting national guidance.

- 7. I fall within the identified vulnerable groups and have now received a shielding letter which advises me to stay at home for 12 weeks. I want to continue working, what should I do?**

If you have received a letter from GOVT advising you to stay at home for 12 weeks then you must follow this guidance. Please speak to your Supervisor regarding any work you can undertake whilst at home.

- 8. I have been isolating with my family due to my child being symptomatic, I am now fit and well along with my family. Am I eligible for testing?**

Testing for Covid-19 should be arranged locally via your host organisation (if available).



9. Does my salary get affected if I have to go off work for 2 weeks either due to Covid19 or due to a family member having it?

Your host placement will now be in receipt of guidance from the Lead Employer on how your absence will be recorded on ESR. Absence related to Covid19 will be paid and sickness absence arising from Covid19 will not count towards any triggers.

10. I have got a chronic condition and I am living with someone in the high risk groups. I was wondering how I can have a local risk assessment for possibly working in low risk areas in my job.

Follow PHE guidance and request a local risk assessment from your local host organisation.

11. If I have to work from home on health grounds, what happens regarding my on call commitment?

Please refer to your host placement organisation

12. I am currently less than full time, if I step up my hours to cover a COVID emergency rota will my pay go up to a full time wage?

A LTFT doctor or dentist in training can now do paid extra shifts as per the recent guidance that has been circulated from the HEE. This is on a temporary increase to your normal working hours in order to volunteer support clinical services.

13. We are a GP training practice. We currently have various members of staff self-isolating, and it is going to get increasingly difficult to be able to schedule and do tutorials. Is scheduling personal study time an acceptable alternative during this difficult time?

Please look to seek guidance from your local HEE office in the first instance as this relates to education.

14. My annual leave for the Easter Holidays has been limited to two days in addition to the bank holidays, this is causing me childcare issues, is this legal?

We encourage you to go back to your host and explain your personal circumstances. We are currently awaiting national guidance on this from NHS Employers on annual leave

15. I CCT in July and have quite a lot of annual leave to take before then If I were to choose not to take my entitlement due to clinical demand, would I be entitled to be paid for these days instead?

We are awaiting national guidance from NHS Employers

16. Despite having Asthma, I have not received a GOVT letter recommending me to stay at home. I do not live with any high-risk individuals but my understanding is that I still fall into a vulnerable group. Can you please advise on what action I should take?



Please refer to PHE and government guidance on vulnerable groups in the first instance: <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>

If you have not had received a letter from the government (by Sunday 29th March) and believe you fall into this category, then you should contact your GP.

17. How do we report absences for those who are self-isolating?

[Please refer to our absence reporting guidance](#)

18. Our rotas have been re-written so all shifts are 12.5 hours with more zero days to maintain compliance. We are currently still allowed to take annual leave. It has been proposed that as all our shifts are now longer & with more zero days, an annual leave day should require more than 1 day of our annual leave allowance (so use up 1.5 days of annual leave to take 1 day off).

Is there any guidance on this? Should we calculate leave in hours temporarily?

Refer to Host Medical Staffing Department in the first instance.

19. The process to sign up for our hospital bank system to do extra shifts to get paid takes months. Meaning likely enough we will not be paid for any extra work we are made to do on our new rotas. How will this be addressed?

Please speak with your host on this matter. These additional hours sit outside your contract of employment with Lead Employer.

20. I've been redeployed to medicine from rheumatology. My rota has now changed, how will my pay be adjusted accordingly?

In the first instance, please speak to your Host, in particular your Medical Staffing department for a new work schedule which includes pay information. It is the responsibility of the host to advise Lead Employer what to pay you and they will send this information to us. However when you receive your new work schedule please contact LE to ensure we have the information also. Pay deadline is 7th April for therefore we will require by that date.

21. How will the cancellation of bank holidays affect GP trainees? Will they become lieu days?

We are currently awaiting national guidance on this matter.

Rotation

22. I should be rotating in April, what should I do?



HEE have issued a communication that says trainees will remain in their current placement and will not be rotating in April. If you require further clarity speak with your TPD for further guidance and await further guidance from HEE.

23. Due to us not rotating, I am unable to stay at my current host trust due to accommodation issues, who do I speak to?

Please speak with your TPD for further guidance.

24. I received an email from Lead Employer saying that I was not rotating on the 1st April 2020 following a national decision by HEE. However, I am currently out of programme OR returning from maternity on 1st April therefore I am confused as to what I am doing. Can you clarify?

The LE team sent a generic email to all trainees rotating 1st April with the national message from HEE. This does not apply to you. The LE team should have been in touch with you by now however if not please email your concerns to the employment services team for your region. Please be assured we are working with HEE for your smooth return to work.

25. I will be doing my last ST2 rotation From April to August. Would it be possible that I can work in GP/primary care front line services instead of hospital placement?

Please speak to your TPD in the first instance.

Other

26. How will training requirements/competencies be fulfilled if immunocompromised staff are redeployed to non-patient facing roles, or “low risk” areas? If re-deployed to non-patient facing roles or advised to self-isolate due to immunocompromised, will this time need to be made up in extra training?

Please contact HEE directly via your TPD or Head of School

27. What will happen if I am unable to submit my expenses I have incurred in the normal 3 month period?

Claiming for e-Expenses has been extended from 3 months to 6 months.

28. Will GP Trainees on Tier2 Visa who have had their exams cancelled or must need an extension to their training be issued with a tier2 visa if their training does indeed need to be extended due to the Covid 19 pandemic?

Please refer to the Tier 2 team – their contact details can [be found here](#)

29. Can a trainee undertake locum work when they are a LTFT trainee

A LTFT doctor or dentist in training can now do paid extra shifts as per the recent guidance that has been circulated from the HEE. This is on a temporary increase to your normal working hours in order to volunteer support clinical services.



- 30. Some LTFT employees are asking about temporarily increasing their job-planned hours if they wish to, either to help out or also that with the changes in household income, some need to. Please could you confirm if this is allowed, how they institute this, and also if they are changing from occupying a half slot to whole, is this OK temporarily even if the host organisation is 'full'?**

Refer back to host organisation for any additional hours worked.

- 31. Should I sign an opt out form due to working beyond my contractual hours?**

All trainees who are currently working above their contractual hours should sign the opt out form to ensure they are working within safe hours to protect their health and wellbeing. You can view the form: [Individual Consent to Opt.docx](#)

- 32. My hotel accommodation has now closed, is there any emergency accommodation available for GPs based in practices?**

Please contact your practice to see if there is any emergency accommodation.

- 33. What guidance is available with regards to teaching and study leave for trainees during the COVID 19 outbreak?**

Please refer to HEE website for further information - <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-vinformation-trainees>

- 34. Is there any guidance on whether NHS staff will have to continue to pay for parking during COVID-19?**

The Government have stated that from 1st April they are suspending car park payments for NHS staff. Please do not contact LE payroll at this time as we are dealing direct with your host and your pay will be amended in due course.

- 35. I currently work in an area that is quiet due to reduced outpatient attendance. Should I be redeployed to front line services? If so, how should I go about rearranging this?**

Please speak to your TPD

Please note that the information in this e-mail is correct as at the date and time stated at the top, however this is a rapidly changing situation and I would recommend you continue to monitor the national advice issued by Public Health England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>